
Volume 3 – Doctrine

Chapter 32 – Guilt Lieth	676
Chapter 33 – Sabbath to Sunday?	724
Chapter 34 – God’s Annual & Other Holy Days: Christian Meaning	753
Chapter 35 – God’s Calendar—The Sacred Year	811
Chapter 36 – Father & Son—or Trinity?	841
Chapter 37 – ‘Playing God’	906
Chapter 38 – God’s Grace	973
Chapter 39 – Christian Baptism	995
Chapter 40 – Dying Without Hearing the Word	998
Chapter 41 – Prayers: Answered & Unanswered	1006
Chapter 42 – Wilful Sin & Others	1017
Chapter 43 – Original Sin	1031
Chapter 44 – Primal Lie	1037
Chapter 45 – Marriage, Divorce, & Re-marriage	1090
Chapter 46 – Tithing	1127
Chapter 47 – Wicked Hateth the Righteous	1144
Chapter 48 – Law & Royal Priesthood	1166
Chapter 49 – Sin Offerings & ‘The Law Added’	1255
Chapter 50 – Reflections on Job	1266
Chapter 51 – Throne of David	1282
Chapter 52 – 7,000-year Chronology	1329
Chapter 53 – Sacred Calendar 2014–2028	1337

Volume 4 – Issues

Chapter 54 – Perversions Various	1346
Chapter 55 – Roman Claim of Primacy	1414
Chapter 56 – Roman Church ‘Innovations’	1422
Chapter 57 – Roman Church: Intolerance, Dogma, & Tradition	1434
Chapter 58 – Trinity Doctrine—Whose Idea?	1473
Chapter 59 – ‘Sola Scriptura’	1491
Chapter 60 – Goddesses of Discernment	1499
Chapter 61 – ‘God’ of Pleiades	1519
Chapter 62 – Forty-Two?	1521
Chapter 63 – Ancient Babylon’s Demise	1527
Chapter 64 – Baptismal Regeneration	1533
Chapter 65 – Adam & Eve	1548
Chapter 66 – Creation or Evolution?	1556
Chapter 67 – ‘Gay Pride’	1575
Chapter 68 – Disfellowshipping	1581
Chapter 69 – ‘Glossolalia’	1606
Chapter 70 – Where are Enoch & Elijah?	1618
Chapter 71 – Isaiah 7:14—‘Almah’	1626
Chapter 72 – Wine Poured Out Before Idols	1631
Chapter 73 – Pharaseeism in the Church	1641

Chapter 74 – Church: History & Contrasts	1650
Chapter 75 – Second Temple—Date of Destruction	1734
Chapter 76 – Definition of Apostle	1740
Chapter 77 – Denying Jesus	1744
Chapter 78 – Exhortation	1749
Epilogue	1751

Volume 3

Doctrine

Chapter 32

Guilt Lieth

This topic has been prompted by the perceived need of an investigation into the truth, or otherwise, of that frequently adopted and usually pejorative accusation that the Jews were responsible for the death of Christ. This belief is particularly prevalent in Roman Catholic prejudice.¹ Consideration of the matter is deemed appropriate since it is written: *'And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me² whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.'*³ This is held further exposed: *'In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon. And the land shall mourn, every family apart; the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart; The family of the house of Levi apart, and their wives apart; the family of Shimei apart, and their wives apart; all the families that remain, every family apart, and their wives apart.'*⁴ These references could lead, on a superficial reading at any rate, to the supposition that Scripture does indeed lay the blame for the death of Christ wholly on the Jews.

¹ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol.2, pp.66,67:

'There are many things which can shut a man's mind. Prejudice can make a man blind to everything he does not wish to see.'

² cp. John 19:37b, *'look on him.'*

³ Zech 12:10

⁴ Zech 12:11-14; i.e., mourning on the part of all of the Jews; David and Nathan indicating the royal line, Levi and Shimei the priestly one, so encompassing all, though LXX, Syrian and Arabic read *'Simeon,'* brother in iniquity with Levi.

The following excerpt from John possibly serves to bolster the same view: *'I spake that which I have seen with my Father: and ye do that which ye have seen with your father. They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham. But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God; this did not Abraham. Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they to him, We be not born of fornication; we have one father, even God. Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me. Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word. Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it. And because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not.'*⁵

But there is something incongruous here, surely, for the '*spirit of grace and of supplications*,' spoken of by Zechariah,⁶ is the Holy Spirit, hardly something naturally associated with shouldering guilt deriving from responsibility for the death of Christ. Therefore it is appropriate to review the train of events, as recorded in the Scriptures, in order to identify an answer to the question which has caused such severe persecution and hardship for the Jewish people down through the centuries in the frequent visitations and related pogroms of 'so-called Christian' and other apostate 'religions.'

Arrest & inquiry

*'From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem and suffer many things.'*⁷ Christ's audience was not so much the multitudes as the twelve; His method not so much preaching as teaching; His subject not so much the kingdom as His death and resurrection, bringing forth that kingdom. The inevitability of it all was laid out before His disciples, even though they failed to discern it at the time. For their part in the macabre affair, the priests and scribes took counsel together over how they could put Jesus to death. The priests' function was to teach the Torah and give direction on it, but their counsel was evilly conceived, evilly directed, and wholly contrary to their remit. He whom they should have pointed out to the people, the Messiah, they sought to destroy.

The incongruity continues, for, '[t]here is something astonishing about the force which came out to arrest Jesus. John said that there was a company of soldiers [*'a band of men'*], together with officers from the

⁵ John 8:38-45

⁶ Zech 12:10b

⁷ Mat 15:21a

⁸ John 18:3,12; it is probable that since the officers of the chief priests and Pharisees were operating outside the temple precinct, they would need the support and supervision of a Roman force to 'legitimize' any action, and that

chief priests and Pharisees. The 'officers' would be the Temple police. The Temple authorities had a kind of private police force to keep good order, and the Sanhedrin had its police officers to carry out its decrees. The officers, therefore, were the Jewish police force. But there was a band of Roman soldiers there too. The word is speira. Now that word, if it is correctly used, can have three meanings. It is the Greek word for a Roman cohort and a cohort had six hundred men. If it was a cohort of auxiliary soldiers, a speira had one thousand men, two hundred and forty cavalry and seven hundred and sixty infantry. Sometimes, much more rarely, the word is used for the detachment of men called a maniple which was made up of two hundred men.

Even if we take this word to mean the smallest force,⁹ what an expedition to send out against an unarmed Galilean carpenter!¹⁰ At the Passover time there were always extra soldiers in Jerusalem, quartered in the Tower of Antonia which overlooked the Temple, and men would be available. But what a compliment to the power of Jesus! When the authorities decided to arrest Him, they sent what was almost an army to do it.

The question begged on the matter of the Roman forces deployed is: Who authorized the action and commanded that they be sent, and why? Doubtless, the Jewish authorities would have misrepresented the matter, claiming that if overwhelming force were not made available by the Romans then a riot could start and erupt into wholesale insurrection, especially given the numbers then present in Jerusalem, but would that have been sufficient to coax the occupying force commander to accede to their pleadings? And, of necessity, would not that commander have been Pilate? Is there a hint that Pilate's involvement started earlier in the affair than at the fateful assize, as usually assumed?¹¹

'Only John tells us that Jesus was brought first of all to Annas. After Christ was arrested, he was brought before Annas,¹² a former High Priest and father-in-law of the then High Priest, Caiaphas.¹³ Annas was a notorious character. Edersheim writes of him: "No figure is better known in contemporary Jewish history than that of Annas; no person deemed more fortunate or successful, but none also more generally execrated than the late High Priest." Annas was the power behind the throne in Jerusalem. He himself had been High Priest.¹⁴ Four of his sons had also held the high priesthood and Caiaphas was his son-in-law. That very fact is itself suggestive and illuminating. There had been a time when the Jews were free, when the High Priest had held

force, ultimately, was under the procurator, Pontius Pilate. The 'band,' a speira, was under a chiliarch (both Greek but referring to Latin military terms), translated 'captain' in v.18.

⁹ Latin: maniple.

¹⁰ better, builder.

¹¹ John 18:1-11; Barclay, William, *The Gospel of John*, Vol.2, pp.222,223

¹² Annas (Anias), 'one who answers,' was appointed high priest in 6AD, and although his reign officially ended in 15AD when deposed by the Roman procurator of Judæa, Valerius Gratus, give the machinations of the time, it did not effectively end, for he long remained the 'power behind the priesthood.' After several changes, Joseph Caiaphas, his son-in-law, was appointed in 18AD, and held office until 35-36AD (cf. Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, 18:33-35). Annas acted as his *sagan* (Temple manager or substitute), and was considered by the Jews as high priest by Divine right (cf. Luke 3:2). The sagan's management style was deeply self-serving: the booths overturned by Jesus in His cleansing of the Temple were known as 'the booths of Annas.'

¹³ whose name means 'a searcher.'

¹⁴ 6-15AD

office for life; but when the Roman governors came, the office became a matter for contention and intrigue and bribery and corruption. It now went to the greatest sychophant and the highest bidder, to the man who was most willing to toe the line with the Roman governor. The High Priest was the arch-collaborator, the man who brought comfort and ease and prestige and power not with bribes only but with close cooperation with his coun-try's masters. The family of Annas was immensely rich and one by one they had intrigued and bribed their way into office, while Annas remained the power behind it all.

Even the way in which Annas made his money was most probably disgraceful. In the Court of the Gentiles there were the sellers of victims for the sacrifices, those sellers whom Jesus had driven out. They were not traders; they were extortioners....The whole business was sheer exploitation; and the shops where the Temple victims were sold were called The Bazaars of Annas; it was by exploitation of the worshippers, by trading on the sacred sacrifices, that Annas has amassed a fortune. The Jews themselves hated the household of Annas. There is a passage in the Talmud which says: "Woe to the house of Annas! Woe to their serpent's hiss! They are the High Priests; their sons are keepers of the treasury; their sons-in-law are guardians of the Temple; and their servants beat the people with staves." Annas and his household were notorious.

Now we can see why Annas arranged that Jesus should be brought first to him. Jesus was the man who had attacked Annas's vested interest; He had cleared the Temple of the sellers of the victims and had hit Annas where it hurt [even if fleetingly]—in his pocket. Annas wanted to be the first to gloat over the capture of this disturbing Galilean.

The examination before Annas was a mockery of justice. It was an essential regulation of the Jewish law that a prisoner must be asked no question which would incriminate him. Maimonides, the great Jewish medieval scholar, lays it down: "Our true law does not inflict the penalty of death upon a sinner by his own confession." Annas violated the principles of Jewish justice when he questioned Jesus about His disciples and His teachings, as if there were something secret about them. It was precisely of this that Jesus reminded him. Jesus said: "Don't ask me questions. Ask those who heard me." He was, in effect, saying: "Take your evidence about me in the proper and legal way. Examine your witnesses, which you have every right to do; stop examining me, which you have no right to do." When Jesus said that, one of the officers hit Him a slap across the face. He said, in effect, "Are you trying to teach the High Priest how to conduct a trial?" Jesus's answer was: "If I have said or taught anything illegal, witnesses should be called. I have only stated the Law. Why hit me for that?"

Jesus never had any hope of justice. The self-interest of Annas and his colleagues had been touched; and Jesus was condemned before He was tried. When a man is engaged on an evil way, his only desire is to eliminate anyone who opposes him. If he cannot do it by fair means, he is compelled to resort to foul.¹⁵

¹⁵ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of John*, Vol. 2, pp.225,227 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

The questioning proceeded no further. Jesus was led bound to Caiaphas, the High Priest, who had assembled the chief priests, and elders, and scribes. There, in the middle of that fateful night, the Sanhedrin held a form of trial.

'The Sanhedrin was the supreme court of the Jews.¹⁶ In particular, it had complete jurisdiction over all religious and theological matters. It was composed of seventy members. Scribes, Rabbis and Pharisees, Priests and Sadducees and elders were all represented on it. It could not meet during the hours of darkness. That is why they held Jesus until the morning before they brought Him before it. It could meet only in the Hall of Hewn Stone in the Temple court. The High Priest was the president of it. We possess the rules of procedure of the Sanhedrin. Perhaps they are only the ideal, which was never fully carried out;¹⁷ but at least they allow us to see what the Jews, at their best, conceived that the Sanhedrin should be, and how far their actions fell short of their own ideals in the trial of Jesus. The court sat in a semi-circle, in which every member could see every other member. Facing the court there stood the prisoner dressed in mourning dress. Behind them there sat the rows of the students and disciples of the Rabbis. They might speak in defence of the prisoner but not against him. Vacancies in the court were probably filled by co-option from these students. All charges must be supported by the evidence of two witnesses independently examined. A member of the court might speak against the prisoner, and then change his mind and speak for him, but not vice-versa. When a verdict was due, each member had to give his individual judgement, beginning at the youngest and going on to the most senior. For acquittal, a majority of one was all that was necessary; for condemnation there must be a majority of at least two. Sentence of death could never be carried out on the day on which it was given; a night must elapse so that the court might sleep on it, so that, perchance, their condemnation might turn to mercy. The whole procedure was designed for mercy; and even from Luke's summary account, it is clear that the Sanhedrin when it tried Jesus was far from keeping its own rules and regulations.'¹⁸ It was into the midst of this improperly convened assembly that Jesus was taken for trial.

There, a few hastily-assembled false witnesses came forward but their testimony failed to agree, save for two who reported, falsely, that Christ had claimed to be able to destroy the building of the Temple of God and to rebuild it in three days. It is interesting to note that this accusation was based on a garbled report of words Christ had spoken almost three years previously, recorded in John.¹⁹ ²⁰ 'There is a legend which tells

¹⁶ Sanhedrin, from the Greek: 'Assembly' or 'Session,' had its origins in the Exodus from Egypt, when God commanded that Moses assemble seventy elders to assist and help in leading the nation of the children of Israel. This Council of seventy-one assumed all legislative and judicial powers throughout the history of the people until the destruction of the First Temple. It was reconvened later by Ezra on the return of the Jews from Babylonian exile and the re-building of the Temple, and named the Great Sanhedrin. The last weak remnant of this was dissolved by the Romans in 66AD, a few years before the destruction of the Second Temple.

¹⁷ Barclay brings no evidence to support this contention (or mere speculation?).

¹⁸ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Luke*, pp.287,288 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

¹⁹ John 2:19,21

²⁰ Barclay, William, *The Mind of Jesus*, p.141

how the Sanhedrin sought for witnesses when Jesus was on trial. There came a crowd of people saying: "I was a leper and He healed me"; "I was blind and He opened my eyes"; "I was deaf and He made me able to hear." That was precisely the kind of witness the Sanhedrin did not want.²¹

'In spite of such motley, erroneous, and dated testimony, the trial ultimately centred on a single question put to Christ by the High Priest: *'Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?'*²² Christ's reply is recorded, *'And Jesus said, I am: and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.'*²³ Both the words '*Blessed*' and '*power*' were understood to mean God.²⁴ His reply was taken to be blasphemous, of being evidence of a human claim to divinity, and, as a consequence, Christ was condemned to be guilty of death. *'Then the high priest rent his clothes, and saith, What need we of any further*

²¹ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of John*, Vol.1, p.53

²² Mark 14:61

²³ Mark 14:62

²⁴ Barclay, William, *The Mind of Jesus*, pp.141,142:

'Jesus regarded Himself as a teacher. There are three closely inter-related words used for Jesus; in fact, they all most probably go back to the same Aramaic word.

(a) There is the word *Rabbi*, to which the other two words go back. Six times Jesus is called *Rabbi*, five of them by His disciples and the sixth by a blind man appealing for his sight (Mark 9:5,11:21,14:45; Mat 26:25,26:49; Mark 10:51). *Rabbi* literally means 'my great one,' and it was the title given by the Jews to the greatest and wisest teachers. This was a title which Jesus was offered and which He accepted.

(b) There is the word *epistates*. Luke alone uses this word; Luke was a Gentile, and this is a characteristically Greek word, and Luke used it as a Greek substitute for the Hebrew *Rabbi*. In Luke's gospel it occurs six times, five times on the lips of the disciples, and once on the lips of a leper desiring to be healed (Luke 5:5,8:24,45,9:33,48,17:13). This is a great Greek word. It is the word in Greek for a headmaster, and in particular for the man who was in charge of the *ephebi*, the cadets who were engaged in their years of national service of their country. The duty of the *epistates* was defined as being 'to lead the souls of the young men on the path which leads to virtue and to every manly feeling.' Here again Jesus is regarded, and regards Himself, as the master teacher.

(c) There is the word *didaskalos*. *Didaskalos* is the normal Greek word for 'teacher' and in the synoptic gospels it is used of Jesus more than thirty times, as is the kindred verb *didaskein* which means 'to teach.' It is the word by which all kinds of people addressed Jesus. He is so addressed by His disciples (Mark 4:38,10:35,13:1); by the Pharisees (Mat 9:11; Mark 12:14); by the Sadducees (Mark 12:19); and by the people who came to Him with all kinds of request for help and for guidance (Mark 9:17,10:17; Luke 8:49,12:13).'

Barclay, William, *The Mind of Jesus*, pp.148,150,152 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets); how Jesus described Himself:

'If we place any reliance at all upon the Gospel records of the life of Jesus, we are compelled to conclude that '*Son of man*' was Jesus' own most personal and most deliberately chosen title for Himself. The title '*Son of man*' occurs in the New Testament about eighty-two times, and with a single exception all the occurrences are in the Gospels. The one exception is the saying of Stephen in Acts 7:56, '*Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing at the right hand of God.*' Within the Gospels themselves the phrase never occurs except on the lips of Jesus with one exception, and that one exception is a quotation of the words of Jesus. The question of the crowd to Jesus is: '*How can you say that the Son of man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of man?*' (John 12:34). To all intents and purposes no one used it but Jesus; no one ever even addresses Jesus by that title. It is uniquely His title for Himself, and therefore we are bound to try to find out what it means.

Jesus normally spoke Aramaic; in Aramaic '*Son of man*' is *bar nasha*; and that is the Aramaic phrase simply for 'a man,' a member of the human race....[Moreover], '*Son of man*' was in fact a messianic title, and a messianic title of the most superhuman and supra-mundane kind....Without doubt, the origin of the title '*Son of man*' is to be found in the book of Daniel....'*I saw in the night visions, and, behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him*' (Dan 7:13). [Footnote: So all the modern translations; the A.V.'s '*like the Son of man*' is incorrect].'

witnesses? Ye have heard the blasphemy: what think ye? And they all condemned him to be guilty of death.²⁵ In the morning, the Sanhedrin, after consultation, handed Jesus over to Pilate.²⁶

It is still widely debated whether the Sanhedrin had the right of the sword in this matter. In most cases, other than in matters of no interest to the Roman rule, that right lay with the Roman procurator, who, in any event, could intervene in any case if he so chose, irrespective of taxonomy. The Talmud²⁷ states that the Jews had the right of capital punishment taken from them by the Romans forty years before the destruction of the Temple. This would place the removal c.30AD.²⁸ Without knowing the actual day and month,²⁹ forty years before the destruction would place Christ's trial about the start of the Sanhedrin's judicially-neutered era. But even regardless of that, during Passover season, it was considered unlawful to prosecute a capital trial, and to take away life. Josephus states³⁰ that later, at the time of the death of James the Just, Roman approbation was needed for any Sanhedrin assembly.

Bock also describes the events of that night, where he brings out a different understanding of the motives and ploys behind the hastily-convened assembly: 'We know that Jesus, after having been betrayed by one of his own followers, was hustled under tight guard to stand before the Sanhedrin, an assembly of Jewish religious leaders whose chief priest at the time was Caiaphas. Fearing the worst, His disciples fled. Peter, however, ventured as far as the building where Jesus was taken for examination. While sitting around a fire with some soldiers in an outside courtyard, Peter feigned ignorance of the controversial teacher being interrogated inside. He knew all too well why his Master had been arrested and did not wish to share the same fate.

In fact, Peter denied Christ thrice; the number of judgement, as recorded in Mark, '*And the second time the cock crew. And Peter called to mind the word that Jesus said unto him, before the cock crow twice,*³¹ thou

²⁵ Mark 14:63,64; compounding the Sanhedrin's confusion, the Old Testament Law on blasphemy is contained in Lev 24:10-14, '*And the son of an Israelitish woman, whose father was an Egyptian, went out among the children of Israel: and this son of the Israelitish woman and a man of Israel strove together in the camp. And the Israelitish woman's son blasphemed the name of the Lord, and cursed. And they brought him unto Moses: (and his mother's name was Shelomith, the daughter of Dibri, of the tribe of Dan:) And they put him in ward, that the mind of the Lord might be shewed them. And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Bring forth him that hath cursed without the camp, and let all that heard him lay their hands upon his head, and let all the congregation stone him.'* It is not crucifixion.

²⁶ Mark 15:1; Barclay, William, *The Gospel of John*, Vol.1, pp.53,54

²⁷ Sanh. 1:1,7:2

²⁸ possible range: 29–30AD

²⁹ 70AD, giving 30AD for the removal of that power.

³⁰ Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, 20.9.1.

³¹ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of John*, Vol.2, pp.229,230:

'There is this very interesting thing. Jesus had said that Peter would deny him three times before the cock crew. There are difficulties about that. According to Jewish ritual law, it was not lawful to keep cocks in the holy city, although we cannot be sure whether that law was kept or not....But the Romans had a certain military practice. The night was divided into four watches—6pm to 9pm; 9pm to 12 midnight; 12 midnight to 3am; and 3am to 6am. After the third watch the guard was changed and to mark the changing of the guard there was a trumpet call at 3am. That trumpet call was called, in Latin, *gallicinium*, and in Greek, *alektorophonia*, which both mean 'cockcrow.' It may well be that Jesus said to Peter: "*Before the trumpet sounds the cockcrow, you will deny me three times.*" Everyone in Jerusalem must have known that trumpet call at 3am. When sounded throughout the city that night, Peter remembered.'

*shalt deny me thrice. And when he thought thereon, he wept.*³² The problem for Peter, who did not have the gift of the Holy Spirit conferred on him at that time, was that any admission of his to being one of Jesus' disciples would have linked him to what was technically an armed uprising in the garden of Gethsemane, where Peter had cut off the ear of a servant of the High Priest with a sword.³³ The penalty for such an uprising, for a non-Roman citizen like Peter, was crucifixion. Immediately upon realising his sin, Peter repented: he wept, and bitterly at that.

Because Judæa at this time was a puppet Jewish state under the jurisdiction of the Roman Empire, the Sanhedrin did not possess the legal power to sentence a person to death. Only Roman magistrates could do this. So the assembled Jewish leaders on this night looked to find some basis for bringing Jesus before the governor, and they tried to do so swiftly since Pilate would be in Jerusalem only for the Passover festival.

To appreciate the importance of this hearing, the controversy that had attached itself to Jesus' ministry over the preceding three years must be recalled. Not only had His miracles and His claims to authority made the religious officials in Jerusalem nervous: Jesus' approach to Sabbath practice, healing, exorcism, and sinners ended up challenging the existing religious structure of Judaism [sic].

In short, Jesus was a reformer of Pharasaic and related Judaism [sic],³⁴ calling the nation of Israel to repentance, firstly through the Jews. John the Baptist had done this before Him, but there was a major difference: John prepared the way for the era of decisive reform, only calling for a heart ready to respond to the changes God might bring; Jesus claimed to bring that reform. If Jesus were left to lead the people in His unique way, Pharasaic Judaism would never be the same. In fact, it would be doomed. An official examination before the religious leaders clearly was inevitable.

It is often suggested that the Jews broke their own legal rules to bring Jesus before the Romans. Often those making this point have used it not to question the breaking of the rules but to show that Mark did not accurately understand Jewish history and blundered in writing his account of Jesus. Or worse yet, Mark and the early Christian community were skewing the facts, creating an anti-Semitic fiction, to slander the Jews by making them, and not the Roman Gentiles, responsible for Jesus' death.

The fact is that these rules, whilst not written down until about 170AD in the Mishnah, did record an older oral tradition. One section of the Mishnah, titled 'Sanhedrin,' describes the legal process required in a Jewish trial where the defendant faces possible death. It states that the High Priest should not participate in the questioning, the verdict cannot be given on the same day as the trial, and someone is required to speak on behalf of the defendant. It also notes that capital trials could not be held at night, or on the eve of a Sabbath or feast day. The sentence of death could not be pronounced on the same day as the trial, and prior examination

³² Mark 14:72

³³ Mark 14:47

³⁴ He was not in the least interested in reforming those beliefs, practices, and customs.

of witnesses, as well as independent agreement of their testimony, was required. A charge of blasphemy required the explicit pronouncing of the Divine name. Trials were to be held in an official trial chamber, not in the courtyard of the house of the High Priest.

None of these Mishnah stipulations appears in the record of Jesus' examination. But recent research shows that the Jewish leadership very likely did not view this hearing as a formal trial but more as something comparable to a grand jury inquiry, at best. Since they would not be able to make the decision to put Jesus to death, Jewish rules concerning a capital trial did not apply to this case. All they were considering was whether Jesus could be brought before the Romans as a political subversive. Could He be viewed as such a public threat that Rome would wish to remove him? This view is bolstered by the eventual mode of execution. Crucifixion was a Roman execution. Had the Jewish punishment for blasphemy been adopted, then Jesus Christ would have been stoned to death.

Given that the Sanhedrin convened in the Chamber of Hewn Stones³⁵ adjoining the Inner Temple Courts, a hastily convened night-time assembly in a courtyard can only reinforce the cursory and superficial nature of the whole affair, [and clearly not constituting a legally-convened court], the patent object of which was to get Jesus before Pilate as quickly as possible on some manufactured charge warranting the death penalty.

In an effort to find if Jesus could be tried for a political crime, the questioners began by reviewing Jesus' statements about the Temple. Already in Jesus' day the Temple had become a centre of a 'church-state' compromise in which the Romans treated the Temple with an exceptional respect. History had taught them that anything else could lead to public chaos or worse.

In light of this, Jesus' remarks about the Temple and His actions would have been considered nothing less than explosive, and it is of little surprise that the Sanhedrin focused on this potent issue. Yet Mark tells that the presentation of witnesses got nowhere with this issue: *'For many bare false witness against him, but their witness agreed not together.'*³⁶ The Sanhedrin needed to find another avenue of challenge.³⁷

At this point Caiaphas moved the inquiry toward another potential political charge. Urging Jesus to defend Himself, Caiaphas asked, *'Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?'*³⁸ Three points in this question are important. First, the term Messiah referred to the promised king of Israel, making the query a political and not just a religious one. Claiming to be the Messiah was not necessarily blasphemous in itself; for the Jews and in their understanding, it was not a claim to divinity. But a positive answer to the High Priest's question would mean that the leaders could take Jesus to Pilate and claim that He claimed to be a King who would deliver

³⁵ Hebrew: Lishcath hag-gazith.

³⁶ Mark 14:53-60

³⁷ it may be inferred that the reason that 'Armed Insurrection,' a capital offense, did not form part of the charge was that the soldier's ear had been healed (Mat 26:51-54; Mark 14:47; Luke 22:50,51; John 18:26) and possibly the two swords (Luke 22:38) had been discarded and lost in the general confusion.

³⁸ Mark 14:61

Israel from her Gentile enemies. The hope for such a King was found in the Hebrew Scriptures, was feared by King Herod at the time of Jesus' birth, and was reflected in several then recent Jewish works.

Second, the term '*Son of the Blessed One*' was a direct statement deriving from the prophesied birth of the Messiah, and His standing vis-à-vis God, as seen in Psalms, '*I will declare the decree: The Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.*'³⁹ Third, the Jewish practice of showing reverence for the name of God by not pronouncing it can be seen in the way that Caiaphas calls God '*the Blessed*.'⁴⁰

Jesus' reply, recorded in Mark, gave the leaders far more than they had dared hoped, for it was at this point that Jesus said, '*I am.*' Moreover, Jesus said '*and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.*'⁴¹ To come in the clouds was a figure of speech reserved for deity.⁴²

Though Jesus shared the sense of reverence for God's name by referring to Him as the '*Power*',⁴³ His claim was that He would be placed at God's right hand serving as the One who represents and vindicates God's people. This was more than saying He represented God's presence to the people as a priest does when he went into the earthly '*Holy of Holies*.' Jesus was claiming His own presence and authority came directly from above.

At this, Mark records that, '*the high priest rent his clothes, and saith, What need we any further witnesses? Ye have heard the blasphemy: what think ye? And they all condemned him to be guilty of death.*'⁴⁴ Anyone who understands how the Jews felt about the holiness and uniqueness of God's presence would appreciate how unusual and offensive Jesus' claim sounded. Neither is it incidental that the New Testament later used the phrase '*at the right hand*' fourteen times to proclaim Jesus' authority as the promised One of God. For the Sanhedrin, this Galilean teacher was no great luminary. Jesus simply and confidently proclaimed that this position at God's right hand would be His and that God would justify His claim to that position. In fact, He said that He would one day judge the very leaders examining Him. The real trial one day would be His. Jesus was then taken before Pilate, and accused of a trumped-up quasi-political crime.⁴⁵

³⁹ Psa 2:7

⁴⁰ Caiaphas did not use 'Hashem,' 'The Name,' which is not a name of God, q.v. sup.

⁴¹ Mat 26:64; Mark 14:62

⁴² Num 10:34; Psa 104:3; Isa 19:1

⁴³ an attribute of God, rather than a name.

⁴⁴ Mark 14:63,64

⁴⁵ Bock, Darrell L., *Christianity Today*, April 1998, article 'Jesus -v- Sanhedrin' (with added comment and clarification in square brackets; with limited modifications and alterations to accord with fact, or to bring out the fuller meaning, as required).

Pilate

The scene now shifts to the Antonia, or Praetorium. When Christ was brought before Pilate, he was hardly concerned whether Christ was making blasphemous claims against the God of the Jews. He wanted to know one thing: *'And Pilate asked him, Art thou the King of the Jews? And he answering said unto him, Thou sayest it.'*⁴⁶ The question was almost a code for any of the numerous rebels against Rome who had arisen in Palestine, rebels akin to those Pilate was holding for execution at that very time. Christ's reply was intentionally ambiguous, since to argue His case to the point of release would both countermand the will of God, and run contrary to prophecy. He responded to no further questions, for this latter reason, conforming to Isaiah, *'He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.'*⁴⁷

'Nothing better shows [the Jews'] conscienceless malignity than the crime with which they charged Him. In the Sanhedrin[*'s hasty, mock assembly*] the charge had been one of blasphemy, that He had dared to call Himself the Son of God. Before Pilate, that charge was never even mentioned. They knew that it would have carried no weight with Pilate, and that he would never have proceeded on a charge which would have seemed to him a matter of Jewish religion and superstition. The charge they levelled against Jesus was an entirely political charge, and it has all the marks of the minds in ingenuity of the Sadducees....Their charge before Pilate was really three-fold. They charged Jesus:

1. With seditious agitation;
2. With encouraging men not to pay tribute to Cæsar; and,
3. With assuming the title king. Every single item of the charge was a lie, and they knew it. They resorted to the most calculated and malicious lies in their well-nigh insane desire to eliminate Jesus.'⁴⁸

But to these charges Christ remained silent: *'And when he was accused of the chief priests and elders, he answered nothing.'*⁴⁹ This reflected Isaiah's prophecy: *'yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth,'* as did His earlier refusal to answer the fatuous charges made against Him when before Caiaphas.⁵⁰ So what was Pilate to do? 'Contemporaries like Josephus and Philo of Alexandria describe him as an extortioner, a tyrant, a blood-sucker

⁴⁶ Mark 15:2

⁴⁷ Isa 53:7; cp. Mat 27:12-14, *'he answered nothing,'* and *'he answered him to never a word.'*

⁴⁸ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Luke*, pp.289,290 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁴⁹ cf. Mark 14:60b,61a,15:3b,4b,5a

⁵⁰ Mat 26:62b,63a, *'Answerest thou nothing? What these witnesses have against thee? But Jesus held his peace.'*

and a corruptible character: “He was cruel and his hard heart knew no compassion. His day in Judæa was a reign of bribery and violence, robbery, oppression, misery, executions without fair trial, and infinite cruelty.”^{51 52}

How was it that this tyrannical enemy of the Jews yielded to their request [to crucify Jesus]? John’s gospel contains a cogent explanation: ‘*But the Jews cried out, saying, if thou let this man go, thou art not Cæsar’s friend: whosoever maketh himself a king, speaketh against Cæsar.*’⁵³

This was a dangerous political threat which clearly implied reporting Pilate to Rome for neglect of duty in acquitting a rebel. “*Making himself a king*” meant treason against the Roman emperor. According to Roman law⁵⁴ the penalty for that was death. Pilate was afraid of this unambiguous threat. He had not forgotten that the Jews had carried it out once before.

As Philo tells us, Pontius Pilate had brought to Jerusalem the golden shields bearing the emperor’s name and had hung them up in Herod’s palace in the middle of the city. That was a serious offence against the rights of the Jewish religious community which had been guaranteed by Rome. It was a challenge. He scornfully rejected their request to have the golden shields removed from the Holy City. Thereupon the Jews appealed to Rome and secured their rights. The emperor Tiberius himself ordered the removal of the golden shields. Because of this and sundry other arbitrary actions, which ran counter to Roman colonial policy, Pontius Pilate’s reputation in Rome was at a low ebb at the time of the trial.⁵⁵

Political pressure in the form of the Jewish threat of an appeal to the emperor proved beyond Pilate’s capacity to rebuff. The result was that Jesus Christ, an innocent man, was sent to His execution.

The gospels, in one way or another, describe Pilate as being reluctant to execute Christ. It may have been that he was genuinely puzzled by the prisoner. It may have been that he was caught between his contempt for this insolent Jew and his contempt for the Jewish leaders who brought the insolent One before him. According to Philo, Pilate’s conduct as prefect was characterised as being full of, ‘briberies, violence, robberies, outrages, wanton injuries, executions without trial constantly repeated, and ceaseless and supremely grievous cruelty.’⁵⁶ Not the best of men.

In light of such testimony, Pilate would evidently as soon have executed this insolent Jew as swat an insect, but he may not have wished to be seen as doing anything that favoured the Jews. A close call indeed! As to these opprobrious characteristics of Pilate, the chief priests would have been well apprised. To them, it must have appeared to have been a mere formality to have Christ’s sentence confirmed and executed in the most severe manner possible. Conceivably, there could be no alternative outcome to the matter.

⁵¹ Philo of Alexandria, 25–50AD

⁵² Keller, Werner, *The Bible as History*, pp.352,353

⁵³ John 19:12

⁵⁴ Latin: *Lex Juliana*.

⁵⁵ Keller, Werner, *The Bible as History*, pp.352,353

⁵⁶ Philo of Alexandria.

In any event, the gospels emphasise several times that Pilate could find in Christ nothing warranting capital punishment. While toying with the affair, he sent Christ to Herod Antipas.⁵⁷ As described by Luke, Antipas had come to Jerusalem for the Passover and feast, and apparently was quite delighted to see Christ, for he wanted to see a miracle at first hand. He also wanted to allay his residual fears that this was a reincarnation or resurrection of John the Baptist. But again, Christ refused to respond. Angered by such obstinacy, and with the chief priests and scribes vehemently and continuously accusing Him, Antipas encouraged his soldiers to mock Christ, and, as the cream of the jest, to attire him in '*gorgeous apparel*.'⁵⁸ Jesus, nominally a Galilean and one of the Tetrarch of Galilee's subjects, should have been accorded his ready protection against unruly Judæans, but Antipas passed the burden of decision back to Pilate.⁵⁹ Even so, '*the same day Pilate and Herod were made friends together: for before they were at enmity between themselves*.'⁶⁰

Ploy

Having had time to ruminate, Pilate decided to thwart the desires of the priestly aristocrats to get rid of Christ by adopting a ploy. He knew that the action of the Jewish religious leaders had been determined by their '*envy*' of Christ,⁶¹ and he wished to spite them publically. Sadly for the prefect, his ploy was far from perfect, and it quickly turned against him. But he did not foresee it, and proceeded. First, he had to enunciate his decision: '*And Pilate, when he had called together the chief priests and the rulers and the people, Said unto them, Ye have brought this man unto me, as one that perverteth the people: and, behold, I, having examined him before you, have found no fault in this man touching those things whereof ye accuse him: No, nor yet Herod: for I sent you to him; and, lo, nothing worthy of death is done unto him. I will therefore chastise him, and release him. (For*

⁵⁷ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Luke*, pp.30,31 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets): 'Herod Antipas had married Herodius and John rebuked him for it. Now the relationships involved in this marriage are extremely complicated. Herod the Great was a much-married man. Herod Antipas, who married Herodias and who arrested John, was the son of Herod the Great by a woman called Malthake. Herodius herself was the daughter of Aristobulus, who was also the son of Herod the Great by Mariamne, commonly called the Hasmonean. Now, as we have seen, Herod had divided up his realm between Archelaus, Herod Antipas, and Herod Philip. He had another son, also called Herod, who was his son by another Mariamne, the daughter of a high priest. This Herod had no share in his father's realms and lived as a private citizen in Rome. This Herod married Herodias. He was in fact her half-uncle, because her father, Aristobulus, and he were both sons of Herod by different wives. Herod Antipas, on a visit to Rome, seduced her from his half-brother and married her. She was at one and the same time his sister-in-law, because she was married to his half-brother, and his niece, because she was the daughter of Aristobulus, another half-brother. The whole proceeding was utterly revolting to Jewish opinion and quite contrary to Jewish law [and God's Law], and indeed improper on any standards.'

Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol.2, p.106:

'No man can rid himself of a sin by eliminating the man who confronted him with it.'

⁵⁸ Luke 23:11b

⁵⁹ Luke 23:6-11

⁶⁰ Luke 23:12

⁶¹ Mat 27:18

*of necessity he must release one unto them at the feast.)*⁶² In his befuddled state, Pilate wanted to inveigle Christ, an innocent, as the annual release of a condemned criminal: such was the mind of the man. According to the gospels, it was the custom for the Romans to acknowledge, perhaps, even appease the Jewish celebration of the Passover by pardoning one condemned criminal, as part of extensive Roman precautions to prevent political unrest at this the most potentially volatile of all of the feasts.

A rebel, Barabbas, who had been active in an insurrection against Rome, was at that time under sentence of death for murder. Pilate, perhaps hoping to play on Christ's popularity in some quarters in order to get the crowd to approve the execution of the rebel, offered the choice of releasing either Barabbas or Christ, *'The King of the Jews.'*⁶³ However, the Jewish crowd, under the influence of the chief priests and elders—*'But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitude that they should ask Barabbas, and destroy Jesus'*⁶⁴—when offered the prospect of the immediate release of an active anti-Roman rebel, responded thus: *'And they cried out all at once, saying, Away with this man, and release unto us Barabbas: (Who for a certain sedition made in the city, and for murder, was cast into prison). Pilate therefore, willing to release Jesus, spake again to them. But they cried, saying, Crucify him, crucify him. And when he said unto them the third time, Why, what evil hath he done? I have found no cause of death in him: I will therefore chastise him, and let him go. And they were instant with loud voices, requiring that he might be crucified. And the voices of them and of the chief priests prevailed. And Pilate gave sentence that it should be as they required. And he released unto them him that for sedition and murder was cast into prison, whom they had desired; but he delivered Jesus to their will.'*⁶⁵ Bar-Abbas means 'Son of the Father.' An ancient reading, 'Jesus Bar-Abbas,' while not sufficiently attested to be adopted, does give an added flavour to the name, for it means: 'The Saviour, the Son of the Father.' Here the Jews were vociferous in their clamorous support of a violent criminal guilty of the capital offences of political and armed insurrection and murder, while even more vociferous in their repudiation and condemnation of Jesus the Messiah. Is there here seen a form of dread antitype, in that the Jews, prompted by their crazed, satanically-driven religious and secular leaders, will again clamour for the soon-coming Antichrist?

A further telling passage on these events is that containing the unbelievable confession of the crowd: *'We have no king but Caesar.'*⁶⁶ 'In order to compass the death of Jesus, the Jews denied every principle they had. The most astonishing thing they said that day was: "*We have no king but Cæsar.*" Samuel's word to the people was that God alone was their king.⁶⁷ When the crown was offered to Gideon, his answer was: '*I will not*

⁶² Luke 23:13-17

⁶³ John 19:14b

⁶⁴ Mat 27:20

⁶⁵ Luke 23:18-25

⁶⁶ John 19:15; Latin: aut Cæsar aut nullus.

⁶⁷ I Sam 12:12

*rule over you, and my son will not rule over you: the Lord will rule over you.*⁶⁸ When the Romans had first come into Palestine, they had taken a census in order to arrange the normal taxation to which subject people were liable,⁶⁹ and there had been the most bloody rebellion, because the Jews insisted that God alone was their king, and to him alone they would pay tribute. When the Jewish leader said: "*We have no king but Cæsar,*" it was the most astonishing volte-face in history. The very statement must have taken Pilate's breath away, and he must have looked at them in half-bewildered, half-cynical amusement. [But in one way it was a true statement: the Jews were so utterly debased that they did worship, de facto, the pagan representation called Cæsar. He, indeed, was their 'king,' the one who ruled over them]. The Jews were prepared to abandon every principle they had in order to eliminate Jesus.

It is a terrible picture. The hatred of the Jews turned them into a maddened mob of shrieking, frenzied fanatics. In their hatred they forgot all mercy, all sense of proportion, all justice, all their principles, even God. Never in history was the insanity of hatred so vividly shown.⁷⁰

Here is a pointer, perhaps, to events at the end-time, when the Jews will readily accept the false-messiah, the Antichrist, the head of the last rising of a world-girdling Roman Empire,⁷¹ as national saviour. And to this is added the clamorous guilt acceptance in Matthew: *'When Pilate saw he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it. Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be on us, and on our children.'*⁷² This last phrase will be revisited later.

Edersheim interrogates Pilate's fateful act in '*wash[ing] his hands*': 'All reasoning having failed, Pilate had recourse to one more expedient, which, under ordinary circumstances, would have been effective [in securing the release of Jesus].⁷³ When a Judge, after having declared the innocence of the accused, actually rises from the judgement seat, and by a symbolic act pronounces the execution of the accused a judicial murder, from all participation in which he wishes solemnly to clear himself, surely no jury would persist in demanding sentence of death. But in the present instance there was even more. Although we find allusions to some such custom among the heathen, that which here took place was an essentially Jewish rite, which must have appealed the more forcibly to the Jews that it was done by Pilate. And, not only the rite, but the very words were Jewish.⁷⁴ They recall not merely the rite prescribed in Deuteronomy,⁷⁵ to mark the freedom from guilt of the

⁶⁸ Judg 8:23

⁶⁹ cp. Luke 2:1, '*And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed.*' Here, Greek: oikoumene refers to the Roman Empire rather than the whole planet, and Greek: apographo means 'enrolment' or 'registration' rather than 'taxed.'

⁷⁰ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of John*, Vol.2, p.236 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁷¹ the resurrected world-girdling Roman Empire will be regarded almost universally as the world's last human hope.

⁷² Mat 27:24,25

⁷³ Mat 28:24,25

⁷⁴ i.e., a Hebraism.

⁷⁵ Deut 21:6f.

elders of a city where untracked murder had been committed, but the very words of such Old Testament expressions as in Samuel and Psalms,⁷⁶ and in later times.⁷⁷ The Mishnah bears witness that this rite was continued.⁷⁸ As administering justice in [Judæa], Pilate must have been aware of this rite. It does not affect the question, whether or not a judge could, especially in the circumstances recorded, free himself from guilt. Certainly, he could not; but such a conduct on the part of Pilate appears so utterly unusual, as, indeed, his whole bearing towards Christ, that we can only account for it by the deep impression which Jesus had made upon him. All then more terrible would be the guilt of Jewish resistance. There is something overawing in Pilate's 'See ye to it'—a reply to the Sanhedrists' 'See thou to it,' to Judas, and in the same words. It almost seems as if the scene of mutual imputation of guilt in the garden of Eden were being re-enacted. The Mishnah tells us, that, after the solemn washing of hands of the elders and their disclaimer of guilt, the priests responded with this prayer: 'Forgive it to thy people Israel!' But here in answer to Pilate's words, came back that deep, hoarse cry: 'His blood be upon us,' and—God help us!—'on our children!' Some thirty years later, and on that very spot, was judgement pronounced against some of the best in Jerusalem; and among the three thousand, six hundred victims of the Governor's fury, of whom not a few were scourged and crucified right over against the Praetorium, were many of the noblest of the citizens of Jerusalem.⁷⁹ A few years more,⁸⁰ and hundreds of crosses bore Jewish mangled bodies within sight of Jerusalem.⁸¹

Mocking

'The [trial] scene comes to an end by saying that Pilate brought Jesus out; as....the A.V. and R.S.V. translate it, Pilate came out to the place that was called the Pavement of Gabbatha⁸²—which may mean the tessellated pavement of marble mosaic—and sat upon the judgement seat. This was the bema, on which the magistrate sat to give his official decisions. Now the verb for 'to sit' is kathizein, and that may be either transitive or intransitive; it may mean either to sit down oneself, or to seat another. Just possibly it means here that Pilate with one last mocking gesture brought Jesus out, clad in the terrible finery of the old purple robe and with His

⁷⁶ II Sam 3:28; Psa 26:6,73:13 (LXX version)

⁷⁷ Sus. Ver. 46

⁷⁸ Sot. 9.6

⁷⁹ Josephus, *Wars of the Jews*, 14.8.9

⁸⁰ in 70AD

⁸¹ Edersheim, Alfred, *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, pp.872,873 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁸² Snow, Eric V., *A Zeal for God Not According to Knowledge*, p.79, citing Albright, William F., *The Archaeology of Palestine*, p.245:

'For many centuries no record of the area where Jesus was tried before being crucified, "The Pavement," had been discovered. But Albright found that it was the court of the Tower of the Antonia. Having been the Roman military headquarters in Jerusalem, the Pavement was buried when the Emperor Hadrian rebuilt the city.'

forehead girt with the crown of thorns and the drops of blood the thorns⁸³ had wakened, and set Him in the judgement seat, and with a wave of his hand said: "Am I to crucify your king?" The apocryphal gospel of Peter says that in the mockery, they then set Jesus on the seat of judgement and said: "Judge justly, King of Israel." Justin Martyr too says that "they set Jesus on the judgement seat and said, "Give judgement for us." If that is so, what dramatic irony is there. That which was a mockery was the truth; and one day those who had mocked Jesus as judge would meet him as Judge—and would remember.

So in this dramatic trial scene we see the immutable majesty, the undaunted courage and the serene acceptance of the cross of Jesus. Never was He so regal as when men did their worst to humiliate Him.⁸⁴

Thirty pieces of silver

'It is in the interval during which Jesus was before Herod, or probably soon afterwards, that we place the last weird scene in the life of Judas, recorded by Matthew.⁸⁵ We infer this from the circumstance, that, on the return of Jesus from Herod, the Sanhedrists do not seem to have been present, since Pilate had to call them together,⁸⁶ presumably from the Temple. And here we recall that the Temple was close to the Macca-bean Palace. Lastly, the impression left on our minds is that henceforth the principal part before Pilate was sustained by 'the people,' the priests and scribes rather instigating them than conducting the case against Jesus. It may therefore well have been that, when the Sanhedrists went from the Maccabean Palace into the Temple, as might be expected on that day, only a part of them returned to the Prætorium on the summons of Pilate.

But, however that may have been, sufficient had already passed to convince Judas what the end would be. Indeed, it is difficult to believe that he could have deceived himself on this point from the first, however he had failed to realise the fact in its terrible import until after his deed [sic]. The words which Jesus had spoken to him in the garden must have burnt into his [mind]. He was among the soldiery that fell back at His look. Since then, Jesus had been led bound to Annas, to Caiaphas, to the Prætorium, to Herod. Even if Judas had not been present at any of these occasions, and we do not suppose that his conscience had allowed this, all Jerusalem must by that time have been full of the report, probably in even exaggerated form. One thing he saw: that Jesus was condemned. Judas did not 'repent' in the scriptural sense; but 'a change of mind and feeling' came over him. Even had Jesus been an ordinary man, and the relation to Him of Judas been the ordinary one, we could understand his feelings, especially considering his ardent temperament. The instant before and after sin represents the difference of feeling as portrayed in the history of the Fall of our first parents. With the commission of

⁸³ the 'crown of thorns' is thought to have been woven from *sisyphus spina christi*, the Christ-thorn, as it is commonly known. The Syrian Christ-thorn is a bush or small tree, three to five metres high, with pliant white twigs. Its stipulae have each two strong thorns which curve backwards. This plant still grows in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem.

⁸⁴ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of John*, Vol.2, pp.245,246 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁸⁵ Mat 27:3-10

⁸⁶ Luke 23:13-17; cp. Mat 27:17; possibly otherwise engaged, preparing for the Jewish Passover.

sin, all the bewitching, intoxicating influence, which incited to it, has passed away, and only the naked fact remains. All the glamour has been dispelled; all the reality abideth. If we knew it, probably scarcely one out of many criminals but would give all he has, nay, life itself, if he could recall the deed done, or awake from it to find it only an evil dream. But it cannot be; and the increasingly terrible is, that it is done, and done forever. Yet this is not 'repentance,' or, at least, God alone knows whether it is such; it may be, and in the case of Judas it only was 'change of mind and feeling' towards Jesus. Whether this might have passed into repentance, whether, if he had cast himself at the feet of Jesus, as undoubtedly he might have done, this would have been so, we need not here ask. The mind and feelings of Judas, as regarded the deed he had done, and as regarded Jesus, were now quite other; they became increasingly so with ever-growing intensity. The road, the streets, the people's faces—all seemed now to bear witness against him and for Jesus. He read it everywhere; he felt it always; he imagined it, till his whole being was on flame. What had been; what was; what would be! Heaven and earth receded from him; there were voices in the air, and pangs in the [heart]—and no escape, help, counsel, or hope anywhere.

It was despair, and his a desperate resolve. He must get rid of these thirty pieces of silver,⁸⁷ which, like thirty serpents, coiled round with terrible hissing of death. Then at least his deed would have nothing of the selfish in it: only a terrible error, a mistake, to which he had been incited by these Sanhedrists. Back to them with the money, and let them have it again! And so forward he pressed amid the wondering crowd, which would give way before that haggard face with wild eyes, that crime had made old in those few hours, till he came upon the knot of priests and Sanhedrists, perhaps at that very moment speaking of it all. A most unwelcome sight and intrusion on them, this necessary but odious figure in the drama—belonging to its past, and who should rest in obscurity. But he would be heard; nay, his words would cast the burden on them to share it with him, as with hoarse cry he broke into this: *'I have sinned—in that I have betrayed—innocent blood!'*⁸⁸ They turned from him with impatience, in contempt, as so often the seducer turns from the seduced—and, God help such, with the same fiendish guilt of hell: *'What is that to us? See thou to it!'* And presently they were again deep in conversation or consultation. For a moment he stared wildly before him, the very thirty pieces of silver that had been weighed to him, and which he had now brought back, and would fain have given them, still clutched in his hand. For a moment only, and then he wildly rushed forward, towards the sanctuary itself, probably to where the Court of Israel bounded on that of the Priests, where generally the penitents stood in waiting, while at the priests' Court the sacrifice was offered for them. He bent forward, and with all his might hurled from him those thirty pieces of silver, so that each resounded as it fell on the marble pavement.

⁸⁷ Thayer suggests the silver coins in question were Greek tetradrachmas, each equal to four drachma. This would give the total weight of silver for the thirty coins of about 15 troy ounces (c.466 gms., or just over 1lb.).

⁸⁸ Mat 27:4a

Out he rushed from the Temple, out of Jerusalem, *'into solitude.'* Whither shall it be? Down into the horrible solitude of the valley of Hinnom, the 'Tophet'⁸⁹ of old, with its ghastly memories, the Gehenna of the future, with its ghostly associations. But it was not solitude, for it teemed now with people; figures, faces, sounds. Across the valley, and up the steep sides of the mountain! We are now on 'the potter's field' of Jeremiah—somewhat to the west above where the Kidron and Hinnom valleys merge. It is cold, soft clayey soil, where the footsteps slip, or are held in clammy bonds. Here jagged rocks rise perpendicularly: perhaps there was some gnarled, bent, stunted tree. Up there he climbed to the top of that rock. Now slowly and deliberately he unwound the long girdle that held his garment. It was the girdle in which he had carried those thirty pieces of silver. He was now quite calm and collected. With that girdle he will hang himself on that tree close by, and when he has fastened it, he will throw himself off from that jagged rock.

It is done; but as, unconscious, yet not dead perhaps, he swung heavily on that branch, under the unwanted burden the girdle gave way, or perhaps the knot, which his trembling hands had made, unloosed, and he fell heavily forward among the jagged rocks beneath, and perished in the manner of which Peter reminded his fellow-disciples in the days before Pentecost.⁹⁰

But in the Temple the priests knew not what to do with these thirty pieces of money. Their unscrupulous scrupulosity came again upon them. It was not lawful to take into the Temple-treasury, for the purchase of sacred things, money that had been unlawfully gained. In such cases the Jewish law provided that the money was to be restored to the donor, and, if he insisted on giving it, that he should be induced to spend it for something for the public weal. This explains the apparent discrepancy between the accounts in the book of Acts and by Matthew. By a fiction of law the money was still considered to be Judas's, and to have been applied by him⁹¹ in the purchase of the well-known 'potter's field,' for the charitable purpose of burying in it strangers.⁹² But from henceforth the old name of 'potter's field,' became popularly changed into that of 'field of blood.'⁹³ And yet it was the act of Israel through its leaders: *'they took the thirty pieces of silver—the price of him that was valued, whom they of the children of Israel did value, and gave them for the potter's field!'* It was all theirs, though they would have fain made it all Judas': the valuing, the selling, and the purchasing. And the 'potter's field'—the very spot on which Jeremiah had been divinely directed to prophesy against Jerusalem and against Israel:⁹⁴ how was it now all fulfilled in the light of the completed sin and apostasy of the people, as prophet-ically described by Zechariah! This Tophet of Jeremiah, now that they had valued and sold at thirty shekels Israel's Messiah-

⁸⁹ Hebrew: tophet, 'drum'; once part of a king's garden in Hinnom, it became a place where people in Jerusalem sacrificed their children to the pagan god Moloch, employing much fervent drumming to conceal the screams of the children dying in the flames, cf. Isa 30:33; Jer 19:6,11-14; II Kings 23:10

⁹⁰ Acts 1:18,19

⁹¹ Acts 1:18

⁹² Mat 27:7

⁹³ Hebrew: Hagal Dema.

⁹⁴ cf. Jeremiah chpt. 19

Shepherd—truly a Tophet, and become a field of blood! Surely, not an accidental coincidence this, that it should be the place of Jeremy's announcement of judgement [sic]: not accidental, but veritably a fulfilment of his prophecy! And so to Matthew, targuming this prophecy in form as in spirit, and in true Jewish manner stringing to it the prophetic description furnished by Zechariah, sets the event before us as the fulfilment of Jeremy's prophecy.⁹⁵

The thirty pieces of silver⁹⁶ also gives the sheep dealers' estimate of Christ as that of a slave, a hired hand, to be disposed of howsoever as willed. Christ's service as a shepherd was coming to an end; He asked for His wages or no. '*Wages*'⁹⁷ means '*hire*.' And their view of Him, the guiltless One?: '*and their soul also loathed*'⁹⁸ *me*.'⁹⁹

One final interesting point can be made concerning the number of those pieces of silver. It cannot escape notice that thirty is the very 'number,' as it were, of God's throne room: God the Father, God the Son, the twenty-four elders, and the four cherubim; totalling thirty. In other words, the offence committed on that fateful day was against the entire throne of God, and each and every part of it: utterly offensive, God's people conspiring to murder His Son. The parallel with the parable of the vineyard¹⁰⁰ is inescapable, in part reading: '*But those husbandmen said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours. And they took him, and killed him, and cast him out of the vineyard.*'¹⁰¹

Further background

As further background, after the demise of Herod, Judæa became a vassal state under administration. The Romans, in pursuance of their policy of interfering as little as possible with the internal affairs of conquered provinces, granted the Jews a relatively large measure of autonomy, by the standards of the time, although the Jews had other primary interests, being 'so immersed in political and commercial schemes that they despised and ignored the happiness God had so carefully prepared for them.'¹⁰² The religious Sanhedrin continued as hitherto to exercise its jurisdiction in all cases, whither religious, civil, or capital, involving an infraction of Jewish law, and the people were allowed full freedom in their religious pursuits and practices. Acting as intermediaries between the Roman administration and the people, there came about a political function of the Sanhedrin, constituted at the will of the High Priest, and with a membership drawn largely from those politically minded of

⁹⁵ Edersheim, Alfred, *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, pp.869,871 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁹⁶ cp. sup., 15 troy ounces (c.466 gms., or just over 1lb.).

⁹⁷ Hebrew: sakkar.

⁹⁸ Hebrew: bachal, '*intense disgust*.'

⁹⁹ Zech 11:9

¹⁰⁰ Mark 12:1-12

¹⁰¹ Mark 12: 7,8

¹⁰² Dods, Marcus, *The Parables of Our Lord*, p.89

the Sadducean members. In the exercise of this quisling political function, the Sanhedrin had also to deal with cases of sedition and insurrection, but its verdict, however, was subject to review by the procurators. Unfortunately, the procurators who governed Judæa abused their power and did everything to render the lot of their Jewish subjects miserable and bitter. Most notorious among these procurators was Pilatus, otherwise known as Pontius Pilate. His vile vadministration¹⁰³ was characterised by corruption, violence, robberies, and, as has been noted, a continuing series of executions without even so much as a form of a trial.

Caring little for what would widely be regarded nowadays as the elementary human rights and feelings of his subject people, Pilate outraged Jewish religious sentiments in every possible way. Contrary to all precedent, he ordered his legionaries to carry standards bearing imperial images through the Holy City and plundered the Temple in order to construct an aqueduct. He also sought to weaken the power and influence of the Sanhedrin in religious and civil affairs by depriving them of the penal jurisdiction hitherto vested in them in capital cases which were of no concern to Rome.

Mendels describes the tumultuous changes surrounding the priesthood in the near two centuries leading up to the time of the ministry of Christ: 'After 152BCE the high priests became also the secular leaders of the emerging Jewish state, and from 104–103BCE they also were the kings of this state. When Herod the Great was crowned king of Judea by the Romans in 40BCE, the whole situation changed. Then....the Temple again became 'native' in the sense that all other native temples in the East were under Hellenistic monarchs. The Temple was divested of its dominant political role in the Jewish client state of Herod; the high priesthood became of secondary importance because the king was no longer the high priest.

When Gratus arrived to become governor of Judea in 15CE, he was given the authority to appoint high priests, as were the Roman governors following him. Thus Rome had taken over [usurped] the responsibility for the appointment of high priests, which was the last nail in the coffin of a significant Jewish nationalistic symbol, at least for the time being.¹⁰⁴

'As the ostensible leaders of the Palestinian Jewish people, the High Priests were supposedly responsible for the guidance and protection of the interests of Jewish society as a whole. But as the leaders of the Jewish aristocracy in particular, they were expected by Rome to control Jewish society in the interest of imperial order, and they were dependent on Roman power for the maintenance of their own position of power.

The provincial upper classes were, by and large, loyal to the imperial regime that guaranteed their own position. The aristocracies apparently preferred to enjoy their wealth and power rather than to risk the drastic penalties resulting from any unsuccessful revolt for independence.

¹⁰³ 27–37AD (and not 26–36AD as commonly reported).

¹⁰⁴ Mendels, Doron, *The Rise and Fall of Jewish Nationalism: Jewish and Christian Ethnicity in Ancient Palestine*, pp.295,301

The Roman system also made provision for dealing with unjustified exploitation and brutality by its governors. In many cases of unsatisfactory behaviour the governor was simply recalled. But it was also possible for the provincial authorities to bring accusations before the Senate or the Emperor. Of course, it was extremely difficult for the provincials to mount the necessary expedition of accusers to Rome, and the Senate was inclined to treat members of its own order somewhat leniently.¹⁰⁵ Nevertheless, in the large majority of known cases, the accused governors were convicted—or committed suicide before the trial.¹⁰⁶

This sheds light on the overt threat in John: *'And from thenceforth Pilate sought to release him: but the Jews cried out, saying, if thou let this man go, thou art not Cæsar's friend: whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Caesar.'*¹⁰⁷ If the Jews were to have mounted a case before Cæsar—or, more likely, the Senate—explaining that Pilate had released a king who threatened Roman authority, then, undoubtedly, Pilate would have been found guilty of treason against Rome. The entire convoluted mode of authority and redress operating in the Holy Land at that time, allied to the politics of the Jewish leaders, and the easily controlled and inflamed passions of the mob, virtually ensured the fateful outcome.

Pilate, following procedures, gladly saddled the Sanhedrin with the greater part of the responsibility of maintaining the Roman rule in the province. Theirs was the duty to order the arrest of any persons suspected of plotting against Rome, and, where there was a clear capital charge, to hand over the defendant to the Romans for actual judgement. It was before this highly politicised Sanhedrin, on one of the illegal or trumped-up 'hearings,' that Christ was brought for examination on the quasi-political charge that He had attempted to make Himself King of the Jews. There was also a potential secondary but related charge of armed revolt: *'And he said unto them, When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye anything? And they said, Nothing. Then said he unto them, But now, he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise his scrip: and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one. For I say unto you, that this that is written must yet be accomplished in me, And he was reckoned among the transgressors: for the things concerning me have an end. And they said, Lord, behold, here are two swords. And he said unto them, It is enough. And while he yet spake, behold a multitude, and he that was called Judas, one of the twelve, went before them, and drew near unto Jesus to kiss him. But Jesus said unto him, Judas, betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss? When they which were about him saw what would follow, they said unto him, Lord, shall we smite with the sword? And one of them smote the servant of the high priest, and cut off his right ear. And Jesus answered and said, Suffer ye thus far. And he touched his ear, and healed him. Then Jesus said unto the chief priests, and captains of the temple, and the elders, which were come to him, Be ye come out, as against a thief, with swords and staves? When I was daily with you in the temple, ye stretched forth no hands against me: but this is your hour, and the*

¹⁰⁵ especially during the reign of Tiberius whose chief minister, Sejanus, was a violent anti-Semite.

¹⁰⁶ Horsley, Richard A., *High Priests and the Politics of Roman Palestine*, pp.24,28,29 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

¹⁰⁷ John 19:12 (sublinear emphasis added)

*power of darkness.*¹⁰⁸ John identifies Peter as the one who chopped off the ear of the servant of the High Priest, whom he also identifies as Malchus.¹⁰⁹ The reason for the curious incident of the two swords is simply that an armed insurrection, technical though it was, would actually invoke an automatic death penalty, irrespective of any other charge laid against Christ.

One man should die

Fearing that unless they followed normal procedure in a capital charge which was considered sufficiently proven, the Jews would lose what vestiges of national independence they still managed to retain, and Caiaphas' knowing that Christ would *'gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad'*—that is, the 'lost' Israelites—and that He was the Messiah,¹¹⁰ and having persuaded the body of the Sanhedrin to follow his witting, evil plan to kill their Messiah,¹¹¹ they later handed Him over to Pilate, *'that one man should die for the people.'*¹¹² The rest is history; and yet future glory.

In a dissembling vein, founding upon a theory first propounded by Büchler,¹¹³ some wild Jewish commentators have claimed discernment of the existence of a second, and separate, formal Sanhedrin, one which was purely an ad hoc political assembly acting as the puppet of the High Priest. Presumably, this is but a crude attempt to distance the religious functions and duties of the Sanhedrin from any involvement with the crucifixion. It is patent, however, from Josephus and others, that the Sadducees of the time, despite comprising substantially of priests, were men of little religion; rather, they were freethinkers in the Hellenistic mould. They had no such intensely religious interests as the Pharisees, whom they detested, seeing them as usurpers. Politically, they were open to foreign influence. It follows that there could not be a religious Sanhedrin and a parallel political one; the nature and worldliness of the priests at the time simply would not permit of such a duality or bifurcation. Politics was their very life-blood.

'Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? for this man doeth many miracles. If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him: and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and our nation. And one of them, named Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said

¹⁰⁸ Luke 22:35-38,47-53

¹⁰⁹ John 18:10

¹¹⁰ seen in the words of the crowd: John 7:26, *'But, lo, he speaketh boldly, and they say nothing unto him. Do the rulers know indeed that this is the very Christ?'* is better translated: *'But, lo, he speaketh boldly, and they say nothing unto him. The rulers do know for certain that this is certainly the Messiah.'* The rulers knew that Jesus was the Messiah, but chose to conspire to have Him killed rather than follow Him.

¹¹¹ John 11:48-53

¹¹² John 11:50a,18:14b; isn't it strange, that when evil men design mischief, they can be overruled by God's Holy Spirit to speak oracles.

¹¹³ Büchler, Dr. Adolf, Vienna, 1902.

*unto them, Ye know nothing at all, Nor consider that it is expedient¹¹⁴ for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. And this spake he not of himself, but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation; And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad. Then from that day forth they took counsel together for to put him to death. Jesus therefore walked no more openly among the Jews; but went thence unto a country near to the wilderness, into a city called Ephraim, and there continued with his disciples. And the Jews' passover was nigh at hand: and many went out of the country up to Jerusalem before the passover, to purify themselves. Then sought they for Jesus, and spake among themselves, as they stood in the temple, What think ye, that he will not come to the feast? Now both the chief priests and the Pharisees had given a commandment, that, if any man knew where he was, he should shew it, that they might take him.'*¹¹⁵

The evil congress involved the high priests and the Pharisees, producing the concord that henceforth, and as soon as possible, they would seek to have Jesus killed.¹¹⁶ Fearful that Jesus was about to lead an insurrection against the Romans and that it would fail—with dire consequences for themselves and their privileged positions (principally), and the nation as a whole (subordinately)—they were at a loss as to what to do: they had no power over the Romans, neither could they locate and capture Jesus, pro tem.

Caiaphas, in his exalted position of high priest, however, knew the Old Testament prophecies concerning the Messiah and realised that first He should die an ignominious death, rise, ascend, and, finally, return in glory, much, much later. That time period, between the ascension and the eventual return, if handled deftly by allowing Jesus to die at the hands of the then civil power, would permit their privileged positions to remain intact and remove, so he thought, any possibility of consequent Roman retribution. Viewed by the ruling elite, it was an issue of national security and, above all, one of preserving their status, privileges, and perquisites. In adopting that stance, the evil congress set in motion the train of events that was to lead to the consummation of the ancient prophecies concerning the Messiah, particularly those contained in Isaiah.¹¹⁷

Pharisees

The Pharisees might appear to have stood aloof from the whole affair of formal judgement, even though they were represented by officers at the arrest of Christ in the garden of Gethsemane, *'Judas then, having received a band of men and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, cometh thither with lanterns and*

¹¹⁴ Greek: sumphero, 'expedient,' (K.J.V.) means 'to bring together,' so John 11:50a should read 'brings us together,' in the sense of binding formerly disparate parts to a common cause, rather than the K.J.V.'s 'is expedient for us.' A similar word, Greek: sunago, from the same root, is used correctly in v.52 where it is translated, in the K.J.V., 'gather together.'

¹¹⁵ John 11:47-57

¹¹⁶ Snow, Eric V., *A Zeal for God Not According to Knowledge*, p.105:

'They even wanted to kill Lazarus, "because on account of him many of the Jews were going away, and were believing in Jesus." (John 12:11).'

¹¹⁷ Isa 52:13-53:12

*torches and weapons,*¹¹⁸ and beforehand in the baleful deliberations in council.¹¹⁹ But their profound and fundamental differences with Christ would have had no impact upon the political charge in principio on which Christ appeared before the High Priest and his associates, if, as claimed by some apologists, they could have neither intervened nor participated, even had wished to do so. They claim that in Scripture not a single Pharisee is found specifically to have participated in the trial, much less in the decision to hand over the accused to the Romans. The phrases repeatedly used for the active participants in those particular stages of the false accusations led against Christ are: *'the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders,'* and *'the chief priests and the council.'*¹²⁰ Despite this, when taken with the content of John,¹²¹ it is virtually certain that the *'elders'* and *'council'* members included some of the Pharisaic tendency; probably a significant proportion. And, of course, a little later, when Paul was set before the Sanhedrin, a strong body of Pharisees actually sitting in the council is observed in Acts: *'But when Paul perceived that the one part were Sadduces, and the other Pharisees, he cried out in the council, Men and brethren, I am a Pharisee: of the hope and the resurrection of the dead I am called in question. And when he had so said, there arose a dissension between the Pharisees and the Sadducees: and the multitude was divided. For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit: but the Pharisees confess both.'*¹²²

Where the Pharisees are patently evident and active, however, is almost immediately after Jesus' death: *'Now the next day, that followed the day of the preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate, Saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again. Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead: so the last error should be worse than the first. Pilate said unto them, ye have a watch:¹²³ go your way, make it as sure as ye can. So they went, and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch.'*¹²⁴ Thus the Pharisees participated in the council's plotting to kill Him, participated in the council's mock trial and decision to hand Him over to the Romans, and arranged for the sepulchre to be made fast until the third day.

Jewish views

Now the prevailing view of Christ and the events both surrounding His life and after His death, as seen from the perspective of mainstream Judaism, is summed by Epstein: 'The crucifixion of Jesus put an end to all

¹¹⁸ John 18:3

¹¹⁹ John 11:47f.

¹²⁰ Mark 14:53-55; Luke 22:66

¹²¹ John 18:3, et al

¹²² Acts 23:6-8

¹²³ i.e., their own guard.

¹²⁴ Mat 27:62-66

political-national hopes which his followers had pinned on him. Instead they turned to apocalypse for an explanation of his death and sought to reassure themselves by exalting him into a heavenly Messiah who was to appear speedily on earth as a supernatural ruler. Thus arose in that century the Judæo-Christian sect which in time tore itself away from Judaism to found the Christian church. The earliest adherents of this sect were Jews in all respects but one—they regarded Jesus as the Messiah. They made no other changes. They continued to go to the Temple, and presumably to the synagogue, as they had been accustomed to do, and to all appearances conformed in every respect to the usual Jewish observances. Their belief that the Messiah had come was not a ground of division between them and other Jews. But within a few decades the Christian church under the influence of Paul was altering its conception of Jesus in a way that meant that he was no longer thought of as merely human, and implied that he was in fact a second God—a belief which was a denial of the unity of God as Jews understood the term. Once this development had taken place, accommodation of Jewish Christians within Judaism was no longer possible, and the final rift between the two became inevitable.¹²⁵

This is little more than an absurdly crude attempt to 'rationalise away' the first advent of the Messiah. To achieve this, the New Testament record of events in Acts has to be ignored, together with the record of the words of Christ and much of the specific Old Testament prophecies concerning the Messiah besides. For a ready example of Jewish persecution, before the arrival of Paul, Stephen, a Hellenist Jew, had been martyred: *'And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this he fell asleep.'*¹²⁶

Saul, who later was to be re-named Paul on the road to Damascus, was engaged in the wholesale persecution of the early Christian church, with the full authority of the High Priest: *'And Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem: and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles. And devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him. As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering into every house, and hailing men and women, committed them to prison. Therefore they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word,'*¹²⁷ *'And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest. And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they be men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem.'*¹²⁸ Such was the nature and intensity of the persecution that the Jews were willing to import Christians from as far afield as Damascus.

To adopt this Jewish view simply denies the New Testament record and also the Old Testament prophets on the subject. To suggest that in the early decades of the church the Jews and the Christians were

¹²⁵ Epstein, Isidore, *Judaism*, p.107

¹²⁶ Acts 7:59,60

¹²⁷ Acts 8:1-4

¹²⁸ Acts 9:1,2

living in peaceful co-existence when faced with the record of Jewish persecution and also the martyrdom of Christians is simply disingenuous. Before Paul was so named on the road to Damascus, he was Saul, the Pharisee who organised and promoted the systematic persecution of Christians, and who consented to the martyrdom of Stephen. The Pharisaic and Hellenistic Jews of the time were the agents of persecution and martyrdom of the early apostolic Judæo-Christian church and not their co-inhabiting brothers and fellow travellers who later split over a question of the nature of the Godhead.

The suggestion that Paul was the agent of change of the early, and therefore substantially Jewish, Christians' view of the Messiah is simply nonsense: Paul was apostle to the Gentiles, not to the Jews, and that not in Jerusalem, or Judæa. Paul changed nothing of the sort. The record of the words and deeds of Peter, however, who was one of the apostles sent to Israel, and who was based in Jerusalem, and who was, obviously, a Jew, bears out the complete continuity of doctrine in the church at Jerusalem, and which remained utterly unchanged throughout the record in the Acts, and I and II Peter, *inter alia*.

Another example of this Jewish 'rationalising process' is evident in the description used by Epstein of the flight of the apostolic church from Jerusalem before it fell to Titus.¹²⁹ 'Of all the parties and the sects that existed at the time of the Destruction, and according to an ancient source,¹³⁰ there were twenty four of them, the only one to survive the national cataclysm was the Pharisees. All the other parties failed their people in the time of dire need. The Judæo-Christians at the very outbreak of the war made for the safe retreat of Pella bey-ond the Jordan,¹³¹ while the Sadducees, Zealots, and Essenes, and all the other sects, vanished gradually from the scene. The Pharisees alone stood at their post and were left to rebuild the shattered fabric of the spiritual life of Israel.'¹³²

To suggest that the early church failed the Jews in their time of direst need is dissembling on a grand scale. It is God who added daily to the church, and if He did not add certain of the Jews, the reason is all too evident. The flight to Pella was to save that part of the early church which had been resident in Jerusalem: there was no benefit in lingering in the environs of the very Temple which Christ had damned. The Christian church knew that *'not one stone shall left upon another.'*¹³³ It had been warned to flee, and it did, and, by so doing, survived intact. The Christian remove from Jerusalem to Pella, before the Temple's destruction, was apparently motivated by the voice in the Temple on Pentecost four years earlier, saying: 'Let us remove hence.'¹³⁴ The first warning to His church came from Christ Himself, in the Olivet prophecy: *'And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judea flee to*

¹²⁹ in 70AD

¹³⁰ Jer. Talmud, *Sanhedrin*, x, 5.

¹³¹ in late summer, 68AD, when the siege of Vespasian was temporarily lifted.

¹³² Epstein, Isidore, *Judaism*, pp.111,112

¹³³ Mat 24:2b; Mark 13:2b; Luke 21:6b

¹³⁴ Josephus, *Wars of the Jews*, 6:5:3

*the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto.*¹³⁵ While clearly a dual prophecy, apparent from the balance of the warning,¹³⁶ the reference was all too clear to the early Christian church. When Jerusalem fell, believing Christians had already fled the doomed city. On that earlier feast of Pentecost, God had miraculously warned those who would heed to flee before the destruction hit, and the church fled to the north-east, to the town of Pella, beyond the river of Jordan, and to safety.

By the special providence of God, after the Romans under Cestius Gallus made their first advance toward Jerusalem, they suddenly withdrew again, in an unexpected and, indeed, impolitic manner; at which Josephus testifies his surprise, since the city might then have easily been taken. During the brief hiatus ensuing, the Christians of Jerusalem, being forewarned, were able to flee the coming wrath and retire to Pella, while others fled to mount Libanus.

According to both Clement and Hegesippus, James, step-brother of Jesus Christ, leader of the church at Jerusalem, and also known as 'James the Righteous,' was martyred by the Jews, scribes, and Pharisees by being thrown down from the parapet of the Temple, which he barely survived alive, and then, while praying for forgiveness for his murderers, he was stoned, and finally clubbed to death. Eusebius records that it was immediately after this fearful event that Titus fell on Jerusalem, and so began the siege which led to the destruction of the Second Temple, and the death and captivity of the city's inhabitants. Hertzberg describes the Jewish view of the depth of the malaise, and attempts an explanation: 'The First Temple was destroyed because of the sin of idolatry, sexual licentiousness and murder....but during the time of the Second Temple, the people were engaged in the study of Torah, and the performance of commandments and deeds of lovingkindness [sic]. Why, then, was the Second Temple destroyed? Because the people were guilty of groundless hatred. This teaches that the sin of groundless hatred is considered to be as grave as the sin of idolatry, sexual licentiousness and murder.'¹³⁷

Another device cited by Jewish defectors is through the quotation and sometimes embellishment of an excerpt intended to lay the blame squarely on Pilate and the Romans: 'Christ, the founder of the name [Christian] had undergone the death penalty in the reign of Tiberius by sentence of the procurator Pontius Pilatus.'¹³⁸

Thus, in summary, we have no involvement admitted by the Jews in the whole affair. Not guilty, or so it is claimed. But the claim of man is one thing; God's judgement is quite another. Guilt lieth wherever it must, and is neither remitted nor propitiated through obfuscation, denial, dissembling, or recension.

¹³⁵ Luke 21:21,22

¹³⁶ Luke 21:22-28

¹³⁷ Hertzberg, Arthur, *Judaism*, p.235, quoting Yoma 9b

¹³⁸ *Annals of Tacitus*, xv, 44; 'Auctor nominis eius Christus Tiberio imperitante per procuratorem Pontium Pilatum supplicio adfectus erat' (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

Death by crucifixion

The actual violence done to Christ, death by crucifixion—the Hebrew word for altar¹³⁹ means, literally, 'the slaughter-place,' an appropriate description of Calvary—was a form of capital punishment described by the Roman orator Cicero as 'the most cruel and hideous of punishments,' reserved for criminals without Roman citizenship, and usually only for rebels against the state, delinquent slaves, or the most barbarous of offenders. It was the most horrible example of a punishment designed to deter serious crime and insurrection. Perhaps invented in a somewhat different form by the Persians, and said to have been devised by Semiramis, it was spread in the Middle East by Alexander the Great. This method of execution was refined by the Romans to produce a lingering and painful death, graphically described in the following, modified for historical accuracy and detail: 'First, the condemned prisoner would be stripped, bound to a post, and given thirty-nine [thirteen times three]¹⁴⁰ or possibly more strokes with a short leather whip.¹⁴¹ The [three] thongs of the whip held tiny lead balls, deformed bronze discs, and sharp bits of sheep bone to bite into the flesh. Generally, two soldiers took turns administering the strokes. The intent was to cause so much blood loss, pain, and circulatory shock that the victim would be near death; Josephus noted that certain rebel Jews had been 'torn to pieces by the scourge before being crucified.' The torture would so weaken the condemned that his time on the cross would be shortened, possibly an unintentional mercy. In the instance of Christ, there was sleeplessness, and the added rigour of the events of the previous night and the following day.¹⁴²

By custom, the prisoner had to carry the crossbar¹⁴³ of his own cross [the instrument of his death] through the streets to the place of execution, which in Jerusalem was a bare hill outside the city walls called Golgotha, 'the place of a skull.'¹⁴⁴ There, a sturdy wooden post was permanently positioned, ready to be used

¹³⁹ Hebrew: mizbeach.

¹⁴⁰ in Num 15:37-41 and Deut 22:12, there is a commandment that Israelites wear fringes, tassels, or twisted coils on the corner of their garments to remind them of God's commandments and the necessity of obeying them. In the Jewish interpretation, as seen in their prayer shawl, the 'Tallith,' there are thirty-nine windings in each, which equals the gematria, or Kabbalistic numerical value, of the Hebrew words '*the Lord* [is] *One*,' found in Deut 6:4, and also written in the parchment incorporated in Jewish door-post Mezuzot. Christian tradition holds that this number, thirty-nine, is actually the number of stripes suffered by Jesus Christ prior to His crucifixion.

¹⁴¹ Latin: flagrum, flagellum, or plumbeta.

¹⁴² q.v. inf. for plausible explanation of the actual cause of His death.

¹⁴³ Latin: patibulum.

¹⁴⁴ the exact location of Golgotha is disputed: some place it on the site of the church of the Holy Sepulchre in the Old City of Jerusalem (in the time of Christ that location would have been outside the city walls), while others place it on the lower slopes of the mount of Olives. The former derives from custom and highly-questionable legend, while the latter derives from connections with the location of the Red Heifer sacrifice, q.v., where the heifer was bound on the temporary altar with its head pointing towards the Temple. While a crucifixion on the lower slopes is a distinct possibility (the Romans did have a propensity to crucify victims at or very near the scene of their crime, which would put the crucifixion actually in the garden of Gethsemane, where the technical armed insurrection had taken place, even though it had not formed part of the indictment against Christ, but there were two others crucified that day, and it is extremely unlikely that they too had committed their offences in the garden) correlation with the exact location of the Red Heifer sacrifice can be discounted since no crucifixions would have been allowed on the site of the Red Heifer sacrifice by the religious authorities (and the temporary altar site was not in the garden). The gaze of the heifer towards

as the upright¹⁴⁵ of the cross. When the victim arrived at the scene, he was stripped of his garments, and knocked to the ground. His arms were then stretched out over the crossbar. Judging from skeletal remains of crucifixion victims of the period, long iron nails were driven between the bones of the wrists into the wood of the crossbar, probably in the course piercing the median nerve in the wrists, and causing intense pain. Four soldiers then lifted the crossbar up and fixed it onto the upright. The crossbar was cut and mortised to fit snugly over the upright, forming a T-shaped cross. Then the victim's feet were either nailed to a wooden footrest,¹⁴⁶ or against the upright itself.¹⁴⁷

In the instance of Christ, above His head was attached a sign proclaiming the victim's name and crime.¹⁴⁸ In this case, Pilate had taken a final, ironic, and calculated offensive stab at the Jewish subjects, whom he despised: the sign read '*Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.*' [It couldn't mention a crime, of course, for there was none]. The priests, forever seeking exactitude in their vain delusion, complained that it should read that Jesus only said He was King, but Pilate remained resolute. '*What I have written, I have written,*'¹⁴⁹ was his reply. Thus it was that beneath this mocking and accusing sign, Christ started His ordeal, according to Mark, about the third hour of the day: about nine o'clock in the morning.

The pain of crucifixion often would be augmented by insects or birds of prey attacking the victim. Thirst was unbearable, as the body rapidly dehydrated. A major effect was a type of respiratory failure: as the body hung, taxing the muscles, it became increasingly difficult for the crucified to exhale. Carbon dioxide would not be fully expelled. The victim would thus be gradually asphyxiated. Death was occasionally hastened by crucifracture, or breaking each leg beneath the knee. The condemned, having lost the ability to push upright to aid breathing, soon suffocated.^{150 151}

Some commentators believe that the crucifixion of Christ was on an upright stake, rather than a cross, founding on their perception of the custom of the time, allied to the Greek translated '*cross*,'¹⁵² meaning 'a stake,

the Temple is claimed to correlate with the supposed location and orientation of Christ on the cross. One potential difficulty with this location is the distance from the tomb, for the body, taken down off the cross in considerable haste owing to the lateness of the hour and the onset of the annual Sabbath, would have had to have been transported a considerable distance to be buried. In truth, no one knows the exact location of the crucifixion, or the tomb for that matter.

¹⁴⁵ Latin: stipes.

¹⁴⁶ Latin: suppedaneum.

¹⁴⁷ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of John*, Vol.2, p.276 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'There is no mention of any wound-print in Jesus's feet [in John 20:27] because in crucifixion the feet were usually not nailed, but only loosely bound to the cross.'

¹⁴⁸ Snow, Eric V., *A Zeal for God Not According to Knowledge*, p.109:

'Now Pilate had written the atia, or formal criminal charge, and then affixed it as a titulus, or placard, over Jesus' head.' Thus it was that the formal charge against Jesus Christ was that he was: 'King of the Jews'!

¹⁴⁹ John 19:22

¹⁵⁰ others claim that death was sometimes the result of cardiac shock.

¹⁵¹ *Reader's Digest Atlas of the Bible*, pp.186,187

¹⁵² Greek: stauros.

post, or pole.¹⁵³ The potential difficulty with this view is that Simon of Cyrene could not have carried such a massive stake, capable of sustaining the weight of a man, and estimated by some to weigh 100–200kg.,¹⁵⁴ although the higher ranges seem exaggerated. The Greek word translated '*bare*,' in '*bare his cross*,'¹⁵⁵ means '*to lift, keep in suspense, and carry away*.' It does not mean to drag, haul, or roll on the ground. A stake also runs contrary to the pagan symbolism and intent vested in the cross, although this has no compelling force.

Briefly, some members of the aristocracy came to mock Him: '*And the people stood beholding. And the rulers also with them derided him, saying, He saved others; let him save himself, if he be Christ, the chosen of God*.'¹⁵⁶ This is frighteningly similar in style and content to the words used by the Devil in the earlier temptation of Christ in the wilderness. The soldiers also mocked Him. Grieving and shocked followers of Christ were also there, including many women who had followed Him since the early days of His ministry in Galilee. Also in attendance was Mary, His mother.

*'Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour.'*¹⁵⁷ 'Under the reign of Tiberias, the whole earth, or at least a celebrated province of the Roman Empire, was involved in a præternatural darkness of three hours. Even this miraculous event, which ought to have excited the wonder, the curiosity, and the devotion of mankind, passed without notice in an age of science and history. It happened during the lifetime of Seneca and the elder Pliny, who must have experienced the immediate effects, or received the earliest intelligence, of the prodigy. Each of these philosophers, in a laborious work, has recorded all the great phenomena of nature—earthquakes, meteors, comets, and eclipses—which his indefatigable curiosity could

¹⁵³ C.C.G. (Christian Churches of God), Paper 159 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets): 'The traditions associated with the crucifixion assert that Christ was crucified on a cross. This is translated from the Latin word crux. The origin and significance of the cross is [pagan]. The Companion Bible, at Appendix 162, deals with the two words translated as cross from the Greek N.T. The words are stauros and xulon. The Companion Bible notes that the Greek word stauros denotes an upright pale or stake, to which the criminals were nailed for execution. The word xulon denotes a piece of dead log or wood, or timber for fuel or any other purpose. It is not like dendron which is used of a living or green tree (as in Mat. 21:8; Rev. 7:1,3,8:7,9:4, etc.). The Appendix states that: As this latter word xulon is used for the former stauros, it shows us that the meaning of each is exactly the same. Our English word "cross" is the translation of the Latin crux; but the Greek stauros no more means a cross than the word "stick" means a "crutch." Homer uses the word stauros of an ordinary pole or stake, or single piece of timber. And this is the meaning and usage of the word throughout the Greek classics. It never means two pieces of timber placed across one another at any angle, but always of one piece alone. Hence the use of the word xulon (above) in connection with the manner of our Lord's death, and rendered tree in Acts 5:30,10:39,13:29; Gal. 3:13; 1Pet. 2:24. This is preserved in our old English Name rood or rod. See the Encycl. Brit., 11th (Camb.) ed., vol. 7, p. 505d. There is nothing in the Greek of the N.T. even to imply two pieces of timber.

The letter chi, X, the initial of the word Christ [Christos] was originally used for His name; or Xp. This was superseded by symbols, and even the first of these had four equal arms. These crosses were used as symbols of the Babylonian sun god, and are first seen on a coin of Julius Cæsar, 100–44BC. and then on a coin struck by Cæsar's heir (Augustus), 20BC, (see App. 162, p.186).'

¹⁵⁴ 220–440lbs.

¹⁵⁵ Mat 27:32; Greek: airo.

¹⁵⁶ Luke 23:35

¹⁵⁷ Mat 27:45

collect. Both the one and the other have omitted to mention the greatest phenomenon to which the mortal eye has been witness since the creation of the globe [sic].¹⁵⁸

'[John] tells us that it was on a hyssop reed that they put the sponge containing the vinegar. Now a hyssop reed is an unlikely thing to use for such a purpose, for it was only a stalk, like strong grass, and at the most two feet long. So unlikely is it that some scholars think it is a mistake for a very similar word which means a lance or a spear. But it was hyssop which John wrote and hyssop which John meant. When we go centuries back to the first Passover when the children of Israel left their slavery in Egypt, we remember how the angel of death was to walk abroad that night and to slay every first born son of the Egyptians. We remember how the Israelites were to slay the Passover lamb and were to smear the doorposts of the houses with its blood so that the avenging angel of death would pass over their houses. And the ancient instruction was: *'Take a bunch of hyssop and dip it in the blood which is in the basin, and touch the lintel and the two doorposts with the blood which is in the basin.'*¹⁵⁹ It was the blood of the Passover lamb which saved the people of God; it was the blood of Jesus which was to save the world from sin. The very mention of hyssop would take the thoughts of any Jew back to the saving blood of the Passover lamb [especially at that season], and this was John's way of saying that Jesus was the great Passover Lamb of God whose death was to save the whole world from sin.'¹⁶⁰

'[I]n the fourth gospel....Jesus suffers by His own volition, so that [His death on the] [c]ross becomes an Action rather than a Passion.'¹⁶¹ Christ died about three o'clock in the afternoon, an unusually short period on the cross. There was no need of crucifixture: when the centurions came to Him, He was already dead. The spear of the Roman soldier did not kill Christ, as some have claimed. John makes it perfectly clear: *'But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs.'*¹⁶² *But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water.*¹⁶³ A plausible explanation of such an unusually early demise is that God brought on death by rupturing Jesus' heart, and that the blood, lodging in the pericardium, separated out into red clot and limpid serum, or *'blood and water,'* letting out when pierced by the spear. It was the fourteenth day of the first month. Darkness had covered the whole land since the sixth hour, noon, and, at the ninth hour, when the Saviour died, the earth shook and the curtain in the Temple was rent in two, from top to bottom. Thus ended that most heinous suffering visited on the Messiah by the hand of man.

Silence.

¹⁵⁸ Gibbon, Edward, *Gibbon on Christianity*, p.68

¹⁵⁹ Ex 12:22

¹⁶⁰ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of John*, Vol.2, p.259 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

¹⁶¹ Caird, G. B., *The Apostolic Age*, p.102 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

¹⁶² cp. Psalms 34:20, *'He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken.'*

¹⁶³ John 19:33,34 (sublinear emphasis added)

‘Swoon’ theory

Notwithstanding the evidence to the contrary, ‘[i]t has been suggested that Jesus did not really die on the cross, that in the cool of the tomb he revived from the swoon into which He had fallen, that He succeeded in escaping from the tomb, and appeared to His friends again.

Let us think what that story involves. Jesus was scourged.¹⁶⁴ The Roman scourge was a terrible thing. The victim was bent so that his naked back was exposed. The lash was a long leather thong studded at intervals with pieces of bone and lead. It was laid on to the victim’s back and literally tore it to pieces. Few men retained consciousness after such an ordeal; many went raving mad; and not a few died. On the way to Calvary, Jesus staggered under the weight of the cross and Simon of Cyrene was impressed into the Roman service to carry it for Him.¹⁶⁵ The routine of crucifixion was gone through, and finally the spear was thrust into Jesus’s side, and out came water and blood, which was the sign of a physically broken heart.¹⁶⁶ He was clothed in the grave clothes, and bound in the long linen strips like bandages about his head and feet, strips from which Lazarus had to be freed before he could walk, according to John’s story.¹⁶⁷ Across the entrance to the tomb was rolled a stone, which the women on the way to the tomb did not know how they were to move.¹⁶⁸ How could Jesus possibly survived the lash, the cross, the spear thrust in His side? How, if he had survived, could he have freed Himself from the cocoon-like wrappings of the grave-clothes in the tomb? How, if He had freed Himself from them, could he have possibly moved the stone which closed the mouth of the tomb? And, if all these things had somehow been done, how could He have appeared to His friends as anything other than a broken figure? We have only to state the difficulties of this theory to show that they make it impossible.’¹⁶⁹

Keller adds, ‘What was the cause of Jesus’ death? Of recent years¹⁷⁰ scientific investigations carried out by medical specialists in Cologne have attempted to answer the question. In the case of a person suspended by his two hands the blood sinks very quickly into the lower half of the body. After six to twelve minutes blood pressure has dropped by fifty percent, and the pulse rate has doubled. Too little blood reaches the heart, and fainting ensues. This leads to a speedy orthostatic collapse through insufficient blood circulating to the brain and the heart. Death by crucifixion is therefore due to heart failure [coronary insufficiency].

It is a well authenticated fact that victims of crucifixion did not usually die for two days or even longer. On the vertical beam there was often a small support attached to the ‘seat’¹⁷¹ or a ‘horn.’¹⁷² If the victim hanging

¹⁶⁴ John 19:1

¹⁶⁵ Mark 15:21

¹⁶⁶ John 19:34

¹⁶⁷ John 11:44

¹⁶⁸ Mark 16:3

¹⁶⁹ Barclay, William, *And He Had Compassion*, pp.259,260 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets; sublinear emphasis added)

¹⁷⁰ book written in 1956AD

¹⁷¹ Latin: sedile.

there eased his misery from time to time by supporting himself on this, the blood returned to the upper half of his body and the faintness passed. When the torture of the crucified man was finally to be brought to an end, the “crucifragium” was proceeded with: his legs were broken below the knee with blows from a club. This meant that he could no longer ease his weight on the footrests and heart failure quickly followed.’¹⁷³

Burial

The normal Roman custom was to leave the dead body hanging on the cross for some considerable time to allow the birds to peck at it, and for it to begin to decompose, as a dread warning to others. In the case of Christ's dead body, this did not happen: *'When the even was come, there came a rich man of Arimathæa, named Joseph, who also himself was Jesus' disciple: He went to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be delivered. And when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, And laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock: and he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre, and departed.'*¹⁷⁴ Jesus was a Jew, however, and the commandment pertaining in such circumstances, as they thought, is given in Deuteronomy: *'And if a man have committed a sin worthy of death, and he be put to death, and thou hang him on a tree.'*¹⁷⁵ *His body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day; (for he that is hanged is accursed of God;) that thy land be not defiled, which the Lord thy God giveth thee for an inheritance.'*¹⁷⁶ ‘The Mishnah, the Jewish scribal law, laid down: ‘Everyone who allows the dead to remain overnight transgresses a positive command.’ The Sanhedrin actually was charged to have two burying places ready for those who had suffered the death penalty and were not to be buried in the burying place of their fathers.’¹⁷⁷

The Romans made exception for the Jews because of this. Despite Christ never having committed any sin, His bodily remains were dealt with in strict accordance with this commandment. The final call in the matter was still Pilate's, but had he contrived one final affront to the Jews by refusing consent, Christ would have been unable to complete the divine plan. And so it was not open to Pilate to deny the request; God would not have allowed him to do so.

It was thus that the body of Christ was put in the tomb, with the great stone rolled across it, and later sealed at the insistence of the chief priests and Pharisees: *'Now the next day, that followed the day of the preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate, Saying, Sir, we remember that that*

¹⁷² Latin: cornu.

¹⁷³ Keller, Werner, *The Bible as History*, pp.355,356 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

¹⁷⁴ Mat 27:57-60

¹⁷⁵ phrase used in two speeches in Acts, where the Jews (actually their religious leaders and the Roman authorities) are said to have killed Jesus, “*hanging him on a tree*,” (Acts 5:30,10:39).

¹⁷⁶ Deut 21:22,23

¹⁷⁷ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of John*, Vol.2, p.260

deceiver said, while he was yet alive, *After three days I will rise again. Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away, and say unto the people, he is risen from the dead: so the last error shall be worse than the first. Pilate said unto them, Ye have a watch: go your way, make it as sure as ye can. So they went, and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch.*¹⁷⁸ All was set: three days and three nights would be spent in that tomb, as prophesied by Christ Himself.¹⁷⁹

Guard

Questions surrounding the guard have circulated for centuries. The Jews had their own tendentious claims and concoctions at the time, but those can be dismissed from the immediate purview.¹⁸⁰

The background was very political and legal, with the chief priest and Pilate trying to pass responsibility to each other over the legal duty to dispose of the body. The legal responsibility was Roman, for they conducted the execution, so under Roman law Pilate's administration was responsible for disposal of the body, but when Joseph of Arimathæa was allowed custody of the remains by Pilate, the chief priests and the Sanhedrin were apoplectic, for that placed the responsibility back on the Jews.

The '*watch*' or '*guard*'¹⁸¹ was not the Temple guard; it was a Roman guard, for Pilate could not '*command*' a temple guard to do anything. The Greek word used¹⁸² refers to a Roman guard. When the Jewish elders and leaders asked Pilate to '*command*' that the tomb be made secure they were, in essence, asking that he take back responsibility. Pilate did not command, however, but simply said, '*you have a guard, you secure it as well as you can.*' That explains why the Roman guard could not be punished by death for dereliction of duty once the tomb's seal had been breached: Pilate had specifically refused to '*command*' them to secure it. He merely lent the chief priests and elders a Roman guard which then fell under temporary Jewish control.

The chief priests and the Pharisees concocted a story to cover the breaking of the seal and the loss of the body in the tomb: the guard fell asleep and the disciples of Christ stole the body, bolstering the lie by heavily bribing the guard and assuring them that if the matter came to governor Pilate's ears, they would persuade him that that was what happened.¹⁸³ This, again, shows that the guard could only be a Roman guard but under the direction and control of the chief priests and the Sanhedrin, for if it were but a Temple guard, there would be no need to appease Pilate (who hated the Jews and would have relished the loss of the body), and if it were a

¹⁷⁸ Mat 27:62-66

¹⁷⁹ Mat 12:40; Luke 11:29

¹⁸⁰ q.v. inf.

¹⁸¹ Mat 27:62-66

¹⁸² Greek: *koustodia*.

¹⁸³ Mat 28:12-14

Roman guard under the direction of Pilate then the penalty for admitting to sleeping on duty would be death of all members of the guard. So they didn't fall asleep; they fainted in shock, as Scripture clearly indicates.¹⁸⁴

Cross symbol

The cross is no mere accidental religious symbol. In many primitive animistic mythologies it represented the four quarters of the earth in which lived the wind and the rain gods, the celebrated bringers of fertility, often portrayed as serpents or dragons. This cross¹⁸⁵ was, in exact replica, the cross of Tau, that of the ancient Chaldeans and Egyptians. The latter's phallic emblem of the sun,¹⁸⁶ is called in magic circles to this day: 'Constantine's cross.' The true, original form of the letter 'T'—a cross—was the initial of Tammuz, otherwise known as Nimrod. It was marked in baptism on the foreheads of those initiated into the pagan Mysteries, according to Tertullian. In order to identify Tammuz with the sun, it was at times joined in or to the circle of the sun. The mystic Tau, as the symbol of the great divinity, was called the 'sign of life.'

Hislop states: 'In the Papal system, as is well known, the sign of the cross and the image of the cross are all in all. No prayer can be said, no worship engaged in, no step almost can be taken, without the frequent use of the sign of the cross. The cross is looked upon as the grand charm, as the great refuge in every season of danger, in every hour of temptation as the infallible preservative from all the powers of darkness. The cross is adored with all the homage due only to the Most High; and for anyone to call it, in the hearing of a genuine Romanist, by the Scriptural term, "*the accursed tree*," is a mortal offence. To say that such superstitious feeling for the sign of the cross, such worship as Rome pays to a wooden or metal cross, ever grew out of the saying of Paul, "*God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ*"—that is, in the doctrine of Christ crucified—is a mere absurdity, a shallow subterfuge and pretence. The magic virtues attributed to the so-called sign of the cross, the worship bestowed on it, never came from such a source. The same sign of the cross that Rome now worships was used in the Babylonian Mysteries, was applied by Paganism to the same magic purposes, was honoured with the same honours. That which is now called the Christian cross was originally no Christian emblem at all, but was the mystic Tau of the Chaldeans and Egyptians—the true original form of the letter T—the initial of the name of Tammuz—which, in Hebrew, is radically the same as ancient Chaldee, as found on coins. That mystic Tau was marked in baptism on the foreheads of those initiated in the Mysteries, and was used in every variety of way as a most sacred symbol. To identify Tammuz with the sun it was joined sometimes to the circle of the sun, and sometimes it was inserted in the circle. Whether the Maltese cross, which the Roman bishops append to their names as a symbol of their episcopal dignity, is the letter T, may be doubtful [sic]; but there seems no reason to doubt that that Maltese cross is an express symbol of the sun. The

¹⁸⁴ Mat 28:4

¹⁸⁵ Latin: crux immissa.

¹⁸⁶ Latin: labarum.

mystic Tau, as the symbol of the great divinity, was called "the sign of life;" it was used as an amulet over the heart; it was marked on the official garments of the priests, as on the official garments of the priests of Rome; it was borne by kings in their hand, as a token of their dignity / divinely-conferred authority.

The vestal virgins of Pagan Rome wore it suspended from their necklaces, as the nuns do now. The Egyptians did the same, and many of the barbarous nations with whom they had intercourse, as the Egyptian monuments bear witness. In reference to the adoring of some of these tribes, Wilkinson thus writes: "The girdle was sometimes highly ornamented; men as well as women wore earrings; and they frequently had a small cross suspended to a necklace, or to the collar of their dress. The adoption of this last was not peculiar to them; it was also appended to, or figured upon, the robes of the Rot-n-no; and traces of it may be seen in the fancy ornaments of the Rebo, showing that it was already in use as early as the fifteenth century before the Christian era." There is hardly a pagan tribe where the cross has not been found. The cross was worshipped by the pagan Celts long before the incarnation and death of Christ. "It is a fact," says Maurice, "not less remarkable than well attested, that the Druids in their groves were accustomed to select the most stately and beautiful tree as an emblem of the Deity they adored, and having cut the side branches, they affixed two of the largest of them to the highest part of the trunk, in such a manner that those branches extended on each side like the arms of a man, and, together with the body, presented the appearance of a huge cross, and on the bark, in several places, was also inscribed the letter Thau." It was worshipped in Mexico for ages before the Roman Catholic missionaries set foot there, large stone crosses being erected, probably to the "god of rain." The cross thus widely worshipped, or regarded as a sacred emblem, was the unequivocal symbol of Bacchus, the Babylonian Messiah, for he was represented with a head-band covered with crosses. This symbol of the Babylonian god is revered at this day in all the wide wastes of Tartary, where Buddhism prevails, and the way in which it is represented among them forms a striking commentary on the language applied by Rome to the Cross. "The cross," says Wilford,¹⁸⁷ "though not an object of worship among the Baud'has or Buddhists, is a favourite emblem and device among them. It is exactly the cross of the Manicheans, with leaves and flowers springing from it. This cross, putting forth leaves and flowers (and fruit also, as I am told), is called the divine tree, the tree of the gods, the tree of life and knowledge, and productive of whatever is good and desirable, and is placed in the terrestrial paradise." Compare this with the language of Rome applied to the cross, and it will be seen how exactly is the coincidence....In pagan Egypt, the Tau was the mystic sign of eternal life.¹⁸⁸ Osiris, and all the Egyptian gods, together with the Pharaohs, held it in their hands, as a symbol of divine authority and power. The handle¹⁸⁹ of their form was eventually dropped, to leave but the plain T.¹⁹⁰ The cross is the express symbol of Tammuz, the sun-god and god of fire.¹⁹¹

¹⁸⁷ Wilford, Col., *Asiatic Researches*

¹⁸⁸ Latin: crux ansata.

¹⁸⁹ Latin: ansa.

The cross was not, is not, and never will be a Christian symbol, despite its almost universal usage and association therewith. This also applies to the decussate cross: X. The accursed tree of Scripture, *'Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree,'*¹⁹² is as far removed as possible from the Roman language of the cross. In their Office of the Cross, it is called the 'Tree of Life,' and worshippers are taught thus to address it: 'Hail, O Cross, triumphal wood, true salvation of the world, among trees there is none like thee in leaf, flower, and bud....O Cross, our only hope, increase righteousness to the godly and pardon the offences of the guilty.' And it is found versified by Romanisers for use in the Church of England:

'O faithful cross, thou peerless tree,
No forest yields the like of thee,
Leaf, flower, and bud;
Sweet is the wood, and sweet the weight,
And sweet the nails that penetrate
Thee, thou sweet wood.'

This connection and reverence can also be discerned in the medieval or earlier Roman legend that when Adam left Paradise he took with him an apple or sprout from the 'tree of knowledge of good and evil,' and that from this sprang the tree from which the cross was fashioned. Alternatively, there is a legend that on Adam's grave there grew a sprig from the 'tree of life' and that from it Christ plucked the fruit of redemption. In early Roman poetry, the cross was seen as the 'tree of life' planted anew, bearing the glorious fruit of Christ's body, thus repairing the mischief wrought through misuse of the first tree. A verse in a Latin hymn used in 'Passiontide' is illustrative, being the original form of what was to become the versified obscenity now found in the Anglican Church:

'Faithful cross! Above all other,
One and only noble tree!
None in foliage, none in blossom,
None in fruit thy peer may be:
Sweetest wood and sweetest iron!
Sweetest weight is hung on thee.'¹⁹³

¹⁹⁰ Hislop, Alexander, *The Two Babylons*, p.155 footnote

¹⁹¹ Hislop, Alexander, *The Two Babylons*, pp.155,197,198 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

¹⁹² Gal 3:13

¹⁹³ in Pange Lingua.

Babylon, in its various and variegated eruptions, venerates and worships the very tree on which our Lord hung and died. All true Christianity loathes and abhors it, both for the pagan symbol that it is, and for what it was used to do. How then did this cross get into the visible, so-called 'Christian' church?

'Now this Pagan symbol seems first to have crept into the Christian church in Egypt, and generally into Africa. A statement of Tertullian, about the middle of the third century, shows how much, by that time, the church of Carthage was infected with the old leaven. Egypt, especially, which was never thoroughly evangelized, appears to have taken the lead in bringing in this pagan symbol.'¹⁹⁴

'It was not until Christianity began to be paganised that the cross came to be thought of as a Christian symbol. It was in the fifth century that crosses in churches and chambers were introduced,¹⁹⁵ while the use of crosses on steeples did not come until late in the sixth century.¹⁹⁶ Also in the sixth century, the crucifix image [a cross bearing the battered image of Jesus Christ] was introduced and its worship sanctioned by the church of Rome. It was not until the second council at Ephesus that private homes were required to possess a cross.'¹⁹⁷

Not us....or, perhaps it was!

'If Christ was *'delivered up by the settled purpose and foreknowledge of God,'*¹⁹⁸ then His death had a major part to play in the divine plan of redemption. Still more important is a phrase used in two speeches in Acts, where the Jews¹⁹⁹ are said to have killed Jesus, *'hanging him on a tree.'*²⁰⁰ This is not a description of the crucifixion which would naturally occur to a bystander. It is a quotation from Deuteronomy: *'If a man has committed a capital crime and is put to death, and you hang him on a tree, his body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but you shall bury him the same day; for he that is hanged is under God's curse.'*²⁰¹ The apostles drew attention to that curse, a curse taken vicariously by the only man who ever lived a sinless life. They sought neither to evade nor deny it.'²⁰²

Taking all the confusion and mutual suspicion and distrust together, it is little wonder that each and every party present or represented at the crucifixion first seeks an excuse, then places the blame upon another: a uniquely baleful gamut born of the pressing need of exoneration.

¹⁹⁴ Hislop, Alexander, *The Two Babylons*, p.210

¹⁹⁵ 431AD

¹⁹⁶ c.586AD

¹⁹⁷ Woodrow, Ralph, *Babylon Mystery Religion*, p.50 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

¹⁹⁸ Acts 2:23,4:28

¹⁹⁹ actually their religious leaders and the Roman authorities, with the Jewish 'rent-a-rabble' whipped into a blood-baying frenzy.

²⁰⁰ Acts 5:30,10:39; also q.v. John 18:36 (sublinear emphasis added), *'Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.'* Greek: paradidomi, translated 'delivered' in the K.J.V. means 'surrendered.'

²⁰¹ Deut 21:22f.

²⁰² Caird, G. B., *The Apostolic Age*, p.40 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

The Jews, superficially denying responsibility as has been seen, blame the Romans, but religious Jewish authorities adopt quite another position on the matter: "According to the Talmud, Jesus was executed by a proper rabbinical court for idolatry, inciting other Jews to idolatry, and contempt of rabbinical authority. All classical Jewish sources which mention his execution are quite happy to take responsibility for it; in the talmudic account the Romans are not even mentioned. The more popular accounts—which were nevertheless taken quite seriously—such as the notorious Toledot Yeshu are even worse, for in addition to the above crimes they accuse him of witchcraft."

'Moreover, the Babylonian Talmud, for what it's worth,²⁰³ taught Judaics that the Romans were favourable toward Jesus and did not want to execute Him: "Rather it must be that the case against Jesus was different, because he had close connections with the non-Jewish authorities, and those authorities were interested in his acquittal."²⁰⁴

The Roman Catholics most certainly have blamed the Jews. Indeed, until recently, there was a special Roman prayer seeking forgiveness for the evil of the Jew. It was widely held by them that the Holocaust was a direct punishment for the crime of the crucifixion, meted out by an angry God on the heads of the sinful Jews: *'His blood be on us, and on our children,'*²⁰⁵ the so-called 'Deicidal curse,' frequently evidenced by Roman Catholics in an attempt to traduce the Jews. Pope Innocent III published²⁰⁶ the official Roman Catholic doctrine that saw Jews doomed to eternal damnation for the crucifixion of Jesus. This charge of deicide was the basis for much anti-Semitism throughout the Middle Ages. It wasn't until the Second Vatican Council²⁰⁷ that Roman Catholic Church doctrine was revised or, rather, eased (but is that to prove only to be for a limited time?).

Certainly, the picture of the high priest Caiaphas—given his position as standing once a year in the Holy of Holies as the representative of the people and sprinkling the atonement blood before the Mercy Seat—accusing and condemning the very Messiah in person, was a singular obscenity beyond description. Did the high priests and religious rulers of the Jews know that Jesus was the Messiah when they conspired to have Him killed? The answer is found in Jesus' words: *'Then said they all, Art thou then the Son of God? And he said unto them, Ye say that I am.'*²⁰⁸ They had spoken of this among themselves, admitting it. They knew the full gravity and penalty of what they attempting to do, and they knew it precisely, for they were doctors of the Law.

²⁰³ Sanhedrin 43a, *Steinsaltz Talmud*, v.17, p.159

²⁰⁴ Hoffman, Michael, *Judaism Discovered*, pp.411,412,417, citing *Jewish History, Jewish Religion*, pp.97,98,118 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

The unredacted version of the Talmud is cited by Barclay, Joseph, *The Talmud*, pp.38,39, as including such descriptions of Jesus as: 'that one,' 'such a one,' 'a fool,' and 'the deceiver of Israel.'

²⁰⁵ Mat 27:25b

²⁰⁶ in 1205AD

²⁰⁷ in 1963AD

²⁰⁸ Luke 22:70

Had the scheming and devious Judas Iscariot,²⁰⁹ the betrayer for a few pieces of silver, better not been born,²¹⁰ then what worth Caiaphas?²¹¹ Christ's own words in response to Pilate concerning Caiaphas are given in John: *'Jesus answered, Thou couldst have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin.'*²¹² Caiaphas, sitting in Moses' seat, had authority vested in him by God, and this he had misused abominably. Acting under the direct influence of Satan, completely wilfully,²¹³ Caiaphas was the deliverer. Despite the obfuscation, it is clear that the principal 'movers and shakers' behind the death of Christ, working under the will and sway of Satan, were the Jewish religious authorities. Everyone and everything connected with that conspiracy, deed, and blood-bounty was cursed, with the participants yet to appear at the Great White Throne Judgement and suffer the due penalty in the second death.

Then who?

What, then, is there to be made of all the claims and counterclaims, accusations, and vilification which have been heaped upon various parties down through the ages, and, as is the case with Roman Catholicism and other like forces of darkness, frequently accompanied by pogroms, persecutions, and wholesale executions? Thankfully, there is no need for recourse to avezandum,²¹⁴ for Scripture provides the ready judgement of God.

The words of Christ are recorded in John: *'I spake that which I have seen with my Father: and ye do that which ye have seen with your father. They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham. But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God; this did not Abraham. Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they to him, We be not born of fornication; we have one father, even God. Jesus said unto them, If*

²⁰⁹ Edersheim, Alfred, *The Temple, Its Ministry and Services as they were at the time of Jesus Christ*, p.247:

'It was an unusual time to leave the paschal table, for with 'the sop dipped' into the 'Charoseth' the Pashal Supper itself had just begun.'

²¹⁰ Mat 26:24

²¹¹ cp. Luke 19:12-27, especially last verse.

²¹² John 19:11

²¹³ John 11:48-53; but Peter has another take on it, when addressing the men of Israel (cf. Acts 3:12b), in Acts 3:17 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets): *'And now brethren, I wot [i.e., 'know'] that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers.'* Given that he was speaking to the men of Israel and not the rulers, his statement is taken to be correct as to the hearing recipients but not with respect to their rulers, who must have known. This can be seen from the following verse, Acts 3:18, *'But these things, which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled.'* The rulers had the Law and the prophets before them, and the priests and scribes were charged with expounding them, so they were left without excuse. They did it knowingly. Peter's words, therefore, can be seen not only as a call to repentance to all Israel, but also a specific urging of the leaders to repent of their foul deed and be converted. Peter then addressed the rulers, Acts 4:1-12, but there was no indication of any repentance on their part.

²¹⁴ mythical place to which Scots sheriffs or judges are thought to retreat in order to consider their 'verdicts.'

God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me. Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word. Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it. And because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not.'²¹⁵

A further statement by Christ to the Jews is found in John: *'Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh 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 commandment have I received of my Father.'*²¹⁶ Their reaction, at that time, was divided: *'There was a division therefore among the Jews for these sayings. And many of them said, He hath a devil, and is mad; why hear ye him? Others said, These are not the words of him that hath a devil. Can a devil open the eyes of the blind?'*²¹⁷ although it can be seen that the majority thought Him to be mad.

However, from *'I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself,'* and from other passages,²¹⁸ it is clear that there was a voluntary laying down of life,²¹⁹ for, if Christ had so desired, He could have saved Himself from that death. But then the plan of salvation would have been frustrated, and all would have been lost. This is admirably summed by, *'Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?'*²²⁰ For Scripture to maintain, it had to be death in plenary expiation.

As seen previously, recorded is the dread desire of the people, or mob, then present in Jerusalem: *'When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it. Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be on us, and on our children.'*²²¹

Peter, in his preaching,²²² gives the first real statement of those responsible: *'Ye men of Israel,'*²²³ *hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which*

²¹⁵ John 8:38-45

²¹⁶ John 10:17,18 (sublinear emphasis added)

²¹⁷ John 10:19-21

²¹⁸ e.g., Isa 53:10-12

²¹⁹ hence an action, not a passion.

²²⁰ Mat 26:53,54

²²¹ Mat 27:24,25 (sublinear emphasis added)

²²² Greek: kerygma.

²²³ Collins, Steven M., *A Rebuttal of the Renegation of the United States / British Commonwealth Doctrine*:

'The Bible records that Jews and Israelites were still living side-by-side in the days of the early Church. Josephus, a contemporary of the early Church, states that during the time of same 'there are but two tribes in Asia and Europe subject to the Romans, while the ten tribes are beyond the Euphrates until now, and are an immense multitude, and not to be estimated by numbers.'

Josephus makes it quite clear that the 'two tribes....subject to the Romans' were Judah and Benjamin, and that the 'ten tribes' of Israel were still in Asia during the days of the early Church. Ezra chapt. 1 and Nehemiah chapt. 11 also confirm

God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should beholden of it. For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw also that the Lord was always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved: Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope: Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thy Holy One to see corruption. Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance. Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The Lord saith unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, Until I make thy foes thy footstool. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptised every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation. Then they that gladly

that only Judah and Benjamin had returned to Judæa and, with Levi, had become the ancestors of the Jews of Roman Judæa. Note also that Josephus did not regard the ten tribes as 'lost' during the 1st-century AD. He even named the Euphrates River as one of their borders. It is important that Josephus recorded that the ten tribes' population had grown very immense in Asia; it confirms the Israelites had not 'disappeared' or 'died out.' Indeed, it confirms the biblical prophecy of Hos 1:6-10 that God would make the ten tribes of Israel 'too numerous to count' after He removed them from Palestine.

At the time of Josephus, the Euphrates River had long been the recognised border between the Roman and Parthian Empires. Josephus' euphemism 'beyond Euphrates' was tantamount to saying the ten tribes were 'in Parthia.' Parthia was an immense Asian empire which stretched from the Euphrates River to India. Historians have long recognised that the Parthians, who fought many wars with Rome, were fellow tribesmen of the Sacæ Scythians. There is an immense body of evidence supporting this.

During the time of Jesus Christ and the early Church, there was a long period of 'détente' between the Roman and the Parthian Empires during which extensive travel and trade between the two empires took place. The 'wise men from the east,' Mat 2:1, who brought gold, frankincense, and myrrh to the young Jesus, were Parthians: 'Magi' and 'Wise Men' were the official titles of Parthia's priests and nobility. Acts 2:9 states that 'Parthians, Medes, Elamites and dwellers in Mesopotamia....and Asia' were present in Jerusalem to keep the Feast of Weeks. All the above-named regions were part of Parthia's empire. Verse 10 states these devout people were 'Jews and proselytes,' that is, 'non-Jews.' The 'non-Jews' were Israelites from the Parthian Empire, and Peter openly called them 'men of Israel' when he addressed them, as seen in Acts 2:22. While some seek to put a different meaning on Peter's comments, Peter, like Josephus, knew the many Parthians in his audience were Israelites and addressed them as such.'

received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. And all that believed were together, and had all things common; And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need. And they, continued daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart. Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.'²²⁴

Again, in Acts, Peter states: 'And as the lame man which was healed held Peter and John, all the people ran together unto them in the porch that is called Solomon's, greatly wondering. And when Peter saw it, he answered unto the people, Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this? or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk? The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Son Jesus; whom ye delivered up, and denied him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let him go. But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; And killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses. And his name through faith in his name hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know: yea, the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all. And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers. But these things, which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled. Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began. For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people. Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days. Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed. Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.'²²⁵ Another telling passage is to be found in Acts, where a specific mention is made of the religious rulers of the time: 'And as they spake unto the people, the priests, and the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees, came upon them, Being grieved that they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead. And they laid hands on them, and put them in hold unto the next day: for it was now eventide. Howbeit many of them which

²²⁴ Acts 2:22-47 (sublinear emphasis added)

²²⁵ Acts 3:11-26 (sublinear emphasis added)

heard the word believed; and the number of men was about five thousand. And it came to pass on the morrow, that their rulers, and elders, and scribes, And Annas the high priest, and Caiaphas, and John, and Alexander, and as many as were of the kindred 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 ye done this? Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel, If we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole; Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole. This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.²²⁶

Back to rulers & Jews

'Behold, we go up to Jerusalem: and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death, And shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify him: and the third day he shall rise again.'²²⁷ Just how heinous was the foul deed can be gauged from the words of Christ to His disciples, 'The son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be slain,'²²⁸ and to the scribes, Pharisees, and lawyers: 'Woe unto you! For ye build the sepulchres of the prophets, and your fathers killed them. Truly ye bear witness that ye allow the deeds of your fathers: for they indeed killed them, and ye built their sepulchres. Therefore also said the wisdom of God, I will send them prophets and apostles, and some of them they shall slay and persecute: That the blood of all the prophets, which was shed from the foundation of the world, may be required of this generation; From the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, which perished between the altar and the temple: verily I say unto you, It shall be required of this generation.'²²⁹ As Christ was the consummation, all evil against the prophets and apostles would be required of that generation, but this did not and could not isolate others, before or after, from guilt, for all have sinned and fallen short of the mark.

Paul addresses the matter of responsibility for the death of Jesus: 'For ye, brethren, became followers of the churches of God which in Judæa are in Christ Jesus: for ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they have of the Jews; who both killed the Lord Jesus, and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they please not God, and are contrary to all men: Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles

²²⁶ Acts 4:1-12 (sublinear emphasis added)

²²⁷ Mat 20:18,19

²²⁸ Luke 9:22

²²⁹ Luke 11:47-51

*that they might be saved, to fill up their sins alway: for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost.*²³⁰ This is a stunning indictment of the works of the Jews of the time.

It is abundantly clear from the passages led that both Christ and the apostles placed the guilt on two groupings:

1. The whole nation of Israel, not just the Jews; and, even more to the point;
2. The religious rulers and, as discussed previously, specifically, the High Priest.

That the Gentiles were to come into the kingdom through the fall of Israel is well known and rehearsed. The Jews were there representative of the whole nation of the children of Israel. Nowhere in Acts does Peter address his remarks solely to the Jews, it is always to Israel. It was the entire of Israel that had to fall, Judah could not accomplish it alone, and thus it was the children of Israel that had to take the blame for the crucifixion. This implies that in among the Jewish rabble crying out and demanding the blood of Christ on that fateful day there were also Parthian Israelites.²³¹ But in addition, the religious leaders of the time, and especially the high priest, Caiaphas, who stood in the place of Christ in the Temple rituals, had special responsibility and special guilt. This composite guilt is on the entire children of Israel and its religious leadership, and not on the Jewish people alone.

That the Romans, a form of Babylon, had to actually, physically, kill Christ was nothing other than appropriate. Anything else would have been astounding. They were, after all, the agents of the Devil, and they also stood representing the Gentiles. Sadly, to find some of the children of Israel and their religious leaders acting in concert with the agents of the Devil will not at all surprise the reader who has taken to heart the warnings concerning human nature contained in the Scriptures. That is exactly what happened, and this fascination and dalliance with the Devil has been an almost constant marker of the Israelites down through the ages, despite their covenant with God.

The early gospel message was not well received by the mass of the people. Paul says in Corinthians: *'For Christ sent me not to baptise, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ be made of none effect. For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. For the Jews require a sign,*

²³⁰ I Thes 2:14-16

²³¹ q.v. sup.

*and the Greeks seek after wisdom: But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock,²³² and unto the Greeks foolishness; But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.'*²³³

The very idea of the Messiah hanging and dying on a cross was utterly repulsive to the Jewish religious authorities. But through the whims, schemes, and devices of those wicked religious rulers, all mankind stands condemned, but they especially, through the curse and bar in Psalms.²³⁴ There is no record of prior objection or subsequent repentance in the Scriptures (other than in the instance of Joseph of Arimathæa) on the part of the religious authorities at the time. There is no salvation to be had in such an outright and persistent revolt against the King of kings. It only leads to death: the second death. When the people said, *'His blood be on us, and on our children,'*²³⁵ they took that blood on the heads of the children of Israel, not merely on the heads of the Jews alone. Thus the Roman Catholic contention that the Holocaust was the wrath of God visited upon the sinful Jew over the crucifixion of Jesus is simply fatuous nonsense, for this and for other reasons besides.

To the Jew, especially, lies this great consolation—with the realisation of what was done at Calvary finally brought home in the contrition, mourning, and godly repentance so vividly prophesied in Zechariah²³⁶—expressed archetypically in the words of Joseph to his brothers in Genesis: *'But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive.'*²³⁷ Only this time, of course, it will be Jesus Christ who saves vast numbers of His people—and forever!

But for the existence of the church, the 'elect,' the entire human race would be wiped out at the time of the end. It is to the church, the firstfruits, an holy temple unto the Lord, that Christ returns. Without the 'elect,' mankind of the endtime can have no future. This is the same 'elect' which formed the early apostolic and sub-apostolic church and which was so severely persecuted, first by the Jews, then by the Romans, and then by the Roman Empire and its apostate church.

Date of crucifixion

Sorting out the date of the crucifixion is not straightforward, mainly owing to the amount of manipulation of key data by one group. The main reference works giving times of new moons and equinoxes are written and compiled by Jews, and there is serious inherent wanting and manipulation. For example, the times of new

²³² Greek: shandalon, 'an affront.'

²³³ I Cor 1:17-24

²³⁴ Psa 69:21-28, esp. vv.22a,25,28, *'Let their table become a snare before them. Let their habitation be desolate; and let none dwell in their tents. Let them be blotted out from the book of the living, and not be written with the righteous.'*

²³⁵ Mat 27:25b

²³⁶ Zech 12:10-14

²³⁷ Gen 50:20; this can be compared with Deut 24:7, wherein kidnapping and selling incurs the death penalty for the perpetrator/s.

moons and the vernal equinox are given,²³⁸ not in Jerusalem time, but in Babylon time. The next device is to so produce the vernal equinox data that it appears to be a day later than it was. The Babylon time for the year 30AD is given as falling exactly on midnight, so a twenty-four hour shift is easily achieved through the simple device of adding the annotation, 'Midnight at the end of the given day.' To the casual observer, that puts it back twenty-four hours, with the result that the New Moon for the new year, Rosh hashanah, is put back by a whole month, rendering unworkable a Wednesday crucifixion in that year since the fourteenth day would then fall on a Thursday. Adjusting for Jerusalem time for the equinox, however, gives:

Year: 30 AD

Vernal Equinox: 21 March (c.11.23pm)

Weekday: Tuesday

and this removes any possibility of manipulation of the data to produce a one-day / one-month time-lag.²³⁹

The new moon, the dark lunar conjunction, occurred at eight o'clock in the evening of Wednesday 22 March, which was after the vernal equinox and also after sunset on that day, so the first day of the year, Rosh hashanah, was on Thursday 23 March. That means that the fourteenth of the first month fell on Wednesday 5 April, 30AD, the date of the crucifixion.

This, incidentally, serves to show what happens when the vernal equinox and the new moon occur on the same day or within a twenty-four hour period. The vernal equinox and the conjunction occur at two specific points in time, worldwide. If the equinox precedes the conjunction, then the new moon is the first day of the first month; if the conjunction precedes the equinox, Rosh hashanah is one month later.

Summary

In summary, only Christ, through conquering Satan and death, can save us, yet the blood of Christ is on all our hands. And the only means of washing it off is by repentance and forgiveness through the grace of God, seen in the conferring of the Holy Spirit. Only He can cleanse us, for He paid the penalty of our sin in our stead. We have no defence. We have all crucified Christ, and nobody can point a bloody and accusing finger at anyone else, or any nation, or any people.

This is what Scripture has to say on the matter.

²³⁸ Goldstine, H. H., *New and Full Moons 1001 BC to 1651 CE*, American Philosophical Society, 1973

²³⁹ manipulation and falsification of data to nefarious ends is commonplace. Pike, Albert, *Morals and Dogma*, p.451 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets) claims:

'The crescent and disk combined [in occult / pagan beliefs] always represent the conjunctive sun and moon,' while at the same time noting, '[in the bull, Taurus] the lunette or crescent horns, and the disk of the sun between them, are direct allusions to the important festival of the first [thus visible, crescent] new moon of the year, and there was everywhere an annual celebration of the festival of the first new moon, when the year opened with Sol and Luna in Taurus.'

The occult symbol for Taurus, ♉, clearly shows the crescent moon atop the sun, and not a dark lunar conjunction. The ancients worshipped the crescent moon. The crescent could never have symbolized the dark lunar conjunction.

Chapter 33

Sabbath to Sunday?

Beginning with Nero's attacks,²⁴⁰ the early Christian church had weathered many major Roman persecutions by the beginning of the fourth century.²⁴¹ Hadrian's anti-Jewish, anti-Sabbath decrees,²⁴² and, later, Constantine, responsible for the introduction of Sunday worship throughout the western Roman Empire by his decreeing that *'the venerable day of the sun should be the weekly day of rest,'*²⁴³ effectively starting the next one. The word 'venerable,' which means 'rendered sacred by religious or other associations,' is held by many to have marked a reversion to an ancient and co-existing pagan custom of worship.

The twenty-ninth canon of the Council of Laodicea,²⁴⁴ in bringing the full weight of the 'pre-nascent' or nascent Roman Catholic Church to bear on the matter, pronounced: 'Christians must not judaize by resting on the Sabbath, but must work on that day....and, if they can, resting then (on Sunday) as Christians. But if any be found to be judaizers, let them be anathema from Christ.'

²⁴⁰ 64AD

²⁴¹ 303AD

²⁴² issued in 135AD

²⁴³ in 321AD; the word 'venerable' means 'rendered sacred by religious or other associations,' and is held by many to mark a reversion to an ancient and co-existing pagan custom of Sunday worship. Unfortunately, no such custom obtained in either of the pagan Roman or Greek pantheonic religions, as the concept of a seven-day week was alien to them, not being adopted in any widespread form until the latter part of the third-century AD. Rather they had a monthly calendar with calends, nones, and ides, and set 'religious' days of procession and mass worship mainly based on a system of annual recurrence. It took some time for a Sunday worship / week system to become endemic throughout the empire.

²⁴⁴ c.365AD

What the pagan Roman emperor Constantine did in the fourth-century was to inaugurate an apparently simple transposition of the Sabbath on the seventh-day to the day which was dedicated to the sun-god, and that apparently on an astrological basis. The reasons behind this manoeuvre, however, are a little more complex than that. What Constantine succeeded in doing was to divorce, completely wittingly and wilfully, what thence became so-called Christian worship from the 'marker' or 'sign' of God's people: the Sabbath. In order to graft Sabbath-keeping peoples into a pagan 'supplanting system,' Constantine, a famous compromiser whose life was stained with gross crimes and duplicity, had to inaugurate a seven-day week throughout the Empire, with worship and, eventually, rest, on a Sunday—something very novel to his pagan dominion. The result of this was that his new worship system became the state religion. The day chosen by Constantine, however, did have obvious and direct, previous linkages to cultic pagan sun-worship. Zoroaster, for instance, long before had dedicated Sunday to the sun.²⁴⁵ Ignatius of Antioch, in the ninth chapter of his apocryphal, describes his readers as: '[N]o longer sabbatizing, that is, observing the Jewish [sic] Sabbath, but living in our observance of the Lord's Day,²⁴⁶ on which also our life²⁴⁷ [sic] sprang up again.'²⁴⁸

From this and many other references, such as the Didaché,²⁴⁹ it is clear that Sunday worship and other related and fundamental apostatizings were a remarkably common feature of the second- and third-centuries among so-called Christians. This seems to have come about through a reversion to pagan Babylonian beliefs in their worshipping the resurrection of the Messiah, just as the ancient pagans worshipped the resurrection of their false-messiah. Given that these early 'church apostates' believed, aberrantly, that Christ rose on a Sunday morning,²⁵⁰ they venerated Sunday and worshipped on that day, rather than on the weekly Sabbath. In this manner, pagan beliefs flooded into the very heartland of the early Christian church, and many were turned away from the truth, with a major shift occurring in the day of rest.

The formal change commanded by Constantine was backed by the full force of the Roman State to confiscate the property and ruin the lives of any Judæo-Christian who obeyed the commandments of God rather than the dictates of an apostate and repressive regime. The Council of Elvira²⁵¹ had started the formal Sunday-worship conversion. That of Nicæa²⁵² ordered all churches to observe on each and every Sunday the annual Paschal memorial of the death of Christ. A little later, the force of the nascent Roman Catholic Church was brought to bear directly on this matter with the cited decree of the Council of Laodicea. The net had closed.

²⁴⁵ by no later than 600BC.

²⁴⁶ i.e., the pagan Lord's Day of Sunday, honouring Nimrod.

²⁴⁷ i.e., Christ's.

²⁴⁸ Ignatius of Antioch, *Epistle to the Magnesians*; written c.110AD (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

²⁴⁹ anonymous and spuriously 'Christian' manual, more fully entitled *The Lord's Teaching through the Twelve Apostles to the Gentiles*, probably written in Syria, and commonly assigned to the period 100–150AD.

²⁵⁰ Christ actually rose just before or actually at the end of the Sabbath.

²⁵¹ 300AD

²⁵² 325AD

Flight to safety

By this means the Sabbath was declared a non-day.²⁵³ This was but a virtual sentence of torture and death, as all true Christians were anathematized for keeping the Sabbath. Those followers of the apostolic and early sub-apostolic Judæo-Christain church, who would not conform to the councils' decrees, fled to the wilderness regions of Armenia, out of sight beyond the mountains, and beyond the boundaries of the Roman Empire. From that time it appears that they were frequently called Paulicians²⁵⁴ in Armenia, a term dating to the seventh- or eighth-century.

By the time of the 'non-day,' Polycarp, Polycrates and others had long-since died: most being martyred. The church was about to go into hiding, beyond the hills, and beyond the confines of the Roman Empire, for the purposes of its very survival, for the time, times, and half a time equating with one thousand, two hundred and sixty years.²⁵⁵ In the intervening period only slight signs and brief outcrops occur to indicate that it even existed at all. But one thing can be certain: it did exist, even though frequently in fragmented, scattered, and rather disparate forms, even unknown to one another, because Christ promised never to leave His church: *'Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.'*²⁵⁶

Dark Ages

A few years later,²⁵⁷ Augustine declared: 'The holy doctors of the church have decreed that all glory of the Jewish Sabbath is transferred to it [Sunday]. Let us therefore keep the Lord's Day [Sunday] as the ancients were commanded to do the Sabbath.' Gregory records that in the west, the pope specifically anathematised '[t]hose who taught that it was not lawful to do work on the day of the Sabbath.'²⁵⁸ Sabbath keeping was completely obliterated from Rome by the sixth-century.²⁵⁹ The Eastern Churches extirpated Sabbath observance in about another four hundred years or so.²⁶⁰

'Theodosius forbade²⁶¹ on the Lord's Day²⁶² all litigation, and all spectacles in the theatre or in the circus. Later,²⁶³ the Council of Orleans forbade the field work that the previous edicts had allowed, and the

²⁵³ Latin: dies non

²⁵⁴ Conybeare, F. C., *The Key of Truth*.

²⁵⁵ on the 'day for a year' basis.

²⁵⁶ Mat 28:20

²⁵⁷ c.400AD; (added comment and clarification in square brackets)

²⁵⁸ Gregory of Rome, *History of the Popes*, Vol. II, p.378

²⁵⁹ Andrews, John Nevins, *History of the Sabbath and the First Day of the Week*, p.375

²⁶⁰ c.1000AD

²⁶¹ in 386AD

²⁶² viz., Sunday.

²⁶³ in 538AD

Council of Macon²⁶⁴ ordained a complete cessation of business, and declared that the Lord's Day was a day of perpetual rest....Alcuin²⁶⁵ was the first to identify [or conflate] the Sabbath and the Lord's Day. All work on the Lord's Day became a breach of the fourth commandment....

There is one astonishing thing to be said. It is true that work was forbidden, but the odd and curious thing is that amusement was not forbidden. The only things forbidden up the end of the fifteenth-century were dancing, the singing of ribald songs, theatrical performances, and races in the circus, and, in the sixteenth-century there were complaints about the markets, the open shops, the hawking, the dicing, the sports, the conjuring, the theatrical performances, the dancing, the singing, and the revelry which marked the Sunday....

There followed a time of sway and conflict, the legacy of which is not yet fully past. This may be seen in the vicissitudes of a little book written by James I.²⁶⁶ It was entitled *The King's Majesty's Proclamation to his Subjects concerning Lawful Sports to be used*, and is commonly called *The Book of Sports*. It was an insistence of the right of the people to enjoy all traditional pastimes on the Sunday except bull and bear baiting. It first saw the light of day early in the seventeenth century.²⁶⁷ It was republished by Charles I²⁶⁸ with instructions to Justices that all disorders should be duly punished but that 'all neighbourhood and freedom with mankind and lawful exercises be used.' And then, a decade later,²⁶⁹ that same book,²⁷⁰ the voices of two kings, was publically burned by the public hangman.'

Pre-reformation period

The beginnings of a re-emergence, or the events that paved the way for same, can be seen in the Pre-Reformation period, when the Bible was to begin to become much more widely available through the printing press,²⁷¹ and to be available in the languages of the people. John Wycliffe,²⁷² a noted English scholar, was the first to translate the Bible into the English language. John Huss²⁷³ in Prague was greatly influenced by the work of Wycliffe²⁷⁴ and his work led to the establishment of a group of Sabbath keepers in eastern Europe. Like so

²⁶⁴ in 585AD

²⁶⁵ 735–804AD

²⁶⁶ James, Rex, I, *The King's Majesty's Proclamation to his Subjects concerning Lawful Sports to be Used*.

²⁶⁷ in 1618AD

²⁶⁸ in 1633AD

²⁶⁹ in 1643AD

²⁷⁰ Barclay, William, *The Plain Man's Guide to Ethics*, pp.33,34,36 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

²⁷¹ e.g., the Gutenberg Press, 1450AD.

²⁷² 1320–1384AD

²⁷³ Jan Hus.

²⁷⁴ Latourette, Kenneth Scott, *A History of Christianity, Beginnings to 1500*, Vol. I, p.664:

'Wycliffe taught that the true church is made up of those elected by God and is invisible, and that since it is God's choice which determines membership, no visible church or its officers can control entrance or can exclude membership.'

many in the past, Huss was excommunicated from the Roman Catholic Church and subsequently executed by being burned at the stake.²⁷⁵ The work of Wycliffe and Huss laid part of the foundations leading to the outbreaks of Sabbath keeping and adherence to literal biblical truth from the fourteenth-century onwards. The influence of a group known as the Lollards, formed in Germany, eventually brought the Word of God to the British Isles in the language of the populace, and in relatively wide-scale form. In the late nineteenth-century, the *Jewish Quarterly Review* contained a review article discussing the part the seventh-day Sabbath plays in different religions: 'The celebration of the Sabbath is as much a common religious institution, as one of the most obvious marks of distinction between Judaism and Christianity. On the one hand, the whole Christian world observes each seventh day as a hallowed day of rest, thus to some extent pointing from week to week in the most solemn and in the most general and public manner, to the origin of Christianity: on the other hand, it is just by means of this Sabbath celebration—by ordaining that the Sabbath should be observed on a different day from that on which the people of Israel and the founders of Christianity themselves kept it—that Christianity has set itself in conscious and intentional opposition to the first possessors and inheritors of this great institution. Thus what was the mark of uniformity became a mark of diversity, and the separate observance of the seventh day developed into the most effective cause of separation between the Christian community and the adherents of the Jewish faith.'²⁷⁶

The same review then discusses some people in Poland and Russia in the sixteenth-century who kept the Sabbath: 'people called the Subotniki or Sobbotniki; all of these sects belonged to the Russian sect, Molokani or milk drinkers, and all of these sects displayed a Judaising tendency.'

Chief Rabbi Kohn says of the Puritans, the Bohemians, and the English: 'Several leaders and preachers of the Puritans have re-transferred the rest day from Sunday to Saturday'²⁷⁷....'In Bohemia, Sabbatarians sprung up as early as 1520AD. Such Sabbatarians, or similar sects, we meet about 1545AD among the Quakers in England.'²⁷⁸

All of these, generically called Sabbatarians, spread their faith through preaching and, in many cases, song. It is claimed from discovery of their hymns that they not only kept the Sabbath but also the annual Holy Days. They also helped feed the poor and believed in moderate living. It is said that they sang with joy of their anticipation of the Second Coming and the millennial reign of Christ on earth, although it is unclear exactly how closely they kept the Law and other precepts of true Christianity, and which calendar system they used.²⁷⁹

²⁷⁵ 1415AD

²⁷⁶ *Jewish Quarterly Review*, July 1890AD edition, article by Abrahams and Montefiori.

²⁷⁷ observed and possibly written in 1534AD.

²⁷⁸ Kohn, Chief Rabbi, Hungary, *Sabbatarians in Transylvania*, 1894AD edition, p.38

²⁷⁹ Patai, Raphael, *The Jewish Mind*, p.183, identifies the Molokans as part of a greater and very varied Russian sectarian movement, some of whom 'tried to achieve direct links with God by vigorous group action: wrestling, drinking, flagellation, and even self-castration.'

Renaissance, Reformation, & re-appearance

The Renaissance had ushered in a yearning for learning and a great zeal for questioning formerly-held positions free from the coercion of the Roman church. The continually changing world of the Reformation and Post-Reformation period opened up opportunities for the true Christian church to flourish, firstly in England, then in America. Churchill, in his opus magna, observed: 'New ideas were in debate, not only on religious doctrine and Church government, but on the very nature and foundations of political power. In the great turmoil of Europe, silence was impossible. Men talked: secretly to one another, openly in their writings, which were now printed in a thousand copies, kindling excitement and curiosity wherever they were carried. Even if it were granted that Affairs of State could only be lawfully debated by those called thereto, common men could still search the Scriptures, and try the doctrines of the Church, its government, its rites and ceremonies, by the words of the Evangelist and Apostles.'²⁸⁰

The England of Henry VIII and Elizabeth I provided a limited but stable haven for the propagation of the true faith, always assuming, of course, that it did not at any time threaten the established church or the state. The dispute between Henry VIII and the pope over the need or otherwise for his consent to Henry's divorce and subsequent remarriage led to a serious rift with Rome. The miraculous escape of Britain,²⁸¹ during the reign of Elizabeth I, from the Armada of Philip II of Spain and the partial destruction of his one thousand ship fleet, brought about a feeling of renewed reliance on God.²⁸² It was thus that the conditions necessary for the propagation of the true faith came to be evident.

About this time, a number of people began to write and campaign in favour of the Sabbath and on the duty of the state to impose nothing contrary to the Word of God. Among them was Traske;²⁸³ another was Brabourne who wrote a book²⁸⁴ where he argued: 'That the Lord's Day (Sunday) is not the Sabbath Day by Divine Institution' but 'That the seventh day Sabbath is now in force.'²⁸⁵

America

Come the second moiety of the seventeenth century,²⁸⁶ however, a new wave of persecution had begun with John James being hanged, drawn, and quartered for his preaching seventh-day observance. Freedom to openly worship on the Sabbath was only just beginning in seventeenth-century England, with progress

²⁸⁰ Churchill, Winston, *History of the English Speaking Peoples*, Vol. 2, 'The New World,' pp.105,106

²⁸¹ in 1588AD

²⁸² one of the medals struck to commemorate the great English victory bears the inscription Latin: 'Afflavit Deus et Dissipantur,' 'God blew and they were scattered.'

²⁸³ Traske, John.

²⁸⁴ in 1628AD

²⁸⁵ Brabourne, Theophilus, later wrote: *A Defense of that Most Ancient and Sacred Ordinance of God, the Sabbath Day*, expressing the same sentiment.

²⁸⁶ in the 1660s

seeming so slow that it appeared all but indiscernible. It became increasingly clear that the church would have to find a safer haven, a place where it could grow and prosper without harassment; this despite the 'protection' of the Magna Carta. It was thus that Sabbath-keeping took root in the New World, in the American colonies. The church did not die out in the British Isles, but it did suffer persecution nonetheless.

As the observance of the Sabbath was passed on from generation to generation, and Western society grew ever more materialistic and superficial, certain changes came about in attitudes to the seventh-day. In twentieth-century North America, even in outwardly 'observant' organisations,²⁸⁷ many lax and profane customs crept in on the Sabbath: restaurant-going in the name of 'fellowship,' watching television, making phone calls, and, in the majority of cases, travelling by private or public transport to attend services.

The latter was a subject of dispute in certain quarters in the 1960s and '70s of The Worldwide Church of God. One group²⁸⁸ took the stance that travelling to Sabbath services was mandatory, almost irrespective of the distance and time taken. In the United States some members were making round-trips of about four hundred miles²⁸⁹ on the Sabbath to attend services. Others questioned the very idea of travelling by transport rather than walking on the basis that it profaned the Sabbath by working. The tract quoted by the hierarchical ministry in support of its insistence on compulsory attendance every week was: *'And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, Concerning the feasts of the Lord, which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations, even these are my feasts. Six days shalt work be done: but the seventh day is a sabbath of rest,'²⁹⁰ an holy convocation; ye shall do no work therein: it is the sabbath of the Lord in all your dwellings.'*²⁹¹

On a mere cursory reading this would appear sound and unassailable, save for the concluding phrase proscribing work, but it is based on a peculiar translation, for there are words in the second verse inserted in the K.J.V. translation—'*concerning*,' '*to be*,' and '*even*'—which do not appear in the Hebrew, and there is also the misleading translation '*convocation*' instead of '*proclamation*.'²⁹² The correct translation reads therefore: '*The feasts of the Lord, which ye shall proclaim holy proclamations, these are my feasts.*'²⁹³

There is no '*convocation*' commandment here; rather it is a commandment to proclaim the day as holy. The only God-commanded convocations / assemblies in Scripture are at the three feasts in Jerusalem.²⁹⁴ Now,

²⁸⁷ such as the self-promoting Radio Church of God, later the Worldwide Church of God.

²⁸⁸ Worldwide Church of God.

²⁸⁹ 640km.

²⁹⁰ Hebrew: shabbat shabbathown; q.v. inf. for correct translation.

²⁹¹ Lev 23:1-3 (sublinear emphasis added)

²⁹² Hebrew: migra; root gara meaning to '*call out*,' the very word translated '*proclaim*' in the same verse!

²⁹³ Tanakh rendering of the original Hebrew is much more faithful in the words '*sacred occasion*,' than is the K.J.V.'s '*holy convocation*.' Lev 23:2 '*feasts*' which refers, inter alia, to the weekly Sabbath (as a set time, not a feast), does not appear in the Tanakh, where it is translated, '*set times*.'

²⁹⁴ Deut 16:16

*'Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is,'*²⁹⁵ refers to the Greek²⁹⁶ meaning *'upon'* or *'toward the synagogue,'* translated *'assembling'*—this, the Jewish place of assembly on the Sabbath,²⁹⁷ and also on other days of the week for study and discussion. This might appear to bolster the hierarchical position, but on closer inspection it confirms the opposite. Jews would never travel more than a Sabbath day's journey²⁹⁸ to attend a synagogue on the Sabbath, and certainly would never travel by any means of transport, public or private. Jewish synagogue attendance was never a God-commanded assembly, but the synagogue, in the first-century, before the exclusion of the Christians, was, together with church-houses, the natural place of study and assembly for the nascent Judæo-Christian church.

*[T]he sabbath of the Lord in all your dwellings,'*²⁹⁹ is apposite, for it mentions *'dwellings'* or houses, as does, *'See for that the Lord hath given you the sabbath, therefore he giveth you on the sixth day the bread of*

²⁹⁵ Heb 10:25a; Heb 10:25, *'Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.'*

The word *'assembling'* comes from Greek: *episuagonimi*, literally meaning *'over synagogue,'* or *'over assembly (epi-* meaning *'above,' 'over,' 'upon,'* or *'addition')*. It cannot and does not refer to the weekly synagogue or the weekly assembly. The over-assembly, to which *'the day approaching'* is linked, is a reference to the end-time assembly in the sky, i.e., the wedding-feast of the Lamb, q.v. The same Greek word is used in II Thes 2:1, *'Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him,'* and Mat 24:31, *'And he shall send his angels with the great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven [should read 'sky'] to the other,'* patent references to the gathering or over-assembly in the sky, the wedding feast of the Lamb.

²⁹⁶ Greek: *episunagoge*.

²⁹⁷ Hebrew: *beit kneset*, translated *'synagogue,'* meaning *'meeting house.'*

²⁹⁸ 1,000 paces beyond city walls, or in villages; Buckland, A. R., and Williams, A. Lukyn, *The Universal Bible Dictionary*, p.66:

'Bethany lies two miles from Jerusalem.'

The round trip, therefore, would be four miles, or was a Sabbath Day's journey just one way? Could someone living in Bethany travel to and return from the Temple on the Sabbath? It would appear so, for did not the Lord do so?....or did they return the following day? (cursed fig tree etc.).

Christ's return to the mount of Olives could well be on its east side, cf. Luke 24:50, where the ascension took place *'near unto Bethany.'*

John 11:18, Bethany was *'about fifteen furlongs from Jerusalem.'*

A Sabbath day's journey, Acts 1:12, to the mount of Olivet appears ambiguous, so could be read either way. A reasonable conclusion, on this basis, for safety, is that a Sabbath day's journey seems to have been about two miles.

²⁹⁹ Lev 23:3c; Lev 23:4, *'These are the feasts of the Lord, even holy convocations, which ye shall proclaim in their seasons.'* This is a particularly poor translation. *'Feasts'* comes from the Hebrew: *moed*, meaning *'an appointed time,'* as does the later word *'seasons.'* *'Convocations'* comes from Hebrew: *miqra*, meaning *'occasions,' 'proclamations,' 'invitations,' 'callings out,'* and *'recitations.'* Thus a more accurate and safer translation would be: *'These are the appointed times of the Lord, holy proclamations (or 'occasions,' per the Tanakh), which ye shall proclaim in their appointed times.'*

Calvin, John, *Commentary on Daniel*, Vol. 2, pp.67,69 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'God never separates his hand from his mouth—meaning, he is never unlike himself, but his power follows up his word, and thus he fulfils whatever he declares; this becomes a sure and firm foundation for our faith.'

'[N]otice the noun moed, because it is here opposed to our fervour and intemperance. Haste in desiring anything leads, as they say, to delay; for as soon as God bears witness to anything, we wish it to be fulfilled at the very first moment, and if he suspend its execution only a very few days, we not only wonder but cry out with vexation. God, therefore, here admonishes us by his angel that he has a settled time, and thus we are to learn to put a bridle on ourselves, and not to be rash and unseasonably hasty, according to our usual habit.'

Eccl 3:1, *'To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven.'*

*two days; abide ye every man in his place, let no man go out of his place on the seventh day.*³⁰⁰ There is no travelling 'work' to remote Sabbath services sanctioned in any of this, for the Sabbath should be kept in the home, in the family dwelling-place, or in nearby meeting houses within walking-distance. Like much else, the hierarchical ministry simply had it woefully wrong.

And so to the present day. The true Sabbath is kept as a '*sabbath of rest*³⁰¹....do[ing] no work therein.'³⁰² It is free from all work activity, including cooking, cleaning, recreational pursuits, travel, electronic communications, and all the rest of it, leaving the time available for study, prayer, praise, and, where possible—given the fragmented nature of the church—fellowship. A true day of rest, on the true day of rest: God's Holy Sabbath.³⁰³

The matter of the historical record of the attempted subversion of the Sabbath is dealt with in considerably more detail by Bacchiocchi.³⁰⁴

Bacchiocchi dissertation

'Briefly stated, there are two major views today regarding the historical origin of Sunday and its relationship to the biblical Sabbath. The older and traditional view, which can be traced back to early Christianity, maintains that there is a radical discontinuity between the Sabbath and Sunday, and consequently Sunday is not the Sabbath. The two days differ in origin, meaning, and experience. The more recent view, which is articulated by Pope John Paul II in his Pastoral Letter *Dies Domini*, maintains that Sunday began as the embodiment and "full expression" of the Sabbath, and consequently it is to be observed as a biblical imperative, rooted in the Sabbath commandment itself.

According to the traditional view, which has been held by the Roman Catholic Church and accepted by those Protestant denominations which follow the Lutheran tradition, the Sabbath was a temporary Mosaic institution given to the Jews, abrogated by Christ, and consequently no longer binding today. Christians adopted Sunday observance, not as the continuation of the biblical Sabbath, but as a new institution established by the church to celebrate Christ's resurrection by means of the Lord's Supper celebration.

The word '*season*,' from the Hebrew: *moed*, again means '*appointed time*.' Thus, to everything there is an appointed time; a specific time appointed by God.

³⁰⁰ Ex 16:29

³⁰¹ Hebrew: *shabbat shabbathown*, a complete ceasing of all, including diminutive matters, since *shabbat* means, correctly, '*ceasing*,' and *shabbathown*, a derivative and functional diminutive of *shabbat*, means a lesser degree of that ceasing, the *-own* suffix importing the added meaning of emphasis or a singling out; cf. 'Sabbath Day Activities' table in Appendix.

³⁰² Ex 20:9-11

³⁰³ cf. 'Sabbath Day Activities' table in Appendix.

³⁰⁴ Bacchiocchi, Dr. Samuele, Seventh-Day Adventist.

This traditional position has been held by the Roman Catholic Church which has claimed the responsibility for changing the Sabbath to Sunday. For example, Thomas Aquinas,³⁰⁵ regarded as the greatest Catholic theologian who ever lived, explicitly states: "The observance of the Lord's Day took the place of the observance of the Sabbath not by virtue of the [Biblical] precept but by the institution of the church." This view has been reiterated through the centuries in standard Catholic catechisms where a statement like this is usually found: "We observe Sunday rather than Saturday because the Catholic church by virtue of her authority has transferred the solemnity of the Sabbath to Sunday."

Recently, however, there have been both Catholic and Protestant scholars who have argued for an apostolic origin of Sunday observance. According to these scholars, the Apostles themselves chose the first day of the week as the new Christian Sabbath at the very beginning of Christianity in order to commemorate Christ's resurrection.

This view is defended at great length by Pope John Paul II in his Pastoral Letter, *Dies Domini*.³⁰⁶ In this lengthy document,³⁰⁷ the Pope makes a passionate plea for a revival of Sunday observance by appealing to the moral imperative of the Sabbath commandment. For the Pope Sunday is to be observed not merely as an institution established by the Catholic church, but as a moral imperative of the Decalogue. The reason is that Sunday allegedly originated as the embodiment and "full expression" of the Sabbath; consequently it should be observed as the biblical Sabbath.

John Paul departs from the traditional Catholic position presumably because he wishes to challenge Christians to respect Sunday, not merely as an institution of the Catholic church, but as a divine command. Furthermore, by rooting Sunday keeping in the Sabbath commandment, the Pope offers the strongest moral reasons for urging Christians "to ensure that civil legislation respects their duty to keep Sunday holy."

The attempts made by the Pope and other church leaders to ground Sunday observance on the Sabbath commandment raises this important question: "If Christians are expected to observe Sunday as the Biblical Sabbath, why should not they observe the Sabbath in the first place?" What was wrong with the biblical Sabbath that needed to be changed to Sunday? To apply the Sabbath Commandment to the observance of the first day of the week, Sunday, can be confusing to say the least, because the Fourth Commandment enjoins the observance of the seventh day, not the first day....

For the sake of clarity, let me state at the outset the conclusion of my investigation. Simply stated, my analysis of the biblical and historical texts indicate that the change from Sabbath to Sunday did not come about at the beginning of Christianity by the authority of Christ or the Apostles who allegedly chose the first day of the week as the new Christian Sabbath to celebrate Christ's resurrection. Rather the change began about a century

³⁰⁵ 1225–74

³⁰⁶ 'The Lord's Day,' promulgated 31 May, 1998AD.

³⁰⁷ over 40pp.

after Christ's death during the reign of the Roman Emperor Hadrian,³⁰⁸ as a result of an interplay of political, social, pagan and religious factors to be mentioned shortly. Essentially, it was the necessity to avoid the repressive anti-Jewish and anti-Sabbath legislation promulgated in (that year) by Emperor Hadrian that caused the Bishop of Rome to pioneer the change from Sabbath to Sunday and from Passover to Easter-Sunday. These changes were designed to show the Christian separation and differentiation from the Jews at a time when Jewish religious practices were outlawed by the Roman government.

The implication of this conclusion is that the change from Saturday to Sunday was not merely a change of names or numbers, but a change of meaning, authority, and experience. To help you see how I reached this conclusion, I will take you step by step through the major parts of my research. We begin by examining first the alleged role of Christ, of His resurrection and of the Jerusalem church in the change from Sabbath to Sunday. Then we proceed to consider the pivotal influence of the church of Rome and of Sun-worship in the adoption of Sunday.

Jesus & origin of Sunday

A popular view defended recently by several scholars is that Christ paved the way for the abandonment of the Sabbath, and the adoption of Sunday keeping instead, by His messianic claims and His provocative method of Sabbath keeping, which caused considerable controversy with the religious leaders of His day.³⁰⁹ The authors maintain that Christ transcended the Sabbath law by His messianic claims. He acted against the prevailing Sabbath traditions in order to provide His followers with the freedom to reinterpret the Sabbath and to choose a new day of worship, better suited to express their new Christian faith.

The fundamental problem with this popular view is that it grossly misinterprets the intent of Christ's controversial Sabbath activities and teachings which were clearly designed, not to nullify, but to clarify the divine intent of the Fourth Commandment. Christ acted deliberately against prevailing misconceptions of the Sabbath, not to terminate its observance, but to restore the day to God's intended purpose. It should be noted that whenever accused of Sabbath breaking, Christ rejected and refuted such charge. He defended Himself and His disciples from the charge of Sabbath breaking by appealing to the Scriptures: *"Have you read...."*³¹⁰

The intent of Christ's provocative Sabbath teachings and activities was not to pave the way for the abandonment of the Sabbath and adoption for Sunday keeping, but rather to show the true meaning and function of the Sabbath, namely, a day *"to do good,"*³¹¹ *"to save life,"*³¹² to loosen people from physical and

³⁰⁸ 135AD

³⁰⁹ a noteworthy example of this view is the symposium 'From Sabbath to the Lord's Day,' produced by seven British / American scholars and sponsored by the Tyndale Fellowship for Biblical Research in Cambridge, England.

³¹⁰ Mat 12:3-5

³¹¹ Mat 12:12

spiritual bonds,³¹³ and to show "mercy" rather than religiosity.³¹⁴ A careful study of these Sabbath pronouncements of Jesus, clearly show Jesus had no intent to abrogate the Sabbath. Instead He wanted to clarify the divine intent of the Sabbath, namely a day to celebrate God's creative and redemptive love by offering a living, loving service to needy people.

Resurrection & origin of Sunday

The common view among Sunday-keeping Christians is that the Sabbath was changed to Sunday by the 'Apostolic church' in order to commemorate Christ's resurrection. This is indeed the common explanation given for Sunday-keeping. The Pope himself appeals to the resurrection and appearance of Jesus on Sunday in his Pastoral Letter³¹⁵ in order to argue for the apostolic origin of Sunday. Numerous Catholic and Protestant scholars have written in defence of the same view.

For example, in his doctoral dissertation *Storia della Domenica*,³¹⁶ Corrado Mosna, a Jesuit student at the Pontifical Gregorian University³¹⁷ [states]: "Therefore we can conclude with certainty that the event of the resurrection has determined the choice of Sunday as the new day of worship of the first Christian community." On a similar vein Cardinal Jean Daniélou wrote: "The Lord's Day is a purely Christian institution; its origin is to be found solely on the fact of the Resurrection of Christ on the day after the Sabbath."

In spite of its popularity, the claim that Christ's Resurrection on the first day of the week caused the change from Sabbath to Sunday worship lacks both biblical and historical support. A careful study of all the references to the Resurrection reveals the incomparable importance of the event, but it does not provide any indication regarding a special day to commemorate it. The New Testament attributes no liturgical significance to the day of Christ's Resurrection simply because the Resurrection was seen as an existential reality experienced by living victoriously by the power of the Risen Saviour, and not a liturgical practice associated with Sunday worship.

Let me briefly mention seven major reasons which discredit the alleged role of Christ's Resurrection in the adoption of Sunday observance:

1. No Command of Christ or of the Apostles: There is no commandment of Christ or of the apostles regarding a weekly-Sunday or annual Easter-Sunday celebration of Christ's resurrection. We have commands in the New

³¹² Mark 3:4

³¹³ Luke 13:12,16

³¹⁴ Mat 12:7

³¹⁵ Latin: *Dies Domini*.

³¹⁶ *History of Sunday*

³¹⁷ who worked under Prof. Vincenzo Monachino, S.J.

Testament regarding baptism,³¹⁸ the Lord's Supper,³¹⁹ and foot-washing,³²⁰ but we find no commands or even suggestions to commemorate Christ's Resurrection on a weekly Sunday or annual Easter-Sunday;

2. Jesus Made no Attempt to Institute a Memorial of His Resurrection: If Jesus wanted the day of His resurrection to become a memorial day of rest and worship, He would have capitalized on the day of His resurrection to establish such a memorial. It is important to note that divine institutions like the Sabbath, baptism, Lord's Supper, all trace their origin to a divine act that established them. But on the day of His resurrection Christ performed no act to institute a memorial of His resurrection.

If Jesus wanted to memorialize the day of His Resurrection, most likely He would have told the women and the disciples when He arose: "Come apart and celebrate My Resurrection!" Instead He told the women *"Go and tell my brethren to go to Galilee"*³²¹ and to the disciples *"Go....make disciples....baptizing them."*³²² None of the utterances of the risen Saviour reveal intent to memorialize His Resurrection by making Sunday the new day of rest and worship.

The reason is that our Saviour wanted His followers to view His Resurrection as an existential reality to be experienced daily by living victoriously by the power of His Resurrection, rather than a liturgical / religious event to be celebrated on Sunday. Paul expressed the hope to *"know him and the power of his resurrection,"*³²³ but he never mentions his desire to celebrate Christ's Resurrection on Sunday or Easter-Sunday;

3. Sunday Is Never Called "Day of the Resurrection": Sunday is never called in the New Testament as "Day of the Resurrection." It is consistently designated "First day of the week." The references to Sunday as the day of the resurrection first appear in the early part of the fourth century, specifically in the writings of Eusebius of Cæsarea. By that time Sunday had become associated with the resurrection and consequently was referred to as "Day of the Resurrection." But this development occurred several centuries after the beginning of Christianity;

4. The Sunday-Resurrection Presupposes Work, not Rest and Worship: The Sunday-Resurrection presupposes work, rather than rest and worship, because it does not mark the completion of Christ's earthly ministry which ended on a Friday afternoon [sic; it was a Wednesday] when the Saviour said: *"It is finished,"*³²⁴ and then rested in the tomb according to the commandment. Instead, the Resurrection marks the beginning of Christ's new intercessory ministry,³²⁵ which, like the first day of creation, presupposes work rather than rest;

³¹⁸ Mat 28:19,20

³¹⁹ Mark 14:24,25; 1 Cor 11:23-26

³²⁰ John 13:14,15

³²¹ Mat 28:10

³²² Mat 28:19

³²³ Phlp 3:10

³²⁴ John 19:30

³²⁵ Acts 1:8;2:33

5. The Lord's Supper was not Celebrated on Sunday [sic—it was celebrated on the Passover that year, a Tuesday evening, at dusk, shortly after sunset] in Honour of the Resurrection: In his dissertation on Sunday,³²⁶ Rordorf argues that Sunday became the Lord's Day because that was the day in which the Lord's Supper was celebrated. This view, accepted by many, lacks biblical and historical support. Historically we know that Christians could not celebrate the Lord's Supper on a regular basis on Sunday evening, because such gatherings were prohibited by the Roman hetariae law—a law that outlawed all types of communal fellowship meals held in the evening. The Roman government was afraid that such evening gatherings could become an occasion for political plotting.

To avoid the search of the Roman police, Christians changed regularly the time and place of the Lord's Supper celebration [a calamitous error—the Lord's Supper is a once-a-year memorial, held on the Passover]. Eventually, they moved the service from the evening to the morning. This explains why Paul is very specific on the manner of celebrating the Lord's Supper, but he is indefinite on the question of the time of the assembly. Note that four times he repeats the same phrase: "*When you come together.*"³²⁷ The phrase implies indefinite time, most likely because there was no set day for the celebration of the Lord's Supper [sic; again calamitous].

If, as some scholars contend, the Lord's Supper was celebrated on Sunday evening, as part of the Lord's Day worship, Paul could hardly have failed to mention the sacredness of the time in which they gathered. This would have strengthened his plea for a more worshipful attitude during the partaking of the Lord's Supper. The failure of Paul to mention "Sunday" as the time of the gathering or to use the adjective "Lord's-kuriake" to characterize the day as "the Lord's Day," (as he did it with reference to the Lord's Supper), shows that the apostle did not attach any religious significance to Sunday;

6. The Lord's Supper Commemorates Christ's Sacrifice, not His Resurrection: Many Christians today view their Lord's Supper as the core of Sunday worship in honour of Christ's resurrection. But in the Apostolic church, the Lord's Supper was not celebrated on Sunday, as we have just seen, and was not connected with the Resurrection. Paul, for instance, who claims to transmit what "he received from the Lord,"³²⁸ explicitly states that the rite commemorated not Christ's resurrection, but His sacrifice and Second Coming—"You proclaim the Lord's death till he comes."³²⁹

Similarly, Passover, celebrated today by many Christians [so-called] on Easter Sunday, was observed during apostolic times, not on Sunday to commemorate the Resurrection, but according to the biblical date of Nisan

³²⁶ Rordorf, Willy, *The History of the Day of Rest and Worship in the Earliest Centuries of the Christian Church*

³²⁷ I Cor 11:18,20,33,34

³²⁸ I Cor 11:23-26, 'For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.' Jesus was betrayed on Passover.

³²⁹ I Cor 11:26

the fourteenth, primarily as a memorial of Christ's suffering and death. Contrary to what many people believe, Easter-Sunday was unknown in the Apostolic church. It was introduced and promoted by the church of Rome in the second century in order to show separation and differentiation from the Jewish Passover. The result was the well-known Passover controversy which eventually led Bishop Victor of Rome to excommunicate the Asian Christians³³⁰ for refusing to adopt Easter-Sunday. These indications show that Christ's resurrection on the first day of the week [sic; again, in error] did not influence the 'Apostolic church' to adopt the weekly Sunday and the annual Easter-Sunday to commemorate such an event; and,

7. The Resurrection is not the Dominant Reason for Sundaykeeping in Earliest Documents: The earliest explicit references to Sundaykeeping are found in the writings of Barnabas³³¹ and Justin Martyr.³³² Both writers do mention the Resurrection but only as the second of two reasons, important but not predominant. Barnabas' first theological motivation for Sunday keeping is eschatological, namely, that Sunday as "the eighth day" represents "the beginning of another world." The notion of Sunday as "the eighth day," was later abandoned because it is senseless to speak of "the eighth day" in a seven days week.³³³ Justin's first reason for the Christians' assembly on Dies Solis—the Day of the Sun, is the inauguration of creation: "Sunday is the first day on which God, transforming the darkness and prime matter, created the world." These reasons were eventually abandoned in favour of the Resurrection which became the primary reason for Sunday observance.

The seven reasons given above suffice to discredit the claim that Christ's resurrection on the first day of the week [sic] caused the abandonment of the Sabbath and the adoption of Sunday. The truth is that initially the resurrection was celebrated existentially rather than liturgically, that is, by a victorious way of life rather than by a special day of worship.

Jerusalem & origin of Sunday

Closely related to the role of the alleged role of the Resurrection, is the popular view that the Jerusalem church pioneered the abandonment of the Sabbath and adoption of Sunday. My investigation shows that this popular view rests on three major faulty assumptions:

1. Sunday Began in Jerusalem because Christ Arose there First: It is assumed that Jerusalem must be the birthplace of Sunday-keeping, because that is the place where Jesus arose on the first day of the week [sic]. It is alleged that immediately after Christ's resurrection, the Apostles "no longer felt at home in the Jewish

³³⁰ c.191AD

³³¹ c.135AD

³³² c.150AD

³³³ 'eighth day' looks forward, in occult lore, to the new beginning of the world: the New World Order.

Sabbath service," and consequently they proceeded to institute Sunday worship in order to commemorate Christ's Resurrection by a distinctive Christian liturgy.

As we have already shown, this assumption lacks biblical and historical support, because in the Apostolic church the Resurrection was seen as an existential reality experienced by living victoriously by the power of the Risen Saviour, and not a liturgical practice associated with Sunday worship. We noted earlier that nothing in the New Testament prescribes or even suggests the commemoration of Jesus' resurrection on Sunday. The very name "Day of the Resurrection" does not appear in Christian literature until early in the fourth century.

If the primitive Jerusalem church had pioneered and promoted Sunday-keeping because they no longer felt at home with Jewish Sabbath-keeping, we would expect to find in such a church an immediate break away from Jewish religious traditions and services. But the opposite is the case. Both the book of Acts as well as several Judæo-Christian documents clearly reveal that the ethnic composition and the theological orientation of the Jerusalem church were profoundly Jewish. Luke's characterization of the Jerusalem church as "*zealous for the law*"³³⁴ is an accurate description which hardly allows for the abandonment of a chief precept of the law, namely, the Sabbath;

2. Paul Learned About Sunday Observance from Jewish Leaders: The second faulty assumption is that Paul learned about Sunday observance from the apostolic leaders of the Jerusalem church and taught it to his Gentile converts. The reason given for this assumption is that Paul could hardly have pioneered the abandonment of the Sabbath and adoption of Sunday, without stirring up the opposition of the Jewish brethren. The absence of any echo of controversy is taken to mean that Paul accepted Sunday observance as taught him by the Jewish brethren, and promoted this practice among the Gentile churches which he established.

Jewett notes, for example, "If Paul had introduced Sunday worship among the Gentiles, it seems likely that Jewish opposition would have accused his temerity in setting aside the law of the Sabbath, as was the case with reference to the rite of circumcision."³³⁵ ³³⁶ The absence of such opposition is interpreted by Jewett as indicating that Paul accepted and promoted Sunday observance as taught him by the Jewish brethren.

This assumption is correct in maintaining that Paul could not have pioneered Sunday observance without stirring up the opposition of the Jewish brethren, but it is incorrect in assuming that the Jewish Brethren taught Paul Sunday observance. The truth is that Jewish Christians, as we shall now see, were deeply committed to the observance of the law in general and of the Sabbath in particular. The absence of any controversy between Paul and the Jewish brethren rather indicates that the Sabbath never became an issue in the Apostolic church because it was faithfully observed by all Christians;

³³⁴ Acts 21:20

³³⁵ Acts 21:21

³³⁶ Jewett, Paul, *The Lord's Day*

3. Only Apostolic Jerusalem Church Could Change the Sabbath to Sunday: The third faulty assumption is that only the Jerusalem church, which was the Mother church of Christendom, commanded sufficient authority and respect to persuade all the Christian churches scattered through the Roman empire to change their weekly day of worship from Sabbath to Sunday. Less influential churches could have never accomplished this change.

The fundamental problem with this assumption is the failure to recognize the Jewish composition and theological orientation of the Jerusalem church. Of all the Christian churches, the Jerusalem church was the only church that was composed almost exclusively of Jewish Christians who were zealous in the observance of the law in general and of the Sabbath in particular;

4. Attachment to the Law: The attachment of the Jerusalem church to the Mosaic Law is reflected in the decisions of the first Jerusalem Council held about 49–50AD.³³⁷ The exemption from circumcision is there granted only "*to brethren who are of the Gentiles*."³³⁸ [sic]. No concession is made for Jewish-Christians, who must continue to circumcise³³⁹ their children [sic].³⁴⁰

The release of Gentiles from circumcision did not entail their release from the observance of the law in general and of the Sabbath in particular. This is clearly indicated by the fact that the Gentiles were expected to observe the four Mosaic laws regarding the "sojourner" who dwelt among the Israelites. These laws are found in Leviticus chapters seventeen and eighteen, and are cited in the decision of the council: "*You abstain from what has been sacrificed to idols and from blood and from what is strangled, and from unchastity*."³⁴¹ This concern of the Jerusalem Council for ritual defilement and Jewish food laws reflects its continued attachment to the Mosaic laws.

This conclusion is supported by the reason given by James for requiring Gentiles to observe the four Mosaic Laws regarding the "sojourner": "*For generations past Moses has had spokesmen in every city; he is read every Sabbath in the synagogues*."³⁴² All interpreters recognize that both in his proposal and in its justification, James reaffirms the binding nature of the Mosaic Law which was customarily taught every Sabbath in the synagogue.

Further insight is provided by Paul's last visit to Jerusalem. The Apostle was informed by James and the elders that thousands of converted Jews were "*all zealous for the Law*."³⁴³ The same leaders then pressured Paul to prove to the people that he also "*lived in observance of the law*"³⁴⁴ by undergoing a rite of purification at the Temple. In the light of this deep commitment to the observance of the Law, it is hardly conceivable that the

³³⁷ q.v. Acts chpt. 15

³³⁸ Acts 15:23

³³⁹ circumcision, representing voluntary subjection to the conditions of the Law, and acceptance of the obligations but also the privileges of the covenant between God and Abraham and his seed.

³⁴⁰ Edersheim, Alfred, *Jesus the Messiah*, p.135

³⁴¹ Acts 15:29

³⁴² Acts 15:21

³⁴³ Acts 21:20

³⁴⁴ Acts 21:24

Jerusalem church would have abrogated one of its chief precepts—Sabbath keeping—and pioneered Sunday worship instead.

Did Sunday originate in Palestine after destruction of Second Temple?

The foregoing evidence has led some scholars to argue that Sunday observance began in Palestine at a slightly later time, namely, after the Roman destruction of the [Second] Temple. They presume that the flight of the Christians from Jerusalem to Pella as well as the psychological impact of the destruction of the Temple weaned Palestinian Christians away from Jewish observances such as Sabbath-keeping.

This assumption is discredited by the testimonies of both Eusebius and Epiphanius who inform us that the Jerusalem church after the destruction of the Temple³⁴⁵ and until Hadrian's siege of Jerusalem³⁴⁶ was composed of and administered by Jewish converts, whom they characterize as "*zealous to insist on the literal observance of the Law.*"

The continuity in the observance of the Sabbath among Palestinian Christians, known as Nazarenes [sic] is evidenced by the testimony of a fourth century Palestinian historian, Epiphanius. He tells us that the Nazarenes, who were "the very direct descendants of the primitive community" of Jerusalem, insisted and persisted in the observance of seventh-day Sabbath keeping until his own time.³⁴⁷ I vividly remember the joy I felt when I found Epiphanius' testimony. Eagerly I showed this document to Prof. Vincenzo Monachino, who read it attentively and then exclaimed: "This is the death-blow to the theory that makes Jerusalem the birthplace of Sunday-keeping."

If the direct descendants of the Jerusalem church persisted in the observance of the Sabbath until at least the fourth century, then the Jerusalem church could hardly have pioneered the abandonment of the Sabbath and adoption of Sunday during the Apostolic time. Of all the Christian churches, the Jerusalem church was both ethnically and theologically the closest and most loyal to Jewish religious traditions, and thus the least likely to change the day of the Sabbath.

Rome & origin of Sunday

Having proven to the satisfaction of my professor that the Jerusalem church was to be excluded as the birthplace of Sunday observance, I proceeded to look for the most likely church that could have pioneered such a change. In the course of my investigation I found cumulative evidences pointing to the church of Rome. There

³⁴⁵ 70AD

³⁴⁶ 135AD

³⁴⁷ i.e., until c.150AD

I found the social, religious and political conditions which made it expedient for the Bishop of Rome to promote the abandonment of Sabbath-keeping and the adoption of Sunday worship instead.

1. Predominance of Gentile Converts: In the first place, the church of Rome was composed predominantly of Gentile converts. Paul in his Epistle to the Roman church [not a church, but private parties only] explicitly affirms: "*I am speaking to you Gentiles.*"³⁴⁸ This means that while the Jerusalem church was made up almost exclusively of Jewish Christians who were deeply committed to their religious traditions, like Sabbath-keeping, the church of Rome consisted mostly of Gentile converts who were influenced by such pagan practices as Sun Worship with its Sun Day;

2. Early Differentiation from the Jews: In the second place I found that the predominant Gentile membership apparently contributed to an early Christian differentiation from the Jews in Rome. This is indicated by the fact that Nero blamed the Christians for the burning of Rome,³⁴⁹ though the Jewish district of Trastevere had not been touched by the fire. This fact suggests that by then Christians in Rome were no longer perceived to be a Jewish sect by the Roman authorities, but a different religious movement. Most likely the reason is that by that time Christians in Rome no longer participated in the worship service of the synagogue. This was not the case in Palestine where Christians attended the synagogue's services until toward the end of the first century. This is indicated by the fact that in order to keep Christians away from the synagogue services, rabbinical authorities introduced the malediction of the Christians to be recited during the worship service;³⁵⁰

3. Pre-eminence of the Church of Rome: A third important consideration is the "preeminent authority"³⁵¹ exercised by the Bishop of Rome after the destruction of Jerusalem. Being the Bishop of the capital city of the Roman empire, the Bishop of Rome took over the leadership of the Christian communities at large [sic.; this is not borne out by the Quatrodeciman Controversy, q.v.]. His leadership is acknowledged, for example, by Ignatius, Polycarp, Irenæus, all of whom lived in the second century [sic!]. Tangible proofs of the leadership of the Bishop of Rome are his interventions against sectarian movements like Marcionism and Montanism.

More important still for our investigation is the role of the Bishop of Rome in pioneering and promoting the change from Sabbath feasting [sic!] to Sabbath fasting, as well as the change from Passover to Easter Sunday. To this point we shall return shortly. At this juncture it suffices to note that the Bishop of Rome emerged to the leadership position after the destruction of Jerusalem. He was the only one who commanded sufficient authority to influence the majority of Christians to adopt new religious observances, such as weekly Sunday and annual Easter Sunday [sic.];

³⁴⁸ Rom 11:13

³⁴⁹ in 64AD

³⁵⁰ c.90AD

³⁵¹ Latin: potentior principalitas.

4. Repressive Anti-Jewish Measures: To appreciate why the Bishop of Rome would pioneer the abandonment of the Sabbath and the adoption of Sunday, it is important to consider a fourth important factor, namely, the fiscal, military, political and religious repressive measures imposed by the Romans upon the Jews, beginning with the First Jewish Revolt against Rome³⁵² and culminating with the Second Jewish Revolt.³⁵³ These measures, which were introduced by the Roman government to punish the Jews on account of their violent uprisings in various places of the Empire, were especially felt in the city of Rome, which had a large Jewish population.

Fiscally, the Jews were subjected to a discriminatory tax³⁵⁴ which was introduced by Vespasian and increased first by Domitian³⁵⁵ and later by Hadrian. This meant that the Jews had to pay a penalty tax simply for being Jews. [It was not rescinded until the reign of emperor Julian.³⁵⁶] Militarily, Vespasian and Titus crushed the First Jewish Revolt,³⁵⁷ and Hadrian, the Second Jewish Revolt.³⁵⁸ Religiously, Vespasian³⁵⁹ abolished the Sanhedrin and the office of the High Priest.

These repressive measures against the Jews were intensely felt in Rome, which had a large Jewish population. In fact, the mounting hostility of the Roman populace against the Jews forced the Emperor Titus, though "unwilling" (*inuitus*), to ask the Jewess Berenice, sister of Herod the Younger, whom he wanted to marry, to leave Rome;

5. Anti-Jewish Propaganda: A fifth significant factor is the anti-Jewish propaganda by a host of Roman authors who began reviling the Jews racially and culturally, deriding especially Sabbath-keeping and circumcision as examples of Judaism's degrading superstitions. These authors especially derided Sabbath-keeping as an example of Jewish laziness. Contemptuous anti-Jewish literary comments can be found in the writings of Seneca,³⁶⁰ Persius,³⁶¹ Petronius,³⁶² Quintilian,³⁶³ Martial,³⁶⁴ Plutarch,³⁶⁵ Juvenal,³⁶⁶ and Tacitus,³⁶⁷ all of whom lived in Rome most of their professional lives;

³⁵² in 66AD

³⁵³ in 135AD

³⁵⁴ Latin: *fiscus judaicus*.

³⁵⁵ 81–96AD

³⁵⁶ in 363AD

³⁵⁷ 66–71AD

³⁵⁸ 132–135AD

³⁵⁹ 69–79AD

³⁶⁰ d.65AD

³⁶¹ 34–62AD

³⁶² c.66AD

³⁶³ c.35–100AD

³⁶⁴ c.40–104AD

³⁶⁵ c.46–119AD

³⁶⁶ 125AD

³⁶⁷ c.55–120AD

6. Hadrian's Legislation: The sixth and most decisive factor which influenced the change of the day of worship from Sabbath to Sunday is the anti-Jewish and anti-Sabbath legislation promulgated by the Emperor Hadrian.³⁶⁸ Hadrian went as far as outlawing the practice of Jewish religion in general and of Sabbath-keeping in particular.³⁶⁹

This repressive anti-Jewish legislation was promulgated by Hadrian after three years of bloody fighting³⁷⁰ to crush the Jewish revolt. His Roman legions suffered many casualties. When the Emperor finally captured Jerusalem, he decided to deal with the Jewish problem in a radical way. He slaughtered thousands of Jews, and took thousands of them as slaves to Rome. He made Jerusalem into a Roman colony, calling it Ælia Capitolina. He forbade Jews and Jewish Christians from ever entering the city. More important still for our investigation, Hadrian outlawed the practice of the Jewish religion in general and of Sabbath-keeping in particular throughout the empire.

It is not surprising that the Jews view Hadrian and Hitler as the two most wanted men of their history. The two men share the infamous distinction of wanting to eradicate the Jewish religion and the Jewish people. Hadrian attempted to abolish Judaism as a religion and Hitler tried to liquidate the Jews as a people.

When I learned about the Hadrianic anti-Jewish and anti-Sabbath legislation, I asked myself: How did the Christians, especially those living in Rome under the immediate attention of the Emperor, react to such legislation? Did they choose to remain faithful in their Sabbath observance, even if it meant being punished as Jews, or did [they] abandon Sabbath-keeping in order to clarify to the Roman authorities their separation and differentiation from the Jews? The answer is simple. Many Christians changed the time and manner of observance of two institutions associated with Judaism, namely the Sabbath and Passover. Shortly we shall see that the Sabbath was changed to Sunday and Passover to Easter Sunday in order to avoid even the semblance of Judaism;

7. Christian Theology of Contempt for the Jews: To understand what contributed to these historical changes, we need to mention a seventh important factor, namely, the development of a Christian theology of contempt for the Jews. This is what happened. When the Jewish religion in general and the Sabbath in particular were outlawed by the Roman government and derided by Roman writers, a whole body of 'Against all Jews'³⁷¹ [so-called] Christian literature began to appear. Following the lead of Roman writers, Christian authors developed a

³⁶⁸ in 135AD

³⁶⁹ in that year.

³⁷⁰ 132–135AD

³⁷¹ Latin: Adversus Judaeos, 'Against all Jews.'

"Christian" theology of separation from and contempt toward the Jews. Characteristic Jewish customs such as circumcision and Sabbath-keeping were proclaimed to be signs of Jewish depravity.³⁷²

The condemnation of Sabbath-keeping as a sign of Jewish wickedness contributed to the abandonment of the Sabbath and the adoption of Sunday observance, in order to clarify to the Roman authorities the [apostate] Christian separation from Judaism and identification with Roman paganism. This historical change from Sabbath to Sunday observance was pioneered by the church of Rome—a predominantly Gentile church which, as noted earlier, took over the leadership of Christian communities after the destruction of Jerusalem. To appreciate how the church of Rome went about to wean [so-called] Christians away from Sabbath-keeping and to encourage Sunday worship instead, we shall mention briefly the theological, social and liturgical measures taken by the church of Rome.

Rome's manipulation of Sabbath

Theologically, the Sabbath was reduced from a creational institution established by God for mankind, to a Mosaic institution given exclusively to the Jews as a trademark of their depravity. Justin Martyr, for instance, a leader of the church of Rome who wrote about the middle of the second century, argues in his *Dialogue with Trypho*, that the observance of the Sabbath was a temporary Mosaic ordinance which God imposed exclusively on the Jews as "a mark to single them out for punishment they so well deserve for their infidelities."

It is hard to comprehend how church leaders like Justin, who became a martyr for the Christian faith, could reject the biblical meaning of the Sabbath as a sign of covenant commitment to God,^{373 374} and reduce it instead to a sign of Jewish depravity. What is even harder to accept is the absence of any scholarly condemnation for such absurd and embarrassing theology of contempt for the Jews—a theology which blatantly mis-

³⁷² not Judæo-Christian theology. It is the phony, Roman, anti-Jewish theology of the time. Judæo-Christians never derided the Jews, even though they suffered much persecution at their hands.

³⁷³ Ex 31:16,17; Ezek 20:12,20

³⁷⁴ Ezek 20:11,12 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets), *'And I gave them my statutes, and shewed them my judgments, which if a man do, he shall even live in them. Moreover also I gave them my sabbaths [plural], to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them.'*

'Sabbaths,' plural, are a generic reference to all Sabbaths: weekly, monthly, annual, and ultra-annual, the latter being Sabbatical years and Jubilees (Yobels). God's 'elect' keep all of these days, on the correct, sacred calendar derived from Scripture. Unshrinkable obedience, rendered without hesitation or complaint, is the condition imposed by God on those who would aspire to the high dignity of His service. It is not open to God's people to decide for themselves which days to keep and which to ignore, and on what calendar basis to do so.

Those baptised into the church and who keep the Sabbatical years and the other holy days will be able to keep the forthcoming Yobel as the immortal 'elect' with the Lamb. The Jews went into captivity in Babylon in part to give the land its backlog of Sabbatical '*sabbaths of rest*.' To escape the captivity of sin, the Sabbatical years, and the rest of the Law must be kept. Captivity in sin is the antithesis of salvation. The 'whole Sabbaths' requirement again points to those eras where they were and are kept: the first two years of Christ's ministry, and the church eras of Ephesus (which did take to heart Christ's admonition in Rev 2:4,5 and repent, q.v. sup.), Smyrna, and Philadelphia.

interpreted biblical institutions like the Sabbath, in order to give biblical sanction to the political and social repression of the Jews.

The sad lesson of history is that the desire to be politically correct by supporting popular immoral policies such as the extermination of Jews, Moslems and heretics, or the perpetration of slavery, has caused some church leaders and Bible scholars to become biblically incorrect. They fabricated unbiblical theologies which would sanction popular immoral practices. It is impossible to estimate the damage done by these theologies of expediency to our society and Christianity at large.

For example, the failure of church leaders and scholars to apologize for the theology of contempt toward the Jews, has contributed, among other things, to the origin of the popular dispensational theology. This theology, embraced by many evangelical churches today, teaches among other things that God will rapture the church away secretly and suddenly, before pouring out His wrath on the Jews during the final seven years of Tribulation. The popularity of the book and movie *Left Behind*, which is taking America by storm, is a tangible proof of how pervasive this deceptive teaching is today.

Socially, the negative reinterpretation of the Sabbath as a sign of Jewish wickedness led the church of Rome to transform Sabbath observance from a day of feasting [sic!] and joy into a day of fasting and sadness. The purpose of the Sabbath fast was not to enhance the spiritual observance of the Sabbath. Rather, as emphatically stated in the papal decretal of Pope Sylvester,³⁷⁵ the Sabbath fasting³⁷⁶ was designed to show "contempt for the Jews"³⁷⁷ and for their Sabbath "feasting."³⁷⁸ The sadness and hunger resulting from the fast would enable Christians to avoid "appearing to observe the Sabbath with the Jews" and would encourage them to enter more eagerly and joyfully into the observance of Sunday.

The weekly Saturday fast developed as an extension or counterpart of the annual Holy-Saturday fast of Easter season. This was the day when all Christians who adopted the Roman Easter Sunday, fasted. The annual Holy-Saturday Easter fast, like the weekly Saturday fast, was designed to express not only sorrow for Christ's death but also contempt for the Jews who were considered as the perpetrators of His death. For example, a third century document known as *The Teachings of the Apostles*³⁷⁹ enjoins Christians to fast on Easter-Friday and Saturday "on account of the disobedience of our brethren³⁸⁰....because thereon the people killed themselves in crucifying our Saviour."

³⁷⁵ 314-335AD

³⁷⁶ Saturday fast signifies the absence of Sunday-worshippers from the Millennium of rest, where there will be no 'Sunday sabbath' worship; the feasting of the following day rejoices at the inception of Satan's New World Order.

³⁷⁷ Latin: exsecratione Judaeorum.

³⁷⁸ Latin: destructione ciborum.

³⁷⁹ Latin: Didascalia Apostolorum, c.250AD

³⁸⁰ i.e. 'the Jews.'

Most scholars agree that the church of Rome was responsible for repudiating the biblical dating of the Passover,³⁸¹ and promoting instead Easter Sunday. The change from Passover to Easter Sunday was introduced by the church of Rome in the latter part of the second century in order to avoid, as Professor Lightfoot puts it, "even the semblance of Judaism." The anti-Judaic motivation for the repudiation of the biblical dating of Passover is clearly expressed by Constantine in his letter to the Christian bishops at the Council of Nicæa.³⁸² In this conciliar letter the Emperor urges all Christians to follow the example of the church of Rome in adopting Easter Sunday, because, he wrote: "We ought not therefore to have anything in common with the Jews, for the Saviour has shown us another way....In unanimously adopting this mode³⁸³ we desire, dearest brethren, to separate ourselves from the detestable company of the Jews." This letter of the Council of Nicæa represents the culmination of a controversy initiated two centuries earlier which centred in Rome.

The same anti-Judaic motivations which caused the change from Passover to Easter Sunday account also for the contemporaneous substitution of Sabbath keeping with Sunday worship. This conclusion is supported not only by the fact that the Jewish Sabbath shared the same anti-Judaic condemnation as the Jewish Passover, but also by the close nexus between the observance of the annual Easter Saturday fast, which was followed by the Easter Sunday rejoicing, and the observance of its weekly counterpart, the Saturday fast which was followed by Sunday rejoicing. The basic unity between these annual and weekly observances is explicitly affirmed by the Fathers, and further suggests a common origin in the church of Rome at the same time and owing to similar causes.

It should be noted that the Pope's attempt to kill the festive [sic!] gleam of the Sabbath by making the day a time of rigorous fasting, was not favourably received by all the churches. The Eastern churches, for example, resisted the adoption of Sabbath fasting as well as Easter Sunday. In fact, their resistance to these practices eventually contributed to the historical break³⁸⁴ between the Roman Catholic Church and the Greek Orthodox Church [sic].

Liturgically, the church of Rome decreed that no religious assemblies and eucharistic celebrations were to be held on Saturday. For example, Pope Innocent I³⁸⁵ declared that "as the tradition of the church maintains, in these two days³⁸⁶ one should not absolutely celebrate the sacraments." Two contemporary church historians, Socrates and Sozomen, confirm Innocent I's decretal. For example, Sozomen³⁸⁷ tells us that while "the people of Constantinople, and almost everywhere, assemble together on the Sabbath, as well as on the first day of the week, such custom is never observed at Rome and Alexandria."

³⁸¹ 14 Abib

³⁸² 325AD

³⁸³ i.e., Easter Sunday.

³⁸⁴ 1054AD

³⁸⁵ 402–417AD

³⁸⁶ viz, Friday and Saturday.

³⁸⁷ c.440AD

Summing up, the historical evidences alluded above indicate that the church of Rome used theological, social, and liturgical measures to empty the Sabbath of any religious significance, and to promote Sunday observance instead.

Sun-worship & origin of Sunday

The foregoing discussion has focused on the interplay of social, political, and religious [elements] which have contributed to the abandonment of the Sabbath. The question that still remains unanswered is: Why was Sunday chosen to show separation and differentiation from the Jews? Why did Christians not adopt another day such as Friday, to commemorate Christ's atoning sacrifice for our redemption?

Sun Worship and Sunday: The answer to these questions is to be found especially in the influence of sun-worship with its Sun day which became "dominant in Rome and in other parts of the Empire from the early part of the second century."³⁸⁸ The Invincible Sun-god became the chief god of the Roman Pantheon and was worshipped especially on the Dies Solis, that is, "the Day of the Sun," known in our calendar as "Sunday."

To understand how the Day of the Sun became the first and most important day of the Roman week, it is important to note that the Romans adopted the seven day week from the Jews just before the beginning of Christianity [sic!]. However, rather than numbering the days like the Jews, the Romans chose to name the days of the week after the seven planets, which they worshipped as gods.

What is surprising, however, is that initially the Romans made Dies Saturni (the day of Saturday) the first day of the week, followed by Dies Solis (Day of the Sun), which was the second day. The reason is that during the first century the Saturn god was viewed as being more important than the Sun-god. Consequently the Day of Saturn was made the first and most important day of the week. The situation changed by the beginning of the second century, when the Sun-god became the most important Roman god. The popularity of the Sun-god caused the advancement of the Day of the Sun (Sunday) from the position of second day of the week to that of first and most important day of the week. This required each of the other days to be advanced one day, and Saturn's day thereby became the seventh day of the week for the Romans, as it had been for the Jews and Christians.

When I learned about the advancement of the Day of the Sun from second day of the week in the first century, to first day of the week in the second century, I asked myself the question: It is possible that this development influenced Christians with a pagan background to adopt and adapt the Sun's day for their Christian worship in order to show separation from the Jews and identification with the Romans at the time when Sabbath-keeping was prohibited by Roman Law?

³⁸⁸ viz., 2nd. century AD.

Indirect Evidences: During the course of my investigation I found abundant indirect and direct evidences supporting this hypothesis. I found that people who had worshipped the Sun-god in their pagan days brought with them into the church various pagan practices. The existence of the problem is evidenced by the frequent rebukes by church leaders to those Christians who venerated the Sun-god, especially on the Day of the Sun.

The influence of sun-worship can be seen in early Christian art and literature, where the symbology of the Sun-god is often used to represent Christ. In fact, the earliest pictorial representation of Christ,³⁸⁹ which was discovered under the confession of St. Peter's Basilica,³⁹⁰ is a mosaic that portrays Christ as the Sun God riding the quadriga sun-chariot. Sunrise also became the orientation for prayer and for Christian churches. The Dies Natalis Solis Invicti, the birthday of the Invincible Sun, which the Romans celebrated on December twenty-fifth, was adopted by the Christians to celebrate Christ's birth.

Direct Evidence: A more direct [indication] of the influence of sun-worship in the Christian adoption of Sunday is provided by the use of the symbology of the sun to justify the actual observance of Sunday. The motifs of light and of the sun are frequently invoked by the church Fathers to develop a theological justification for Sunday worship. For example, Jerome explains: "If it is called the day of the sun by the pagans, we most willingly acknowledge it as such, since it is on this day that the light of the world appeared and on this day the Sun of Justice has risen."

Conclusion: The conclusion of my investigation conducted over a period of five years in Pontifical libraries and archives in Rome, Italy,³⁹¹ is that the change from Sabbath to Sunday came about, not by the authority of Christ or the Apostles, but as a result of an interplay of social, political, pagan, and religious factors. I found that anti-Judaism led many Christians to abandon the observance of the Sabbath to differentiate themselves from the Jews at a time when Judaism in general and Sabbath-keeping in particular were outlawed in the Roman empire. Sun-worship influenced the adoption of Sunday observance to facilitate the Christian identification and integration with the customs and cycles of the Roman empire.

Simply stated, the Sabbath was changed to Sunday because of expediency, that is, the need to avoid the anti-Jewish and anti-Sabbath Roman legislation. We may ask: Is expediency a legitimate motive to change a divine commandment? Did Jesus ever say: "If it becomes difficult to observe one of my commandments, do not suffer for it! Just change it!" Obviously the answer is "No!" No such teaching can be found in the Bible. Yet,

³⁸⁹ dated about 240AD.

³⁹⁰ excavated during 1953–57AD.

³⁹¹ resulting in the dissertation, *From Sabbath to Sunday: A Historical Investigation of the Rise of Sunday Observance in Early Christianity*, being published in 1997AD by the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome, Italy, with the official Catholic imprimatur-approval. Pope Paul VI awarded Bacchiocchi a gold medal for earning the summa cum laude distinction in this research and school work.

time and again in the history of [so-called] Christianity, some church leaders and religious organizations have chosen expediency and compromise, rather than commitment to biblical teachings.

The change from Sabbath to Sunday was not simply one of names or numbers, but of authority, meaning and experience. It was a change from a HOLY DAY divinely established to enable us to experience more freely and more fully the awareness of divine presence and peace in our lives, into a HOLIDAY to seek for personal pleasure and profit. This historical change has greatly affected the quality of Christian life of countless Christians who throughout the centuries have been deprived of the physical, mental, and spiritual renewal the Sabbath is designed to provide [and, indeed, one of the key markers of God's people]. The change has also contributed to the enormous decline in church attendance which is threatening the survival of mainline churches in numerous Western countries.

The recovery of the Sabbath is especially needed today when our [very beings or minds], fragmented, penetrated and desiccated by a cacophonous, tension-filled culture, cry out for the release and realignment that awaits us on the Sabbath Day.

Rediscovering the Sabbath in this cosmic age provides the basis for a cosmic faith, a faith which embraces and unites creation, redemption, and final restoration; the past, the present, and the future; man, nature, and God; this world and the world to come. It is a faith that recognizes God's dominion over the whole creation and human life by consecrating to Him the seventh day; a faith that fulfils the believer's true destiny in time and eternity, a faith that allows the Saviour to enrich our lives with a larger measure of His presence, peace, and rest.³⁹²

Luther's Larger Catechism, maintaining Sunday worship, excused it so: '[T]o avoid the unnecessary disturbance which an innovation [the return to Sabbath worship] would occasion, it should continue to be Sunday.'

Harlot daughters & Sunday

Organizations which claim their belief is based on Scripture only³⁹³ and observe Sunday merely expose their hypocrisy. The weekly Sabbath is the only one of the ten commandments which is introduced with the word: '*Remember*.' This is necessary since the annual calendar, based on the sun and moon, cannot give the start of the week. It has to be handed down from on high, and then kept, religiously and rigorously.

The harlot daughters have adopted Roman Sunday worship, despite knowing its provenance and that it is completely contrary to God's Law. The Roman Catechism says: 'We observe Sunday instead of Saturday

³⁹² Bacchiocchi, Dr. *Samuele*, *From Sabbath to Sunday: How Did it Come About?* (excerpted and abridged; with added comment and clarification in square brackets; sublinear emphasis added)

³⁹³ Latin: sola scriptura.

because the Catholic church in the council of Laodicea³⁹⁴ transferred the solemnity from Saturday to Sunday,³⁹⁵ and, 'Had she [the Catholic church] not power....she could not have substituted the observance of Sunday, the first day of the week, for the observance of Saturday, the seventh day of the week, a change for which there is no scriptural authority.'³⁹⁶ This quickly became deeply-rooted in Protestantism:

1. Baptist: 'There is no scriptural evidence of the change of the Sabbath institution from the seventh to the first day;'³⁹⁷
2. Congregationalist: 'It is quite clear that however rigidly or devotedly we may spend Sunday, we are not keeping the Sabbath;'³⁹⁸
3. Methodist: 'Many believed that Christ changed the Sabbath. But from His own words, we see that He came for no such purpose. Those who believe that Jesus changed the Sabbath base it only on a superstition;'³⁹⁹ and,
4. Episcopalian: 'We have made the change from the seventh day to the first day, from Saturday to Sunday, on the authority of the one holy, catholic, apostolic church of Christ [sic]!'⁴⁰⁰

This is summed from the view of Romanism: 'It is well to remind the Presbyterians, Baptists, Methodist, and all the other Christians [sic], that the Bible does not support them anywhere in their observance of Sunday. Sunday is an institution of the Roman Catholic Church and those who obey the day observe a commandment of the Catholic church.'⁴⁰¹

Summary

In summary, the inauguration of Sunday worship, and the proscription on Sabbath worship,⁴⁰² is seen to be the product of the pagan Roman Empire and a deeply pagan Roman church which has the effrontery to call 'herself' Christian. It had nothing to do with the early Christian church, and it has nothing to do today with the

³⁹⁴ in 354AD

³⁹⁵ Geiermann, Peter, *The Convert's Catechism of Catholic Doctrine*, p.50

³⁹⁶ Keenan, Stephen, *A Doctrinal Catechism*, p.174 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

³⁹⁷ Hiscox, E. T., *Baptist Manual*

³⁹⁸ Dale, Dr. R. W., *The Ten Commandments*, pp.106,107

³⁹⁹ Binney, Amos, *Theological Compendium*, p.180

⁴⁰⁰ Seymour, Bishop, *Why We Keep Sunday*

⁴⁰¹ Brady, statement reported in *New Jersey News*, 18 March, 1903AD

⁴⁰² Barclay, William, *The Plain Man's Guide to Ethics*, p.46:

'The word worship is a very wide word. Worship is worth-ship, and to worship is to confess and experience the supreme worth of God.'

Judaeo-Christian church. All Judaeo-Christians keep the weekly Sabbath, from sunset on Friday evening to sunset on Saturday evening, as God commands.

‘One thing has become completely and inescapably clear. The Sabbath day and the Lord’s Day [Sunday] are different days and commemorate different events.’⁴⁰³ Should the Church keep the Sabbath?⁴⁰⁴ Most certainly! It’s the commandment of God.

⁴⁰³ Barclay, William, *The Plain Man’s Guide to Ethics*, p.39 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets). There is one further and fundamental difference of extreme importance. Whilst the first is God-instituted, the latter is merely of man’s making.

⁴⁰⁴ Mark 2:23f.,3:1f.; Luke 13:15f.,14:1

Chapter 34

God's Annual & Other Holy Days Christian Meaning

As revealed in John,⁴⁰⁵ God's purpose relates to saving the entire of mankind; not just the Jew, or the Israelite, or the firstfruits. It is open to everyone who is willing to repent, be baptised for the remission of sins, and receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. This would be more widely known had man not replaced God's holy days with a pagan mix of religious holidays of his own imagination, appending the label 'Christian' to the resulting ensemble. God's plan of salvation is pictured in the annual holy days described in the twenty-third chapter of Leviticus. Each one has its own meaning and forms part of the overall plan, forming a '*shadow of things to come*.'⁴⁰⁶

God's annual holy days

'Travel was permitted on the feast days for holy purposes, 'that it might be distinctly known that travelling, which was forbidden on the Sabbath, was not prohibited on feast days.'⁴⁰⁷ Therefore the cadence of 'holiness,' on the basis of restricted activity,⁴⁰⁸ is:

⁴⁰⁵ John 3:17

⁴⁰⁶ Col 2:17a, '*Which are a shadow of things to come.*'

⁴⁰⁷ Edersheim, Alfred, *Jesus the Messiah*, p.878

⁴⁰⁸ Hebrew: Shabbath, properly, means '*ceasing*.' The weekly Sabbath and the day of Atonement are referred to in Scripture as Shabbath Shabbathowns, or, more meaningfully in English, '*ceasing, of ceasing*,' importing a complete prohibition of all forms of work. Shabbathowns, such as the other annual holy days—save Passover, which has a

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1. Atonement;
 2. The weekly Sabbath;
 3. Other feasts (including new moons); and,
 4. Passover (where before Jesus' sacrifice, cooking was mandatory).

Rosh hashanah

The phrase rosh hashanah is taken to simply mean '*the head of the year*.' Rosh means '*head*,' and the second word—besides its ha shanah '*of the year*' common meaning—may be taken to be linked in sentiment and near-anagrammatically, rather than in strict philology, to the conjoining of two other Hebrew words: yasha, '*to be open wide or free*,' and na, a particle of entreaty, best translated as '*please*' or, possibly, '*I pray now*.'⁴⁰⁹ Thus, in this view, it means much more than the start of the sacred year. In fact, it is rendered as a plea to God to start the divine process of freeing His people from bondage, with immediate effect: '*Begin to save now, we pray thee*.' This particular plea can only be made by the 'elect' on the correct day, Rosh hashanah, on God's sacred calendar, for only the 'elect' keep the new moon Shabbathowns.⁴¹⁰

God's new year

'The modern Jewish calendar, as it is know, revolves around the first day of Tishri, the so called holiday of Rosh hashanah, or New Year. This holiday is celebrated by Jews the world over as New Year's Day. To the Jews, Rosh hashanah literally means, 'Chief' or 'Head of the Year.' It begins the fall holy day season. But, is this really a Scriptural truth or viewpoint? Does the Bible anywhere call the first day of Tishri 'Rosh hashanah'?'⁴¹¹ ⁴¹² No, it does not!

classification of its own, q.v. inf.—are '*of ceasing*,' further defined in Lev 23:7,8 as the prohibition of servile work (but not all forms of work, cf. 'Permissible on Sabbaths' in Appendix) on the first and last days of Unleavened Bread, with the same prohibition found in v.21 for Pentecost, in vv.24,25 for the day of Trumpets, and in vv.34-36 for the first day of Tabernacles and the eighth or Last Great Day. The weekly Sabbath's designation Shabbath Shabbathown gives a clear inference as to what is to be done when a new moon or annual holy day Shabbathown lands on a weekly Sabbath, where the weekly Sabbath restrictions take precedence.

⁴⁰⁹ Hebrew: Hoshiana, '*Hosanna*,' related linguistically, also exhibits the derivation.

⁴¹⁰ q.v. inf.; the -own suffix imports the added meaning of emphasis or a singling out; the high priests of temple times robed up for the annual festivals, the new moons, and the weekly Sabbath observances.

⁴¹¹ Hoffman, Michael, *Judaism Discovered*, p.940 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets): 'This day [Rosh hashanah] also witnesses a strange Babylonian superstition, tashlikh, involving crumbs tossed into a pond, stream, or other body of water. Johannes Pfefferkorn was the first scholar to document this practice for western researchers, in 1508[AD].'

⁴¹² Hoffman, Michael, *Judaism Discovered*, p.924 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

Incredible as it may sound, the Scriptures declare an altogether different day as being the true 'Rosh hashanah.' In the chapter we often quote leading up to the first Passover, YHWH says to Moses and Aaron: 'This month shall be unto you the beginning⁴¹³ of months:⁴¹⁴ it shall be the FIRST MONTH OF THE YEAR⁴¹⁵ to you.'

In Exodus, YHWH says, *"This day came ye out in the month Abib."*⁴¹⁶ *"The Scripture cannot be broken."*⁴¹⁷ The true Rosh hashanah, according to the Scriptures, is Abib 1, not Tishri 1. YHWH says, *"Thou shalt keep the feast of unleavened bread....in the time appointed of the month ABIB; for in it thou camest out of Egypt."*⁴¹⁸

In the book of Leviticus, YHWH makes this crystal clear: HE said, "These are the feasts of YHWH, even holy convocations, which ye shall proclaim in their seasons. In the fourteenth day of the FIRST MONTH at even is YHWH's Passover."⁴¹⁹ Which month is this "first" month? ABIB. Not Tishri. As far as the first day of Tishri is concerned, this same chapter says: "In the SEVENTH MONTH, in the first day of the month, shall ye have a sabbath, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, an holy convocation."⁴²⁰ Notice that this holy day is not called "Rosh hashanah" in the Scriptures—it is clearly identified as YOM TERUAH—the "the day of blowing of trumpets." Also, notice that Tishri is called the seventh month in Scripture—never the "first" month.⁴²¹

Numbers also speaks of Abib—the month of Passover—as being the "first month" of the year.⁴²² And it is the "seventh month, on the first day of the month," that was to be "a day of blowing the trumpets unto you."⁴²³ Notice again that this holy day is Yom Teruah in Scripture—NOT "Rosh hashanah," as the Jews insist on calling it today.

On the 1st day of the Seventh month (Tishri) the Torah commands us to observe a "Day of Shouting"⁴²⁴ on which work is forbidden. This holiday is widely known today by the Rabbinic misnomer "Rosh Hashanah." The Bible never calls this holiday Rosh hashanah but instead variously calls it Yom Teruah (Day of Shouting) and Zicharon Teruah (Remembrance Shouting). The Rabbis renamed the holiday Rosh hashanah (New Years') claiming that the Jewish year actually begins in Tishri. The absurdity of this claim is immediately

'The first month of the calendar is the month of Nisan [Abib], coinciding with Passover as stipulated by God in Exodus chpt. 12. However, [Judaism's] Rosh hashanah New Year occurs in the seventh month, Tishri [Ethanim], which is when the [Judaic] year changes. In Judaism, the [Judaic] calendar is used for divination, astrology, and numerology.'

⁴¹³ Hebrew: rosh.

⁴¹⁴ Hebrew: chodesh.

⁴¹⁵ Hebrew: ha-shana.

⁴¹⁶ Ex13:4; Abib means 'ears of grain,' not 'green ears.'

⁴¹⁷ John 10:35

⁴¹⁸ Ex 23:15

⁴¹⁹ Lev.23:4,5

⁴²⁰ Lev.23:24

⁴²¹ Lev 23:27,34

⁴²² Num 28:16

⁴²³ Num.29:1

⁴²⁴ Lev 23:23-25; Num 29:1-6

apparent since the Bible refers to this holiday as falling out in the Seventh month (Tishri is a later name never used in the Torah). How could New Years fall out in the Seventh month?!

The actual beginning of the year is described in Exodus which states *"This month will be for you the beginning of months; It is first of the months of the year."*⁴²⁵ After this explicit statement the Torah proceeds to describe the ceremony of the Passover sacrifice which is to take place in this First month. Similarly, Leviticus chapter twenty-three and Numbers chapter twenty-eight list the holidays and both passages describe Passover in the First month and Yom Teruah in the Seventh month. Thus there can be no question that the *"beginning of months"* mentioned in Exodus refers to the first of Abib (in which Passover is celebrated) and not to Yom Teruah which takes place in the Seventh month.

The Rabbis claim that later in the Tanach Yom Teruah is referred to as Rosh Hashanah. Indeed, the expression Rosh Hashanah does appear in Ezekiel, which reads *"In the beginning of the year (Rosh Hashanah) on the tenth of the month."*⁴²⁶ The fact that this verse refers to the tenth day of *"Rosh Hashanah"* makes it clear that the reference here is to the entire first month and not to the first day of the year. Even if Ezekiel is referring to the first day of the first month there is no justification to say he is referring to anything other than the first day of Abib (First month).

Undoubtedly the Rabbis felt a need to associate Yom Teruah with New Year's because they felt uncomfortable that the Bible does not give us a reason for celebrating this holiday as it does for all of the other Biblical holidays (such as the Exodus for Hag Hamatzot and Harvest for Shavuot). However, the true nature of Yom Teruah can be adduced from its name. In the Bible "Teruah" means to make a loud noise either by blowing a horn⁴²⁷ or by shouting in prayer.⁴²⁸ The purpose of Yom Teruah then was probably to shout to YHWH in prayer similar to the idea commonly expressed in the Psalms such as, *"Shout unto God with a singing voice!"*⁴²⁹ which uses the same verbal root as "Teruah". The Rabbis claim that this noise making can only be done with a Shofar.⁴³⁰ There is no Biblical evidence for this assertion and on the contrary as has been shown the word "Teruah" can indicate various methods of noise making from shouting in prayer to blowing on the Silver Trumpets, all of which the Bible describes as acts of worshipping YHWH.⁴³¹ (see also Psalm 150).

Biblical Verses which mention Yom Teruah: *"And YHWH spoke unto Moses saying, Speak to the Children of Israel saying, In the Seventh month on the first of the month will be a day of rest (Shabbaton) for you, a Remembrance Shouting, a holy convocation. You shall do no work and you will bring a fire sacrifice to YHWH."*

⁴²⁵ Ex 12:2

⁴²⁶ Ezek 40:1

⁴²⁷ e.g. shofar, Lev 25:9; silver trumpets Num 10:5,6

⁴²⁸ Psa 100:1

⁴²⁹ Psa 47:2

⁴³⁰ ram's horn.

⁴³¹ cf. Psa 150

⁴³² *"And in the Seventh month on the first of the month will be a holy convocation for you; you shall do no work, it will be a Day of Shouting for you."*⁴³³ *"Hear this, O ye that swallow up the needy, that make the poor of the land to fail, Saying, When will New Moon Day pass that we may sell our grain, and the Sabbath, that we may set forth wheat, making the ephah small, and the shekel great, and falsifying with deceitful balances?"*^{434 435}

Passover

The first of God's annual feasts is the Passover. Nowhere is the Passover referred to as a sabbath or a shabbathown in the Bible. In this, it is unique in all the holy days in the Law.

Slaying the Passover lamb,⁴³⁶ presages the death of the Lamb of God,⁴³⁷ Christ, for the collective sins of all mankind. Indeed, everyone's salvation begins with heartfelt repentance, a wholesale revulsion of the former self, the desire to put away evil and to become conformed to God, and the knowledge of Christ's blood sacrifice being in our stead.

Christ kept the Passover on the evening of the fourteenth day of the first month,⁴³⁸ this sometimes being described in now common parlance as the 'evening before': the evening and day in that order being the completed day. The Jews of the day, in the main, kept their Passover one day later, according to their tradition. This is still the Jewish custom. Josephus, however, notes: '[W]e keep a feast for eight days which is called unleavened bread'.... 'The feast of unleavened bread succeeds that of the Passover, and falls on the fifteenth day of the month, and continues seven days, wherein they feed on unleavened bread.'⁴³⁹ Luke, however, settles the day of the Judæo-Christian Passover on the day Christ kept it, and, in doing so, shows the Jews' keeping it one day later: *'And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this the Passover with you before I suffer.'*⁴⁴⁰ The definite article in Greek is present, although not translated in the K.J.V.

In what is usually termed the Celtic Church in Britain, where Passover and Unleavened Bread were celebrated before being brought to an end by the Roman church, there appears to have been some confusion, in that they had the Passover correctly positioned, but restricted the entire of Passover and Unleavened Bread

⁴³² Lev 23:23-25

⁴³³ Num 29:1-6 (with list of sacrifices for Yom Teruah)

⁴³⁴ Amos 8:4,5

⁴³⁵ Gordon, Nehemiah, *Karaite Korner*

⁴³⁶ Lev 23:5

⁴³⁷ John 1:29

⁴³⁸ Passover is acceptable to miss if on a journey, q.v. Num 9:10, since the small Passover, on the following month, is available in such circumstances. Passover must be kept in Jerusalem, the place where the Lord has chosen to place his name.

⁴³⁹ Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, 2:15:1, 3:10:5

⁴⁴⁰ Luke 22:15 (sublinear emphasis added)

to seven days, thus ending on the twentieth of Abib, rather than the twenty-first.⁴⁴¹ Some would point to, *'Now the first day of the feast of unleavened bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the passover?'*⁴⁴² and, *'And the first day of unleavened bread, when they killed the passover, his disciples said unto him, Where wilt thou that we go and prepare that thou mayest eat the passover?'*⁴⁴³ as clear, incontrovertible proof that the Passover was kept by Christ on the evening of the fifteenth of Abib. However, the word translated *'first'*,⁴⁴⁴ equally meaning *'before,'* is accurately rendered as the latter, in context, for the former is incongruous to the other biblical passages on the matter. When this correction is made, the two passages read thus: *'Now the day before the feast of unleavened bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the passover?'*⁴⁴⁵ *'And the day before unleavened bread, when they killed the passover, his disciples said unto him, Where wilt thou that we go and prepare that thou mayest eat the passover?'*⁴⁴⁶ Luke's, *'Then came the day of unleavened bread, when the passover must be killed,'*⁴⁴⁷ may use a reference common among the Jews at the time of Christ, of combining Passover / Unleavened Bread as an eight-day feast, terming the composite 'unleavened bread,' with the first day being the Passover. However, the word translated *'day,'*⁴⁴⁸ also means *'time.'* This gives the following, clearer meaning for the passage in question: *'Then came the time of unleavened bread, when the passover must be killed.'* This same translation,⁴⁴⁹ *'time,'* can also be introduced into two other verses, giving the following, and rendering the entire congruous to all other biblical passages pertaining to this matter, thus, it is submitted, representing the correct translation: *'Now the time before the feast of unleavened bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the passover?'*⁴⁵⁰ and, *'And the time before unleavened bread, when they killed the passover, his disciples said unto him, Where wilt thou that we go and prepare that thou mayest eat the passover?'*⁴⁵¹ John records at the Passover, *'For some of them thought, for Judas had the bag, that Jesus had said unto him, Buy those things that we have need of against the feast.'*⁴⁵² The *'feast'* mentioned here is obviously the first of Unleavened Bread which started after sunset at the end of the fourteenth of Abib, that is, on the fifteenth of Abib. No purchase or sale of goods was permitted on this feast day, so the Passover must have been taken at the start of the fourteenth.

⁴⁴¹ Bede, *Ecclesiastical History* II. 2; III. 3,25; it is unlikely that the Celtic Church had much else held even remotely correctly, as it seems, in far too many ways, to have been what was essentially a parallel organization to the Roman variety.

⁴⁴² Mat 26:17

⁴⁴³ Mark 14:12

⁴⁴⁴ Greek: protos.

⁴⁴⁵ Mat 26:17 (emended)

⁴⁴⁶ Mark 14:12 (emended)

⁴⁴⁷ Luke 22:7

⁴⁴⁸ Greek: hemera.

⁴⁴⁹ for herema.

⁴⁵⁰ Mat 26:17 (emended further)

⁴⁵¹ Mark 14:12 (emended further)

⁴⁵² John 13:29

The biblical account of the Passover and the Exodus, around which the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread are structured, being a statute to be observed in all generations of the children of Israel, as *'ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance forever*,⁴⁵³ matches seamlessly with the Judæo-Christian Passover. The Passover lamb was slain on the evening of the fourteenth of Abib, at dusk, between sunset and total darkness,⁴⁵⁴ *'between the evenings*,⁴⁵⁵ and the children of Israel were commanded to remain in their houses until dawn. Thereafter, they assembled during daylight hours and looted the Egyptians, then went out from the Egyptians in the following night, the night of the fifteenth of Abib, as can be gleaned from, *'for in the month of Abib the Lord thy God brought thee out of Egypt by night*.⁴⁵⁶ Some have posited that this verse refers to the leaving of Egypt through the parting of the Red Sea, but Exodus makes it abundantly clear that that miraculous escape happened during daylight hours.⁴⁵⁷

An article claiming to offer the reason for the disparity in the day of observance and the error in the Judaic tradition had this: 'Why do the Jews hold their Passover a day later than the Passover observed by Moses, Nehemiah, and Jesus? How and when did this change come about?

The differences: While the Jews had the responsibility for preserving the correct calendar,⁴⁵⁸ the interpretation behind the calendar days was not to be determined by them. The reason for this is plain. Only God retains the right to tell us what date on the calendar to keep His festivals. No man has that right! In regard to the Passover, it is God who tells us to observe it on the evening of Nisan the fourteenth.⁴⁵⁹ This is the time Christ kept it. But some of the Jews in the first-century observed the evening of the fifteenth. Even though the

⁴⁵³ Ex 12:14,17

⁴⁵⁴ between c.6.00 and 7.30pm

⁴⁵⁵ Hebrew: ben ha'arbayim, *'between the evenings*'; Karaite Korner: *'Between the evenings*.

The Torah commands us: "In the First Month on the fourteenth day of the month, between the two evenings [Hebrew: "Bein Ha'arabayim"], is the Passover [Sacrifice] to YHWH." In biblical Hebrew, the word "evening" (Ayin-Resh-Bet) indicates both the "early part of the night" as well as the actual "onset of evening". In the expression "between the two evenings" the first "onset of evening" is sunset (when the disk of the sun disappears) while the second "onset of evening" is the disappearance of the last rays of the sun and the onset of total darkness. The expression "between the two evenings" is used interchangeably with the term "Ba-Erev" (literally: "at evening") which itself refers to the "onset of the evening". For example, in the incident of the Manna it is written (Ex 16:11-13):

"I have heard the complaints of the Children of Israel; speak to them saying *'Between the two evenings you shall eat meat*'... And it was at evening that the quail rose up and covered the camp."

We see in this passage that an event predicted as happening "*between the two evenings*" is said to have happened "*at evening*." The meaning of "*at evening*" itself can be learned from the verse "*....you shall slaughter the Passover [sacrifice] at evening, at sunset*" (Deut 16:6, with added comment and clarification in square brackets). We see in this verse that "*at evening*" and "*at sunset*" are interchangeable expressions (used in "apposition").

To summarize, the Torah describes the time of the Passover Sacrifice with three different expressions: "*At Sunset*", "*At Evening*", "*Between the Two Evenings*." All three of these terms refer to the early evening, shortly after sunset.'

⁴⁵⁶ Deut 16:1b

⁴⁵⁷ Ex 14:10-28

⁴⁵⁸ in error, or, at least, the Jews did not do it, q.v. *God's Calendar—The Sacred Year*, inf.

⁴⁵⁹ Lev 23:5

correct calendar was utilised by the Jews,⁴⁶⁰ different dates on that calendar were used for Passover. It will be noticed that Christ and His disciples kept the Passover on the evening before the crucifixion,⁴⁶¹ but the next day, some of the Jews refused to come into the judgement hall lest they be disqualified from observing the Pharisee Passover which occurred on the following evening.⁴⁶² This shows that Christ observed Nisan the fourteenth (as the Old Testament commanded), but the Pharisees observed Nisan the fifteenth. The same practice, keeping Nisan the fifteenth instead of the date commanded by God, is still done by all Jews today.

Why Nisan the fifteenth? You would think that the Jews need to learn their own Scriptures, for they seem to be illiterate in regard to the Passover. God tells us, in the clearest language, that the Passover is to be held on the evening of Nisan the fourteenth. Nowhere in the Bible does it state otherwise. But they keep Nisan the fifteenth. Where did such a practice come from?

The answer is to be found in the history of the Jews in the third-century before Christ. During that time,⁴⁶³ the Palestinian Jews came under the control of the Egyptians. These Gentile people imposed their philosophies and religious beliefs upon the Jews in profusion. Dr. Lauterbach, one of Judaism's greatest historians, admits that this period was one of religious anarchy among the Jews of Palestine.⁴⁶⁴ They accepted, on a very large scale, many outright Egyptian customs. For example, Herodotus, who visited Egypt in the fifth-century before Christ, reported that the Egyptians would only drink out of pots and pans which had been scoured every day. They would religiously bathe themselves twice each day—they shunned all foreigners, especially Greeks, and would destroy any vessel which had been touched by a Greek. Such silly laws were inaugurated by the thousands by the Egyptians.⁴⁶⁵

Prior to the Egyptian domination of Palestine, the Jews possessed none of these absurd customs, but after that period of religious anarchy, the Jews began practising, with utmost vigour, those same Egyptian laws.⁴⁶⁶ There can be no question of this.

But what about the Passover? It can be shown that prior to the Egyptian domination, the Jews always kept the Passover on Nisan the fourteenth. Notice especially Ezra: *'And the children of the captivity kept the passover upon the fourteenth day of the first month. And kept the feast of unleavened bread seven days with joy.'*⁴⁶⁷ Here it shows Nisan the fourteenth as Passover and Nisan the fifteenth as the first day of Unleavened Bread (which it is), not as the Passover day. But, after the Egyptian period, the Jews began to observe Nisan the fifteenth for Passover. Why?

⁴⁶⁰ more or less, q.v. inf; but wholesale change occurred later.

⁴⁶¹ Luke 22:13-15

⁴⁶² John 18:28

⁴⁶³ 301–198BC

⁴⁶⁴ Lauterbach, Dr. Jacob Z., *Rabbinic Essays*, p.200

⁴⁶⁵ Herodotus, *The Histories*, Book II, pp.37-41

⁴⁶⁶ Mat 15:2; Mark 7:3-8

⁴⁶⁷ Ezra 6:19-22; especially vv.19,20,22a

Corruption from Egypt! The answer again is found in the Egyptian customs. The Egyptian day customarily commenced with sunrise.⁴⁶⁸ God's day, however, begins at sunset.⁴⁶⁹ This is where the trouble lay with the Passover reckoning after this period of Egyptian influence on the Jews.

While the Egyptians allowed the Jews to retain their ancient calendar, there was a change made in the beginning of the day—it became common to begin the day at sunrise. This custom was adopted, and persisted among the Jews even down to New Testament times.⁴⁷⁰

Notice how diabolically clever the above arrangement becomes when the day begins in the morning. With the fourteenth of Nisan supposedly beginning at sunrise, that puts what God calls the evening of Nisan the fifteenth as still being on Nisan the fourteenth. This is where the problem arises. Even later on, when the Jews finally got back to an evening-to-evening reckoning for the day, they refused to abandon what had become the traditional way of observing Passover. The principle, 'What was good for my fathers, is good enough for me,' was too strong for the Jews to leave it. So, today, they are still one day out of phase with God.⁴⁷¹

While this excerpt explains when and how this slippage occurred, despite its claim, it does not identify the underlying reason why it happened, and why it had to happen. As stated, the Jews keep their Passover one day late, after their tradition, on the fifteenth of Abib.⁴⁷² There is very good reason for this. It is not accidental, or a mere quirk. John shows that the day of the fourteenth of Abib was the preparation of the Passover as the Jews kept it.⁴⁷³ Christ had celebrated it with His disciples the previous evening. The Jews killed the Passover lamb at three o'clock in the afternoon of the fourteenth of Abib in preparation for their fifteenth of Abib Passover. Now three o'clock in the afternoon, in biblical time, is the ninth hour: the self-same hour that Christ died: *'And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Elio, Elio, lama sabach'tha-ni?'*⁴⁷⁴ Which is, My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me? And some of them that stood by, when they heard it, said, behold, he calleth Elias. And one ran and filled a sponge full of vinegar, and put it on a reed, and gave him to drink, saying, Let alone; let us see whether Elias will come to take him down. And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost.'⁴⁷⁵

Slaughtering the Passover lamb, a symbol of Christ, at three o'clock in the afternoon of the fourteenth of Abib⁴⁷⁶ is, in reality, a celebration of killing the Messiah. However unwittingly, the Jews, in erroneously

⁴⁶⁸ Wilkinson, Richard H., *The Complete Gods and Goddesses of Ancient Egypt*, Vol II, p.368

⁴⁶⁹ Lev 23:32

⁴⁷⁰ q.v. *Jewish Quarterly Review*, April 1946AD; proof also given in *The Expository Times*, June 1948AD, pp.250,251.

⁴⁷¹ *The Good News*, April 1963AD, pp.11,12,14, article 'The Bible & History Prove The Jews Don't Observe Passover'; and usually more, q.v. inf.

⁴⁷² referred to as Nisan by the Jews; Abib means 'ears of grain,' not 'green ears.'

⁴⁷³ John 19:14

⁴⁷⁴ Aramaic.

⁴⁷⁵ Mark 15:34-37

⁴⁷⁶ although sometimes other than on the actual 14th Abib, depending upon the impact of the Judaic postponement and leap year errors, q.v.

keeping their Passover one day late on the fifteenth of Abib, actually celebrate their part in the death of Christ. In reality, this is no better than celebrating pagan Easter. This has to be, however, as the correct celebration of the Passover, in the correct form, including foot-washing,⁴⁷⁷ in Jerusalem on the evening of the true fourteenth of Abib, 'the evening before' or 'early fourteenth' in current common parlance, is a key indicator of God's 'elect'.⁴⁷⁸ God's 'elect,' at the present time, is not comprised of very many Jews, so the bulk of the Jews had to be moved or be allowed to move themselves off of the true date.

Likewise, by combining the Passover and the feast of the fifteenth of Abib, the first day of Unleavened Bread, Judaism contaminates the second of God's annual Sabbaths. The malaise continues to Pentecost, where the Pharisaic Jews altered the modus of counting, commencing from the annual Sabbath of the fifteenth of Abib (which is often wrongly computed by them in any event), rather than from the weekly Sabbath occurring in the feast of Unleavened Bread, so resulting in their Pentecost rarely landing on a Sunday. Indeed, the Phara-saic mode gives the same calendar date for Pentecost each and every year: the sixth day of Sivan, thus negating the need for any counting of weeks at all. By comparison, the Sadducean method always required counting, and always gave off a Sunday Pentecost.⁴⁷⁹

Sadly it is not only the first three annual feasts of God that the Jews manage to defile. The postponement and leap year errors in the Judaic calendar⁴⁸⁰ lead to the Judaic calendar getting the New Moons (which they do not keep in any event) right only about four percent of the time, and the annual Holy Days right

⁴⁷⁷ foot-washing, q.v. John 13:4-17; but cf. v.10 where being baptised ('*washed*') still needs foot-washing (from constant and unavoidable contact with the evil and secular world). In spite of being '*washed*,' i.e., saved, subject to continuing to walk the required 'strait' path—cp. Titus 3:5—the Judæo-Christian still needs yearly footwashing, q.v. I John 1:7-9.

⁴⁷⁸ Ex 31:13, '*Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily my sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you.*' The '*sabbaths*,' plural, derives from Shabbatim. This includes weekly, annual, seven-yearly (Sabbatical) and fifty-yearly (Yobel or Jubilee) observances. Since the day of Atonement is a Sabbath Shabbathown, and it is a key indicator, the remainder of the annual Shabbathowns are included, for one without its fellows is meaningless in context. Three holy days or feast periods are commanded assemblies in Jerusalem (q.v. Deut 16:16) and, since the first, Unleavened Bread, is inextricably linked to the Passover, that too is included. That leaves the new moons, one of which, Trumpets, is already included as an annual Shabbathown. Since it is also a monthly Shabbathown, and observed as such in addition to the annual observances (q.v. Num 29:1-6), all other new moons are included too; the -own suffix importing the added meaning of emphasis or a singling out, indicating or flagging both the inherent importance and the contextual meaning.

The final part of this covenant / indicator lies in identifying the correct dates for the various feasts. Once this is done, and the days kept according to the Law and the detailed word of God, then the '*sign*' becomes evident, and the '*sanctification*' assured.

Keeping the days on incorrect calendar dates, or on dates according to an incorrect calendar, negates the whole affair.

⁴⁷⁹ q.v. inf.

⁴⁸⁰ excerpted from *Explanatory Supplement to the Astronomical Almanac*, editor Siedelmann, P. Kenneth:

'Up to the 10th-century AD, among the Jews there was disagreement about the proper years for the incalendration and the initial epoch for reckoning years.'

only about two-and-a-half percent of the time. The apostate and obscene Judaic view is: 'Heaven itself yields to the authority of the earthly court of justice as to the fixing of the calendar and the festival days.'⁴⁸¹

As to the importation of the customs of men, other than by the Jews, something of the flavour can be had from the writings of Tertullian. He was a student of Jerome at Alexandria, the same who compiled and edited the Latin Vulgate under contract from papal Rome, destined to become the official Romanist text. Thus Tertullian's writings on the Passover customs of early Christians would be those of the Alexandrine school which exhibited customs based on a heady mix of Judaism and proto-Romanism. During the same period, the Sabbatarian quatordecimans (a clear continuation of the early apostolic Church) and the Judæo-Christian church at large, were receiving their texts from Antioch.

Late in the second-century, Lucian completed the 'received text,' which became the standard Bible used by Sabbath-keepers who followed the fourteenth of Abib Passover commandment. This text, it seems, was used by 'the valley dwellers of Europe,' or the Vallenses, and, later, by the Waldenses and others. Much later it was adopted by Protestants as the basis of their Bible after the Reformation, and with a relatively few, mainly well-known and certainly notable exceptions, the King James Version,⁴⁸² otherwise known as the Authorised Version, of today, insofar as its translation standard allows, bears a very close relationship with this 'received text.'

Schurer, a secular Jewish authority, acknowledges that the Passover begins on the fourteenth of Nisan.⁴⁸³ Also, a Wednesday crucifixion is indicated very clearly by simply counting back three days and three nights from the time of Christ's resurrection: at or near the close of the weekly Sabbath. In turn, this gives Christ's Passover the day prior, the start of the fourteenth of Abib, at dusk.

When this is compared with the properly translated biblical accounts, it is found to fit seamlessly. The Passover was Tuesday evening; the Jewish Passover was Wednesday evening; Christ was crucified on Wednesday, dying at three o'clock in the afternoon on that day; the preparation day for the feast (the First Day of Unleavened Bread) was Wednesday; the First Day of Unleavened Bread was Thursday; Friday was the day that spices and ointments were prepared for Christ's dead body,⁴⁸⁴ and was also the preparation day for the weekly Sabbath; the following day was the weekly Sabbath, and early Sunday morning⁴⁸⁵ they came with the prepared spices to the tomb, only to find it empty, for Christ had risen at the end of the weekly Sabbath.

⁴⁸¹ *Jewish Encyclopedia*, p.337

⁴⁸² K.J.V.

⁴⁸³ Schurer, E., *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Christ*, Vol. 1, *Calendar* appendix, p.593

⁴⁸⁴ as a careful reading of Luke 23:50-56, 24:1-3 shows.

⁴⁸⁵ Barclay, William, *And He Had Compassion*, p.258 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'When the friends of Jesus went to visit His tomb after the Sabbath was past, they were carrying out a routine duty; it was the custom to visit the tombs of the dead every [working] day for a week after the funeral.'

Barclay, William, *The Gospel of John*, Vol.2, pp.265,266 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'It was the custom in Palestine to visit the tomb of a loved one for three days after the body had been laid to rest. It was believed that for three days the spirit of the dead person hovered around the tomb; but then it departed because

In reading the days named here, it should be borne once again in mind that God's day starts at sunset, an evening-to-evening time-span. Also, the reference, above, to a careful reading of the named passages in Luke, refers particularly to verse fifty-six,⁴⁸⁶ for it is patent that there was insufficient time in the remaining three hours of Wednesday for permission to be obtained of Pilate, and for the body to be taken down and laid to rest in the tomb, to permit of any subsequent preparation of spices and ointments. Matthew notes, *'And many women were there beholding afar off, which followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering unto him: Among which was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joses, and the mother of Zebedee's children. When the even was come there came a rich man of Arimathæa, named Joseph, who also himself was Jesus' disciple: He went to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be delivered. And when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, And laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock: and he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre, and departed. And there was Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary, sitting over against the sepulchre.'*⁴⁸⁷ Taking all together, it is apparent that the preparation of the spices and ointments could only have taken place on Friday of that week. John notes that Nicodemus had spices prepared or bought on the fourteenth of Abib, and that these were used in the burial of Christ's body that day,⁴⁸⁸ but they were but little by comparison with what was brought to the empty tomb several days later.

Unleavened bread

Immediately after the Passover comes the seven days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.⁴⁸⁹ These days portray forgiven Christians walking in the newness of life, sensibly without sin: *'Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.'*⁴⁹⁰ Leaven is put out of the home during these days as it pictures sin: *'Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.'*⁴⁹¹

the body had become unrecognizable through decay. Jesus' friends could not come to the tomb on the Sabbath, because to make the journey then would have been to break the Law [depending upon the distance involved, of course, q.v. sup.]....so it was on Sunday morning that Mary came to the tomb. She came very early. The word for early is Greek: proi which was the technical word for the last of the four [Roman] watches into which the night was divided, that which ran from 3am to 6am. It was still grey dark when Mary came, because she could no longer stay away.'

⁴⁸⁶ Luke 23:56

⁴⁸⁷ Mat 27:55-61

⁴⁸⁸ John 19:39,40

⁴⁸⁹ Lev 23:6

⁴⁹⁰ Rom 6:4

⁴⁹¹ I Cor 5:7,8

The 'old leaven' is described in Matthew: *'Then Jesus said unto them, Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees....Then understood they how he bade them not to beware the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.'*⁴⁹²

'Let us try to understand what we mean when we speak of the "doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees." The doctrine of the Pharisees may be summed up in three words: they were formalists, tradition-worshippers, and self-righteous. They attached such weight to the traditions of men that they practically regarded them of more importance than the inspired writings of the Old Testament. They valued themselves on excessive strictness in their attention to all the ceremonial requirements of the Mosaic Law. They thought much of being descended from Abraham, and said in their hearts, *"We have Abraham for our father."*⁴⁹³ ⁴⁹⁴ They fancied

⁴⁹² Mat 16:6,12

⁴⁹³ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of John*, Vol.2, pp.24-26 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets): 'For the Jew, Abraham was the greatest figure in all religious history; and the Jew considered himself safe and secure in the favour of God simply because he was a descendant of Abraham....They believed that Abraham had gained such merit from his goodness that his merit was sufficient, not only for himself, but for all his descendants also. Justin Martyr had a discussion with Trypho the Jew about Jewish religion and the conclusion was that, "the eternal kingdom will be given to those who are the seed of Abraham according to the flesh, even though they be sinners and unbelievers and disobedient to God." (Martyr, Justin, *The Dialogue with Trypho*, p.140). Quite literally, the Jew believed that he was safe because he was a descendant of Abraham.

The attitude of the Jews is not without parallel in modern life.

(a) There are still those who try to live on a pedigree and a name. At some time in the history of their family someone performed some really outstanding service to church or state, and ever since they have claimed a special place because of that. But a great name should never be an excuse for comfortable inaction; it should always be an inspiration to new effort.

(b) There are those who try to live on a history and a tradition. Many a church has a quite undue sense of its own importance because at one time it had a famous ministry. There is many a congregation living on the spiritual capital of the past; but if capital be always drawn upon and never built up anew, the day inevitably comes when it is exhausted. No man or church or nation can live on the achievements of the past. That is what the Jews were trying to do. Jesus is quite blunt about this. He declares in effect that the real descendant of Abraham is the man who acts in the way which Abraham acted. This is exactly what John the Baptist had said before. He had told the people plainly that the day of judgment was on the way and that it was no good pleading that they were descendants of Abraham, for God could raise up descendants to Abraham from the very stones, if He chose to do so (Mat 3:9; Luke 3:8). It was the argument which again and again Paul was to use. It was not flesh and blood which made a man a descendant of Abraham; it was moral quality and spiritual fidelity.

In this particular case Jesus ties it down to one thing. They are seeking a way to kill Him; that is precisely the opposite of what Abraham did. When a messenger from God came to him [actually, the Lord, the Word, with two angels in attendance], Abraham welcomed Him with all eagerness and reverence (Gen 18:1-18). Abraham had welcomed God's messenger; the Jews of the present were trying to kill God's messenger. How could they dare call themselves descendants of Abraham, when their conduct was so very different?

By calling to mind the old story in Genesis chapt. 18, Jesus is implying that He too is the messenger from God. Then He makes the claim explicit: *"I speak what I have seen in the presence of the Father."* The fundamental thing about Jesus is that he brought to men, not His own opinions, but a message from God. He was not simply a man telling other men what he thought about things; He was the Son of God telling men what God thought. He told men the truth as God sees it.

At the end of this passage comes a shattering statement. *"You,"* said Jesus, *"do the works of your father."* He had just said that Abraham was not their father. Who then is their father? For a moment the full impact is held back. It comes in verse 44—their father is the devil. Those who had gloried in the claim that they are the children of Abraham are devastatingly confronted with the charge that they are children of the devil. Their works had revealed their true sonship, for man can prove his kinship to God only by his conduct.'

⁴⁹⁴ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of John*, Vol.2, p.173:

themselves because they had Abraham for their father that they were not in danger of hell like other men, and that their descent from him was a kind of title to heaven. They attached great value to washings and ceremonial purifyings of the body, and believed that the very touching of the dead body of a fly or gnat would defile them. They made a great deal about the outward parts of religion, and such things that could be seen by men. They made broad their phylacteries, and enlarged the fringes of their garments. They prided themselves on paying great honour to dead saints, and garnishing the graves of the righteous. They were very zealous to make converts. They prided themselves in having power, rank, and pre-eminence, and of being called by men, "Teacher, teacher." These things, and many things like these, the Pharisees did. Every well-informed Christian can find these things in the gospels of Matthew and Mark.⁴⁹⁵ Remember, all this time, they did not formally deny any part of the Old Testament Scripture. But they brought in, over and above it, so much of human invention,

'Jesus called Himself the 'true' vine. The point of that word alethinós, true, real, genuine, is this. It is a curious fact that the symbol of the vine is never used in the Old Testament apart from the idea of degeneration. The point of Isaiah's picture (Isa 5:1-7) is that the vineyard has run wild. Jeremiah complains that the nation has turned into "*a degenerate plant of a strange vine*." (Jer 2:21). It is as if Jesus said: "*You think that because you belong to the nation of Israel you are a branch of the true vine of God. But the nation is a degenerate vine, as all your prophets saw. It is I who am the true vine. The fact that you are a Jew will not save you. The only thing that can save you is to have an intimate living fellowship with me, for I am the vine of God and you must be branches joined to me.*" Jesus was laying it down that not Jewish blood but faith in Him was the way to God's salvation. No external qualification can set a man right with God; only the friendship of Jesus Christ can do that.'

Barclay, William, *The Gospel of John*, Vol.2, pp.173,174 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets): 'John 15:1-10: When Jesus drew His picture of the vine He knew what He was talking about. The vine was grown all over Palestine as it still is. It is a plant which needs a great deal of attention if the best fruit is to be got out of it. It is grown commonly on terraces. The ground has to be perfectly clean. It is sometimes trained on trellises; it is sometimes allowed to creep over the ground upheld by low forked sticks; it sometimes even grows round the doors of the cottages; but wherever it grows careful preparation of the soil is essential. It grows luxuriantly and drastic pruning is necessary. So luxuriant is it that the slips are set in the ground at least twelve feet [3.66m] apart, for it will creep over the ground at speed. A young vine is not allowed to fruit for the first three years and each year is cut drastically back to develop and conserve its life and energy. When mature, it is pruned in December and January. It bears two kinds of branches, one that bears fruit and one that does not; and the branches that do not bear fruit are drastically pruned back, so that they will drain away none of the plant's strength. The vine cannot produce the crop of which it is capable without drastic pruning—and Jesus knew that.

Further, the wood of the vine has the curious characteristic that it is good for nothing. It is too soft for any purpose. At certain times of the year, it was laid down by the law, the people must bring offerings of wood to the Temple for the altar fires. But the wood of the vine must not be brought. The only thing that could be done with the wood pruned out of a vine was to make a bonfire of it and destroy it. This adds to the picture Jesus draws.

He says that His followers are like that. Some of them are lovely fruit-bearing branches of Himself; others are useless because they bear no fruit. Who was Jesus thinking of when He spoke of the fruitless branches? There are two answers. First, he was thinking of the Jews. They were branches of God's vine. Was not that the picture that prophet after prophet had drawn? But they refused to listen to Him; they refused to accept Him; therefore they were withered and useless branches. Second, He was thinking of something more general. He was thinking of Christians whose Christianity consists of profession without practice, words without deeds; He was thinking of Christians who were useless branches, all leaves and no fruit. And He was thinking of Christians who became apostates, who heard the message and accepted it and then fell away, becoming traitors to the Master they had once pledged themselves to serve.

So then there are three ways in which we can be useless branches. We can refuse to listen to Jesus Christ at all. We can listen to Him, and then render Him a lip service unsupported by any deeds. We can accept Him as Master, and then, in face of the difficulties of the way or the desire to do as we like, abandon Him. One thing we must remember. It is a first principle of the New Testament that *uselessness invites disaster*. The fruitless branch is on its way to destruction.'

⁴⁹⁵ q.v. Matthew chpts. 15,23; Mark chpt. 7

that they virtually put Scripture aside, and buried it under their own traditions. This is the sort of religion, of which our Lord says to the Apostles, *"Be careful and be on your guard."*

The doctrine of the Sadducees, on the other hand, may be summed up in three words: free-thinking, scepticism, and rationalism. Their creed was far less popular than that of the Pharisees, and, therefore, we find them mentioned less often in the New Testament Scriptures. So far as we can judge from the New Testament, they appear to have held the doctrine of the degrees of inspiration; at all times they attached greater value to the Pentateuch above all the other parts of the Old Testament, if indeed they did not altogether ignore the latter. They believed that there was no resurrection, no angels, and no spirits, and tried to laugh men out of their belief in these things, by bringing forward difficult questions. We have an instance of their mode of argument in the case which they propounded to our Lord of the woman who had seven husbands, when they asked, *"At the resurrection, whose wife will she be of the seven?"* And in this way they probably hoped, by rendering religion absurd, and its chief doctrines ridiculous, to make men altogether give up the faith they had received from the Scriptures. Remember, all this time, we cannot say that the Sadducees were downright infidels: this they were not. We may not say they denied revelation altogether: this they did not do. They observed the Law of Moses. Many of them were found among the priests in the times described in the Acts of the Apostles. Caiaphas who condemned our Lord was a Sadducee. But the practical effect of their teaching was to shake men's faith in any revelation, and to throw a cloud of doubt over men's minds, which was only one degree better than infidelity. And of all such kind of doctrine: free-thinking, scepticism, rationalism, our Lord says, *"Be careful and be on your guard."*

[Christ] knew that during the time that the Church existed, until His return, there would always be some that would add to the Word, and some that would subtract from it, some that would tone it down, by adding to it other things, and some that would bleed it to death, by subtracting from its principal truths. And this is the reason why we find Him delivering this solemn warning: *"Be careful and be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees."*

But I ask any honest-minded, unprejudiced Bible reader to turn to the New Testament and see what he will find there. He will find many plain warnings about false doctrine: *"Watch out for false prophets;"*⁴⁹⁶ *"See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy;"*⁴⁹⁷ *"Do not be carried away by all kinds of strange teachings;"*⁴⁹⁸ and, *"Do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God."*⁴⁹⁹ He will find a large part of several inspired epistles taken up with elaborate explanations of true doctrine and warnings against false teaching.

⁴⁹⁶ Mat 7:15

⁴⁹⁷ Col 2:8

⁴⁹⁸ Heb 13:9

⁴⁹⁹ I John 4:1

The yeast is added to the lump of dough in making a loaf of bread.⁵⁰⁰ This yeast bears but a small proportion to the lump into which it is mixed; just so, our Lord would have us know, the first beginning of false doctrine is but small compared to the body of [true] Christianity. It works quietly and silently; just so, our Lord would have us know, false doctrine works secretly in the heart in which it is once planted. It insensibly changes the character of the whole mass with which it is mingled; just so, our Lord would have us know, the doctrines of the Pharisees and Sadducees turn everything upside down, when once admitted into [the] church or into a man's heart. Let us mark these points: they throw light on many things that we see in the present day. It is of vast importance to receive the lessons of wisdom that this word 'yeast' contains in itself.

False doctrine does not meet men face-to-face, and proclaim that it is false. It does not blow a trumpet before it, and endeavour openly to turn us away from the truth as it is in Jesus. It does not come before men in broad day, and summon them to surrender. It approaches secretly, quietly, insidiously, plausibly, and in such a way as to disarm man's suspicion, and throw him off guard. It is the wolf in sheep's clothing, and Satan in the garb of an angel of light, who have always proved the most dangerous foes of the Church of Christ.⁵⁰¹

⁵⁰⁰ Karaite Korner:

'Hametz (leaven)

There is a centuries-old debate among the Karaites themselves about the definition of Hametz (leaven). According to the first opinion Hametz is the process of leavening that occurs to certain grains when they are mixed with water. The test to identify what types of grain can become Hametz is to take the flour of that grain, mix it with water, and leave it for a few hours. If the dough rises, that grain is subject to becoming Hametz (leaven). On the other hand, if the dough spoils, then that grain or plant is not leavenable and it can be freely used and cooked on Passover.

This seems rather obvious but in the Middle Ages the question arose of whether lentil-flour was permissible on Passover. While lentils are not grains, their flour looks much like wheat-flour. The Rabbanites too puzzled over this issue and to this day Sephardic Rabbanites eat lentils on Passover while Ashkenazic Rabbanites do not. Rather than accept arbitrary rulings, the Karaite sages sat down and performed experiments. They concluded that the flour of lentils does not rise but spoils and therefore lentils in all its forms are permissible on Passover. The same with rice which is also permissible in all its forms on Passover. Adherents of this view include most of the medieval Karaite sages including Aharon ben Elijah and Elijah Baschyatchi as well as the present author.

Not all Karaites agree with this definition. The second school of thought argues that Hametz is not strictly speaking "leavening" but something like "fermentation". They point out that in biblical Hebrew vinegar is called "Hometz Yayin" meaning "*leavened-wine*" (others translate: "*soured wine*"). This is used as proof that Hametz refers not only to the leavening of grains but to any fermentation or souring process. Based on this reasoning, they forbid the consumption of anything fermented. Included in their list of forbidden foods on Passover are all forms of alcohol, and all milk products such as yogurts and cheeses. Some, although not all, include lentils and rice in this list of forbidden items. This school also considers wine to be Hametz, which is somewhat surprising given that vinegar is called "*leavened-wine*" (implying that the difference between wine and vinegar is that the latter is leavened but the former is not!). Adherents of this view include the medieval Karaite sage Samuel al-Maghrebi.'

Judæo-Christian interpretation rests on the leavening process—in 'puffing up'—which must involve a leavening agent, usually yeast, in relation to food. Thus wine is acceptable. Sour wine or vinegar would also be acceptable, since the word used in the latter is chometz, meaning '*sour*,' and not chametz, meaning '*leavened*.'

⁵⁰¹ Ryle, J. C., *Pharisees and Sadducees* (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

Wave-sheaf

The ceremony of the wave-sheaf, conducted during this feast, symbolises Christ's resurrection as the very Firstfruit, and His return in glory. The wave-sheaf, cut from the first of the spring barley, was waved early on a Sunday morning. Only once it had been waved before God could the spring harvest begin. Correspondingly, only after Jesus Christ was resurrected and the Holy Spirit made freely available, on that Pentecost,⁵⁰² could the real firstfruits harvest of man begin.

Pentecost

The next holy day described is the Feast of Weeks,⁵⁰³ kept by the Jews in their tradition as a memorial of the handing down of the Pentateuch.⁵⁰⁴ This feast is referred to as Pentecost⁵⁰⁵ in the New Testament.

Pentecost, meaning '*to number fifty*,' exhibits, on the day-for-a-year basis, a Jubilee: a making good, or restitution. It is a harvest festival, taking place at the close of the spring harvest, the smaller of the two annual harvests in the Holy Land. This represents the relatively small harvest, in numerical terms, comprising the patriarchs, judges, kings, prophets, as well as everyday people who were called by God in the Old Testament, plus all converted, true Christians from the beginning of the Judæo-Christian church era to the time of Christ's Second Coming, the last including the one hundred and forty-four thousand remaining alive and sealed from the tribes of Israel. This spiritual harvest is made possible by the gift of the Holy Spirit, which came to the New Testament church on the Day of Pentecost,⁵⁰⁶ and which was evident in former times in those self-same patriarchs, etc., who were called by God in the Old Testament. The church was not born on that day of Pentecost; it had existed in adumbrated form for millennia by that time.⁵⁰⁷ The general availability of the Holy Spirit to mankind, however, started on that day.

As it is traditionally but erroneously taken by Jews to be the day of God's giving of the Ten Commandments at mount Horeb,⁵⁰⁸ and, correctly, by Judæo-Christians, as the anniversary of the covenant (or wedding)

⁵⁰² 30AD

⁵⁰³ Lev 23:15-21

⁵⁰⁴ God's Law was handed down on the previous day, q.v. sup., Pentecost being the day of the making of the covenant.

⁵⁰⁵ Pentecost is the Greek name and relates to the fifty day count from Passover. Shavuot is the Hebrew name and this literally means '*sevens*' or '*weeks*' and refers to the seven weeks counted after Passover. Shavuot occurs fifty days after Pesach; fifty in the Torah is the number of freedom. It marks the end of the barley harvest and the start of the wheat harvest cycle in Eretz Yisrael, the land of Israel. Shavuot also means '*oaths*,' possibly a residual reference to the solemn covenant made on that day. In biblical times it was also known as Yom ha Bikkurim meaning '*Day of the First Fruits*' (Num 28:6), Hag ha Kazir, meaning '*The Harvest Feast*' (Ex 23:16), and Atzaret, meaning '*The Closing*.' This last title refers to its role as the end of the Passover feast season.

⁵⁰⁶ q.v., Acts chpt. 2; 30AD

⁵⁰⁷ all in Christ are in the church, including the patriarchs, etc.

⁵⁰⁸ q.v. footnote on the day of covenant, sup.; cp. I Kings 19:8b, where the mount is named, '*Horeb the mount of God*. Hebrew: Horeb, '*desert*,' also called Hebrew: Sinai, '*thorny*,' fails to identify the location of the mount, but the Arabic: Nwayba' al Muzayyinah, '*Moses' separation of the waters*,' and Jebel Harb, '*mount Horeb*,' also called Sina, '*hump*'—

between God and the children of Israel, Shavuot or Pentecost is seen as the mark of the coming superior marriage between God (Christ) and His firstfruits 'elect.' In Judæo-Christianity, the time of the feast must have, in its purview, the exact time projected from Scripture for Christ's return '*in the air*' for His 'elect.' For that reason, the feast is kept in Jerusalem—it is a commanded chag feast—at that very time.⁵⁰⁹

Contention

By far the main item of contention concerning Pentecost lies in the exact day of its honouring. The Jewish dispute over the date of Shavuot, which they keep on the fixed date, Sivan the sixth,⁵¹⁰ is recounted by Gruber: 'Cohen⁵¹¹ examined the conflicts in the revolutionary rabbinic seizure of power from the priests and the king. "More often than not, they were generated by issues which champions of the keter kehunah⁵¹² must conventionally have regarded to fall fair and square within their own domain's terms of reference. Yohanan⁵¹³.... challenged priestly and / or Sadducean traditions on the status of rulings handed down by the municipal courts in cases which concerned civil law and commercial transactions;⁵¹⁴ he opposed them on specific details relevant to the laws of uncleanness⁵¹⁵ and the precise dating of the Pentecost festival.⁵¹⁶ He also questioned priestly rights to consume certain parts of sacred offerings; passed judgement on the validity of certain women

from its rounded twin peak resembling the hump of the camel (Arabic: gamal, from the root word meaning 'beauty')—identify both the children of Israel's crossing point of the Gulf of Aqaba (Gulf of Eilat) by land bridge, and the '*mountain of God*' in Midian in Saudi Arabia, while also giving a possible reason for the twin names of the mountain.

⁵⁰⁹ Christ's return '*in the air*' occurs at 00:39 Jerusalem (actually Cairo) I.D.S.T. time (allowing an adjustment for the time difference between Cairo and Jerusalem on that day and the one hour anomaly owing to Israel Daylight Saving Time (I.D.S.T.) vis-a-vis the true midnight); or 21:39 U.T.C. on the previous day, if using the Julian / Gregorian calendar. The principle is also applied to the time of keeping the New Moon King's feast, q.v. inf.

⁵¹⁰ Earl Soham Baptist: 'In modern Reform Judaism, Shavuot has been chosen as the day of confirmation services for boys and girls, replacing the traditional Bar Mitzvah, which occurred on the first Sabbath after a boy's thirteenth birthday. Bar Mitzvah means 'Son of the Commandment' and is the time when a young male takes on the responsibility for keeping the Law or Torah.

In Israel today the first fruits aspect of Shavuot has been revived, after a fashion. Children wearing hair bands of flowers, and carrying baskets of fruit and flowers, make a procession to the synagogue. There is much singing and dancing, and tambourines, recorders and other instruments may be played in the procession. Homes and synagogues are decked with greenery and flowers as a reminder of spring. There is a Jewish legend that Mount Sinai itself was green and covered with flowers, even roses, when God gave the Law to Moses.

It is traditional to eat dairy foods on Shavuot. There are a number of Jewish legends concerning this. The Torah is compared to milk, because it contains everything needed for nourishment, just as milk is a complete food for a baby. Milk is the food of the spring, after the young animals have been born. A more exotic legend is the thought that the Israelites had been fasting while Moses met with God. After Moses came down from the mountain with the Law, the Israelites were so hungry that they could not wait to kill and prepare meat, so instead made a meal of dairy food. Whatever the reason, dairy foods such as cheese blintzes and cheesecake are strongly associated with this festival.'

⁵¹¹ Cohen, Stuart A., *The Three Crowns: Structure of Communal Politics in Early Rabbinic Jewry*.

⁵¹² authority / crown of the priesthood.

⁵¹³ Yohanan, ben Zakkai.

⁵¹⁴ Mishnah, Ketubot 13:1,2

⁵¹⁵ tevil yom; Tosephta, Parah 3:8

⁵¹⁶ TB Menahot 65a

to be considered permitted marriage partners for priests,⁵¹⁷ and insisted on the priestly obligation to pay the Temple dues prescribed in Exodus.^{518 519}

In other words, Judaism chooses to keep the wrong day, and this before any consideration is given to the question of the basic validity of the Judaic calendar.⁵²⁰ Since Pentecost was the day of inauguration of the church era and the wholesale availability and conferring of the Holy Spirit, Judaism wittingly excludes itself from the inherent blessings. Again, by not being comprised of God's 'elect,' save a few at the present time, the vast bulk of Jews cannot be included in the firstfruits.⁵²¹

Later, it will be seen that the return of the Messiah to the mount of Olives will occur on the day of Trumpets. Therefore, the three annual festivals of God, which reflect and symbolise events on earth before the Second Coming, have been altered in a most fundamental manner in the Jewish tradition. In so doing, Judaism clearly identifies itself as being other than in compliance with the word of God: the Law.

While the Jewish date for Pentecost has been discussed, some non-Jews have maintained in the past that Pentecost, strangely, should be kept on a Monday, whilst many Law-keeping non-Jews keep it on a Sunday, numbering seven Sabbaths and one day, totalling fifty, in accordance with the instructions given in Leviticus: *'And ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the sabbath, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave offering; seven sabbaths shall be complete: Even unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath shall ye number fifty days; and ye shall offer a new meat offering unto the Lord.'*⁵²² In other words, counting from the Sunday immediately following the weekly Sabbath falling in Unleavened Bread, seven Sabbaths shall be completed, ending, obviously, with a Sabbath. The following day, a Sunday, the fiftieth of the count, is Pentecost.

A different method is described in Deuteronomy: *'Seven weeks shalt thou number unto thee: begin to number the seven weeks from such time as thou beginnest to put the sickle to the corn. And thou shalt keep the feast of weeks unto the Lord thy God.'*⁵²³ This gives seven weeks from the start of the spring harvest to Pentecost: a Sunday to a Sunday. Although the method is slightly different, the result is the same.

Some, in desperation of proving a Monday, have even resorted to reading the word *'weeks'*⁵²⁴ for *'sabbaths'*,⁵²⁵ in Leviticus, and then wilfully misapplying or misinterpreting everything following. Of course, this is extremely poor exegesis. Put simply, there is no biblical authority whatsoever for a Monday Pentecost.

⁵¹⁷ Mishnah, *Eduyyot* 8:3

⁵¹⁸ Ex 30:13; Mishnah, *Shegalim* 1:4

⁵¹⁹ Gruber, Daniel, *Rabbi Akiba's Messiah: The Origins of Rabbinic Authority*, p.95 (sublinear emphasis added)

⁵²⁰ q.v. inf.

⁵²¹ save three times 12,000 from the tribes of Judah, Levi, and Benjamin, or a quarter of those sealed at the end-time, q.v. inf.

⁵²² Lev 23:15,16

⁵²³ Deut 16:9,10

⁵²⁴ in Deut 16:9; Hebrew: *shabuwa*.

⁵²⁵ in Lev 23:15; Hebrew: *shabbath*.

The various contentions are dealt with, with varying success, by the Karaites⁵²⁶ who erroneously maintain that the first wave-sheaf offering in Israel was made at Gilgal, and is implicit in the tract in Joshua.⁵²⁷ This is contrary to the instruction of the Lord that this solemn ceremony be held after the children of Israel enter the Promised Land, and reap their harvest thereof: *'Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye be come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest unto the priest: And he shall wave the sheaf before the Lord, to be accepted for you: on the morrow after the sabbath the priest shall wave it. And ye shall offer that day when ye wave the sheaf an he lamb without blemish of the first year for a burnt offering unto the Lord. And the meat offering thereof shall be two tenth deals of fine flour mingled with oil, an offering made by fire unto the Lord for a sweet savour: and the drink offering thereof shall be of wine, the fourth part of an hin.'*⁵²⁸ There was no harvest of the children of Israel in the Promised Land to be reaped at Gilgal at that time. Also, there is no mention whatsoever of a wave-sheaf offering in the referenced tract in Joshua.

While the Karaites can keep Pentecost on the correct day,⁵²⁹ unfortunately they fail to keep the Passover correctly, observing it at the start of the fifteenth of Abib, rather than the fourteenth. This gives rise to certain date corrections: 'Unlike other holidays, the Feast of Weeks is not given a fixed calendar date but rather we are commanded in the Bible to celebrate it at the end of a fifty day count often referred to as "The Omer."⁵³⁰ The commencement of this fifty day period is marked by a "wave offering" of the first sheaves of the harvest brought on the *"morrow after the Sabbath"* during the Feast of Unleavened Bread. The Torah commands us *"And you shall count from the morrow after the Sabbath from the day you bring the Wave Sheaf; seven whole weeks shall you count."*⁵³¹ In the late Second Temple times a famous debate arose between the Boethusians and the Pharisees about whether the *"morrow after the Sabbath"* refers to the first Sunday during the Feast of Unleavened Bread or the second day of the feast itself.⁵³² Like the Boethusians (and ancient Israelites before them undoubtedly), the Karaites count the fifty days of the Omer from the first Sunday during the Feast of Unleavened Bread and consequently always celebrate Shavuot on a Sunday.

That this is the intention of the Bible is very clear from a number of passages. The Pharisees / Rabbanites argue that in the phrase, *"the morrow after the Sabbath,"* the Sabbath referred to is the first day of Un-

⁵²⁶ *Encyclopedia Americana*: 'A religious doctrine....formed in Baghddad in the 8th-century by the Hebrew Anan Ben David in collaboration with the Muslim Abu-Hanifawhich acknowledges one source of the Law: the Old Testament of the Bible in the version adopted by the Christian church. Karaism rejects the Talmud and rabbinical interpretations, but recognises Jesus and Mohammed as great prophets. Its dogmas and principles have been borrowed both from Christianity and Mohammedanism, amongst others. The belief in the 'transmigration of the soul' (metempsychosis) was borrowed from the pre-Islamic Arabs. It is a small sect, found mainly in Russia.'

⁵²⁷ Josh 5:10-12

⁵²⁸ Lev 23:10-13 (sublinear emphasis added)

⁵²⁹ subject to the vagaries of their calendar.

⁵³⁰ an omer is one tenth of an ephah, and a measure of the flour needed to make one day's personal supply of bread.

⁵³¹ Lev 23:15

⁵³² i.e., 16th Abib.

leavened Bread. While it is theoretically possible that the first day of Unleavened Bread would be referred to as a Sabbath as work is explicitly forbidden on that day, nevertheless it should be noted that the Bible never calls this day a Sabbath nor does it call it a Shabbaton as it does for the weekly Sabbath⁵³³ and the Day of Atonement.⁵³⁴ Furthermore, we are commanded, *"Until the morrow after the seventh Sabbath shall you count fifty days."*⁵³⁵ Whereas the first day of Unleavened Bread [is] called a Sabbath⁵³⁶ there is no way the fifth day of Sivan (which is the forty-ninth day of the Omer in the Rabbanite reckoning) could be called a Sabbath. This being so, according to the Rabbanite system, the fiftieth day of the Omer (= Shavuot) would not be on *"the morrow after the seventh Sabbath"* as commanded.⁵³⁷ The only way for the forty-ninth day of the Omer to be a Sabbath, thereby making the fiftieth day *"the morrow after the Sabbath"* as commanded,⁵³⁸ is if the first day of the Omer is on a Sunday. If the first day of the Omer is on a Sunday then Shavuot will be on a Sunday, that is *"on the morrow after the seventh Sabbath."* Clearly then, in the phrase *"morrow after the Sabbath,"* *"Sabbath"* has the sense of *"the seventh day of the week"* and not the first day of Unleavened Bread.

Another passage which indicates that the first day of the Omer has to be the Sunday during the Feast of Unleavened Bread is found in Joshua. We are told there of the children of Israel's entrance into Canaan and the cessation of the manna, *"And they ate of the produce of the land on the morrow after the Pesach"*⁵³⁹ ⁵⁴⁰ (sacrifice) *matzot and parched (barley) on this very day. And the manna ceased on the morrow when they ate of the produce of the land."*⁵⁴¹ As one may recall, the children of Israel were forbidden to eat of the new crops until the day of the Wave Sheaf offering as is commanded: *"And bread and parched (barley) and Carmel"*⁵⁴² *you will not eat until this very day until you bring the sacrifice of your God, it shall be an eternal statute for your generations in all your habitations."*⁵⁴³ Undoubtedly the expression in Joshua,⁵⁴⁴ describing the eating of the *"Matzot and parched (barley)...on this very day"* is a reference to the command in Leviticus, *"And bread and parched (barley)....you will not eat until this very day."*⁵⁴⁵

⁵³³ Lev 23:3; the first of Unleavened Bread is a Shabbathown (as is the last); Passover is neither a Sabbath nor a Shabbathown; the weekly Sabbath is a Sabbath, and is also referred to as a Sabbath Shabbathown (with the -own suffix importing the added meaning of emphasis or a singling out).

⁵³⁴ Lev 23:32; this statement is erroneous, for the first day of Unleavened Bread is indeed a form of Sabbath, correctly a Shabbathown, q.v. Lev 23:21

⁵³⁵ Lev 23:16

⁵³⁶ in context, confused.

⁵³⁷ Lev 23:16

⁵³⁸ Lev 23:16

⁵³⁹ Pesach means, literally, 'protect,' rather than 'pass over.'

⁵⁴⁰ Targum Onkelos translates pesach as 'he had pity.' The English term 'Passover' came into the English language through William Tyndale's translation of the Bible, with the word later appearing in the K.J.V.

⁵⁴¹ Josh 5:11

⁵⁴² 'nor green ears,' K.J.V.; cp. Abib which means 'ears of grain,' not 'green ears.'

⁵⁴³ Lev 23:14

⁵⁴⁴ Josh 5:11

⁵⁴⁵ Lev 23:14

Joshua is here relating that [in the absence of] the first Wave Sheaf offering in Israel,⁵⁴⁶ on the "*morrow after Pesach*,"⁵⁴⁷ the day on which the manna ceased,⁵⁴⁸ on which day the children of Israel were permitted to eat of the produce of the land, they immediately proceeded to do so.

What is the meaning of the "*morrow after the Pesach*"?⁵⁴⁹ The Pesach sacrifice was carried out at the [start] of the fourteenth day of Abib "*between the evenings*," i.e., the beginning of the [fourteenth].⁵⁵⁰ The question arises then whether the "*morrow after the Pesach*" is the morning of the fourteenth day of Abib, or the morning of the fifteenth day of Abib (i.e., the morning of the following day). It cannot be the morning of the sixteenth day of Abib (that is, the morning of the yet subsequent calendar day). The "*morrow after the Sabbath*" refers to Sunday morning since the Sabbath is a twenty-four hour event ending on Saturday night. By comparison the "*morrow after the Pesach*" should be the morning immediately following the Pesach sacrifice, that is, the morning of the fifteenth day of Abib. This speculation is confirmed by Numbers which tells, "*And they traveled from Ramses in the first month on the fifteenth of the month; on the morrow after the Pesach the children of Israel went out with a high hand in the eyes of all Egypt.*"⁵⁵¹ In the two parallel halves of [this verse] the day of the Exodus is variously described both as the fifteenth of the first month and as the "*morrow after the Pesach*."⁵⁵² Clearly then⁵⁵³ the "*morrow after the Pesach*" refers to the morning of the fifteenth day of Abib. It is then

⁵⁴⁶ the structure and cadence of the feast being extant, but only with the Wave Sheaf being omitted.

⁵⁴⁷ 15th Abib, q.v. inf.

⁵⁴⁸ cf. Josh 5:11,12, Tanakh version: '*On the day after the Passover offering, on that very day, they ate of the produce of the country, unleavened bread and parched grain. On that same day, when they ate of the produce of the land, the manna ceased. The Israelites got no more manna; that year they ate of the yield of the land of Canaan.*'

⁵⁴⁹ Josh 5:11a

⁵⁵⁰ Ex 12:18; Deut 16:4; note that the sacrifice takes place 'on the evening before' as it is known.

⁵⁵¹ Num 33:3; Young's Literal Translation of Num 33:3, '*And they journey from Rameses in the first month, on the fifteenth day of the first month, on the morrow of the passover have the sons of Israel gone out with a high hand, before the eyes of all the Egyptians;*' but cp. inf. for corrected translation.

⁵⁵² although they started going out during the night of the 15th Abib, cf. Deut 16:1.

Consider Young's Literal and Green's Literal translations of Josh 5:11. They're essentially identical. This is Green's: Josh 5:11-12 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets), '*And they ate the old grain of the land on the morrow of the Passover, unleavened bread and roasted grain, in this same day. And the manna ceased on the next day [Hebrew: mochorach] after they ate of the old grain of the land. And there was no more manna to the sons of Israel, but they ate the produce of the land of Canaan in that year.*'

The old grain was eaten in the morning of the 14th. Abib, and the new grain on the morning of the 15th., after what would later become the Wave-sheaf ceremony. Since the Wave-sheaf is on a Sunday, that fixes the question of when to start the Omer count.

Now Num 33:3. Using Green's Interlinear, for Young has it incorrectly, and even Green, in his Literal, manages to change it during transposition from the Interlinear (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

Num 33:3, '*And they departed from Rameses in the first month, in the fifteenth day of the first month. On the next day [Hebrew: mochorach] after the Passover, the sons of Israel went out with a high hand before the eyes of all the Egyptians.*'

That was their departure from Rameses, starting at night (q.v. inf.) but mainly during the day of the 15th. The '*next day after the Passover*' is, literally, '*on the afterday of the Passover.*'

And, finally, Deut 16:1b, '*for in the month of Abib Jehovah your God brought you out of Egypt by night.*'

The Israelites started leaving during the night, and they went out from Rameses to Succoth on the 15th, starting during the night.

⁵⁵³ for the sake of consistency.

clear that the "*morrow after the Pesach*"⁵⁵⁴ in Joshua⁵⁵⁵ was the morning of the fifteenth day of Abib which must have fallen out that year on a Sunday (since the Wave Sheaf offering is always brought on a Sunday). The Rabbanites theory that the Wave Sheaf offering which begins the Omer count is brought on the sixteenth day of Abib is clearly refuted by the above-led passages.⁵⁵⁶

This also answers another important question. It is not at first obvious whether the Omer count⁵⁵⁷ begins with the Sunday during Unleavened Bread or the Sunday after the Sabbath during Unleavened Bread. The only ramification of this semantic nightmare is when the fifteenth day of Abib falls on a Sunday. In this instance it would not be clear whether the first of the Omer should be on the fifteenth of Abib or the twenty-second of Abib. The evidence from Joshua⁵⁵⁸ and Numbers⁵⁵⁹ provides a precedent which clarifies this situation since in the first year the children of Israel were in Canaan, the fifteenth day of Abib actually did fall on a Sunday, and they started eating the produce of the land⁵⁶⁰ on the fifteenth, not on the twenty-second.

Trumpets

The day of Trumpets⁵⁶¹ signifies God's direct intervention in world affairs. This will be announced by the angels blowing trumpets.⁵⁶² When the last trump sounds, Christ will return to earth to bring a new government of peace and prosperity, setting foot on the mount of Olives on the first day of the seventh month, Ethanim, appropriate to the start of the seventh millennium. While the Messiah is in the air, all who have died in Christ will be resurrected to eternal life, and the then surviving Christians will be transformed into spirit beings in God's family, suffering death but for a fleeting moment, as must all mortal beings: *'And it is appointed unto all men once to die, but after this the judgement.'*⁵⁶³ The modus is described by Paul: *'For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead-in-Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remaining shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we be ever with the Lord.'*⁵⁶⁴ This fleeting, momentary death is not the

⁵⁵⁴ on which the Wave Sheaf offering would have been brought had they sown and raised their own crops in the Promised Land and been able to undertake the ceremony as commanded.

⁵⁵⁵ Young's Literal Translation of Josh 5:11 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets): *'And they eat of the old corn of the land on the morrow of the passover, unleavened things and roasted [corn], in this self-same day.'*

⁵⁵⁶ *The Karaite Korner—Shavuot*, pp.1-3 (with corrections, and added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁵⁵⁷ Omer count of fifty (corresponding to a Jubilee, signifying the restitution of all things) represents an elect Christian's life, coming out of sin, going through an allotted lifespan, then rising to meet the Saviour at Pentecost; 13 June, 2027AD, q.v. sup.

⁵⁵⁸ Josh 5:11

⁵⁵⁹ Num 33:3

⁵⁶⁰ cf. structure and cadence reference above.

⁵⁶¹ Lev 23:23-25

⁵⁶² cf. Revelation chpts. 8 and 9, inter alia.

⁵⁶³ Heb 9:27

⁵⁶⁴ I Thes 4:16,17

tasting of death referred to in Luke: *'But I tell you of a truth, there shall be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God.'*⁵⁶⁵ Tasting of death is death for a prolonged period, even as Jesus Christ tasted of death for three days and three nights: *'But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.'*⁵⁶⁶

Yom Teruah means 'the day of trumpets,' Teruah being the staccato blasts that sound a warning of war. Rosh hashanah is not a valid name for this day, for it is of Jewish invention and importation to bolster their calendar's year-start on the first day of Tishri.⁵⁶⁷ It is only mentioned once in the Bible,⁵⁶⁸ in relation to the first month, first day, *'in the beginning of the year.'*⁵⁶⁹ Another Jewish invention for the day of Trumpets is 'the day of judgement.'⁵⁷⁰ The remaining biblical name for this day is 'the remembrance of trumpets.'⁵⁷¹ The '*remembrance*' harks back both to the delivery of the children of Israel at the Red Sea⁵⁷² with the destruction of Pharaoh's forces, and to the first coming of Jesus Christ; the '*trumpets*' look forward to His glorious Second Coming, the destruction of the forces of evil, and the salvation of His people.

The extent of Judaic perversion and attempted appropriation is brought into stark relief: 'The ministering angels gather before God and ask: 'Master of the World, when is Rosh hashanah?' God answers: 'Do you ask Me? Let us all ask the beis din below.'⁵⁷³ The sum of it is this: an erroneous name, on an erroneous date, based on a pagan-derived calendar, at the whimsical call of man, and claiming right over God and His Law.

Atonement

Nine days after Trumpets is the day of Atonement.⁵⁷⁴ This most solemn of all God's holy days pre-sages the reconciliation of wayward humanity to God, with the expiation of all sin.⁵⁷⁵ This is depicted in Levit-

⁵⁶⁵ Luke 9:27; this verse actually refers to three disciples' witnessing of the Transfiguration soon thereafter, cf. vv.28f., followed by their eventual deaths a considerable time later.

⁵⁶⁶ Heb 2:9; '*taste*,' Greek: geuomai, here carries the broader meaning of '*partake of something in its entirety*.'

⁵⁶⁷ Jews' seventh month on the Babylonian-derived calendar.

⁵⁶⁸ Ezek 40:1

⁵⁶⁹ there is then a reference to the tenth day of the 1st month; were it the 7th month, it would be the day of Atonement, and noted as such.

⁵⁷⁰ Hebrew: Yom Hadin.

⁵⁷¹ Hebrew: Zicharon Teruah.

⁵⁷² Red Sea, sometimes erroneously referred to as 'the sea of reeds,' is a gulf of the Indian Ocean, anciently called yam edom, or sea of Edom; Edom signifying 'red.'

⁵⁷³ Yalkut Shimoni 191

⁵⁷⁴ Lev 23:26-32; 16:1-34

⁵⁷⁵ expiation for sin is 'life for life,' and this cannot be given by man (Psa 49:7,8; Mark 8:36,37). Each man's life is forfeit for his own sin and all life is God's (Psa 50:9,10). God thus provides the blood of atonement (Lev 17:11), which He has done in the person of the Messiah and in the Covenant. Sacrifice is thus the *fruit* of grace and not the basis or *root* of grace.

icus,⁵⁷⁶ where Aaron or the High Priest casts lots over two goats from the congregation of the children of Israel forming a single sin offering: one for the Lord, the other for the scapegoat or goat of departure^{577 578}—one, ritually sacrificed, symbolising Christ's death; the other, presented alive before God, having all the sins of the people placed on its head, just as Christ took them on His—then set free in the wilderness, described as '*a place not inhabited*,' signifying Christ's ascent into heaven, where no human being resides and where no human can follow, with the entire symbolising the remission or dismissal of sin by the mercy of God through Christ, and Christ's remove, bringing cleansing, atonement of man to God, and salvation.

Azazel does not depict Satan who could never be a sin offering before God. The idea of Azazel as a 'desert demon' actually comes from the pseudepigraphical book of Enoch. Neither can a clean animal from the congregation depict the most despicable being ever created.⁵⁷⁹ Azazel was also the name given to a cliff in the Judean desert over which the goat of departure was thrown to its death, although this Jewish custom is nowhere enjoined in the Bible, and it is not certain whence it came. It can be taken, however, as symbolic of the Jews' part in the death of Christ.

The day of Atonement was the only day of the year in which the High Priest, representative of the people, was allowed to enter the Holy of Holies, behind the veil, to atone for the sins of the children of Israel. It is a solemn day, a day of fasting: *'It shall be a sabbath of rest unto you, and ye shall afflict your souls, by a statute forever.'*⁵⁸⁰ While fasting and alms go together, *'Is not this the fast that I have chosen? To loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yolk? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? When thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and thou hide not thyself from thy own flesh?'*⁵⁸¹ almsgiving on Atonement, as opposed to all other days of fasting, would not be appropriate.

Azazel

The Old Testament deals with azazel, the goat of departure,⁵⁸² but what of the New Testament?

'On the mountain top Jesus was transfigured until he became a figure glowing with light.⁵⁸³ To Him there appeared Moses and Elijah.⁵⁸⁴ Matthew and Mark say only that Moses and Elijah talked with Jesus, but

⁵⁷⁶ Lev 16: 5-10

⁵⁷⁷ Hebrew: Azazel, 'complete removal.'

⁵⁷⁸ Pentecost was the '*birth of the church in the wilderness*,' q.v. Acts 7:38. Likewise, Trumpets will be the time of the spirit birth of the bride 'in the air,' in the Holy Spirit—the time of the changing of the moral elect to immortal beings, evermore to be with Christ; the wilderness of azazel thus represents the kingdom of God, a kingdom uninhabited save for one being at the moment, the Firstfruit, but due to have a much enlarged membership in early course, q.v.

⁵⁷⁹ the goats symbolise aspects of Christ; the portrayal of Satan in the deform of a strange goat in occult lore is both Satan's false self-aggrandizement and low jibe.

⁵⁸⁰ Lev 16:31

⁵⁸¹ Isa 58:6,7

⁵⁸² q.v. inf.

Luke says that they spoke with Him about the departure which He was to accomplish at Jerusalem.⁵⁸⁵....The Greek word here used for 'departure' is transliterated into English as 'exodus'.⁵⁸⁶ That word is forever connected with one of the great adventures of history, the 'going out' of the children of Israel from the land of Egypt to set out on the journey across the desert in order to reach the Promised Land. They went out into the unknown with nothing other than the command and the promise of God. In the very use of that word it was as if Moses and Elijah said to Jesus: 'Long centuries ago God's people set out upon their exodus, that great adventure in faith, which led them in obedience⁵⁸⁷ across the desert into the Promised Land. Now you, God's Son, are setting out on your great exodus, and it too will lead by way of the cross into the Promised Land.' The very use of that word exodos gave Jesus⁵⁸⁸ the certainty that, whatever the agony to come, at the end of it there lay the Promised Land.⁵⁸⁹

That Promised Land is the kingdom of God, here on earth. It comes about because Christ died for our sins,⁵⁹⁰ rose from the grave as a human being, and, after forty days, ascended, immortal, to sit at the right hand of God the Father. He will return soon to gather His 'elect' to 'the wedding supper in the air.' His departure into the uninhabited wilderness, where no man lives, is a clear parallel to and fulfilment of the azazel goat ceremony of Atonement given in Leviticus chapter sixteen. The total time involved, however, is not forty years, as in the wilderness sojourn. From the start of His ministry to the time of His glorious return is forty Jubilees or Yobels: two thousand years.

Who or what is azazel? Is it the 'scapegoat'? Edersheim has something to say on the matter, although, as will be seen, his final conclusions are based on an aberrant piece of late Judaic revisionism which runs contrary to the express command of God. Up to that point, what he says, in the main, is of a certain worth, although some Judaic revisionism and accretion does creep in from time to time.⁵⁹¹ The point in question, the so-called 'scapegoat,' a translation allegedly deriving from Tyndale,⁵⁹² was part of the Yom Kippur ceremony.

⁵⁸³ Mat 17:2; Mark 9:2f; Luke 9:29

⁵⁸⁴ Mat 17:3; Mark 9:4; Luke 9:30

⁵⁸⁵ Luke 9:31

⁵⁸⁶ Greek: exodus; K.J.V. mistranslates this word, providing, as it does frequently, an attempted substitutionary explanation rather than the straightforward translation. It reads thus: 'Who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem.' Exodos, however, does not mean 'decease.' The N.E.B. correctly translates it: 'departure.'

⁵⁸⁷ eventually, that is, after forty years' probation.

⁵⁸⁸ actually, the disciples, and that in retrospect; Jesus had no need of confirmation.

⁵⁸⁹ Barclay, William, *The Mind of Jesus*, pp.187,189,190 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets), concerning the Transfiguration.

⁵⁹⁰ *Scott's Commentary*: 'The dying goat represented Christ's suffering for our sins; the 'scape-goat,' Christ's rising to effect the purposes of His death, in the actual forgiveness and justification of his people.'

⁵⁹¹ these have been flagged; the result is that while he comes to more than one conclusion in the body of his work, only one is even remotely close to being correct, as shall be seen.

⁵⁹² although there is doubt over its actual provenance.

'The first part of the expiatory service—that for the priesthood—had taken place close to the Holy Place, between the porch and the altar. The next was performed close to the worshipping people. In the eastern part of the Court of the Priests, that is, close to the worshippers, and on the north side of it, stood an urn, called Calpi, in which were two lots of the same shape, size, and material—in the second Temple they were of gold; the one bearing the inscription 'la-Jehovah,' for Jehovah, the other 'la-Azazel,' for Azazel, leaving the expression (rendered 'scapegoat' in the Authorised Version) for the present untranslated. These two goats had been placed with their backs to the people and their faces towards the sanctuary (westwards). The high-priest now faced the people, as, standing between his substitute (at his right hand) and the head of the course on ministry (on his left hand), he shook the urn, thrust his two hands into it, and at the same time drew the two lots, laying one on the head of each goat. Popularly it was deemed of good augury [sic!] if the right hand lot had fallen 'for Jehovah.' The two goats, however, must be altogether alike in look, size, and value; indeed, so earnestly was it sought to carry out the idea that these two formed parts of one and the same sacrifice, that it was arranged they should, if possible, even be purchased at the same time. The importance of this view will afterwards be explained.⁵⁹³

What now took place concerned [the people], if possible, even more nearly. Their own personal guilt and sins were now to be removed from them,⁵⁹⁴ and that in a symbolic rite, at one and the same time the most mysterious and the most significant of all. All this while the 'scape-goat,' with the 'scarlet-tongue,'⁵⁹⁵ telling of the guilt⁵⁹⁶ it was to bear, had stood looking eastward, confronting the people, and waiting for the terrible load which it was to carry away '*unto a land not inhabited*.'⁵⁹⁷ Laying both his hands on the head of the goat, the high priest now confessed and pleaded: 'Ah, Jehovah! they have committed iniquity; they have transgressed; they have sinned—Thy people the house of Israel . Oh, then, Jehovah! cover over (atone for), I intreat Thee, upon their iniquities, their transgressions, and their sins, which they have wickedly committed, transgressed, and sinned before Thee—Thy people, the house of Israel. As it is written in the law of Moses, Thy servant, saying: "*For in that day shall it be covered over (atoned) for you, to make you clean for all your sins before Jehovah ye shall be cleansed.*"' And while the prostate multitude worshipped at the name of Jehovah, the high-priest turned

⁵⁹³ the equality of the two goats is emphasised further in Lev 16:5, '*And he shall take of the congregation of the children of Israel two kids of the goats for a sin offering.*' Both are taken for the sin offering; both are equal, split as to function by lot.

⁵⁹⁴ this atonement was made in the death of the first goat, although Lev 16:10 also places the role of atonement on the second.

⁵⁹⁵ i.e., a cloth thus coloured.

⁵⁹⁶ correctly, sin; Lev 16:21.

⁵⁹⁷ Lev 16:22, which also describes that place as '*the wilderness*.'

his face towards them as he uttered the last words, 'Ye shall be cleansed!' as if to declare to them the absolution and remission of their sins.'⁵⁹⁸

This last is pure Judaic revision and intrusion. Christ was the '*once-for-all sacrifice*';⁵⁹⁹ there is and can be no other death involved in atonement for sin. Interestingly, despite Edersheim's record, while the word 'atonement' does appear several times,⁶⁰⁰ it is solely in relation to the first goat that was sacrificed. The following passage,⁶⁰¹ the passage dealing with the second goat, does not mention the word 'atonement' at all. There is but one reference to the second goat performing an atonement,⁶⁰² and another in acting as a sin offering jointly with the first goat,⁶⁰³ but that is sufficient to show that the two goats represent the same atonement by the same person, the goats simply representing different stages in the atonement process as it proceeds to its final consummation.

'Then a strange scene would be witnessed. The priest led the sin-burdened goat out through 'Solomon's Porch,' and, as tradition has it, through the eastern gate, which opened upon the Mount of Olives.⁶⁰⁴ Here an arched bridge spanned the intervening valley, and over it they brought the goat to the Mount of Olives, where one, specially appointed⁶⁰⁵ for the purpose, took him in charge. Tradition enjoins that he should be a stranger, a non-Israelite, as if to make still more striking the type of Him who was delivered over by Israel to the Gentiles!⁶⁰⁶ Scripture tells us no more of the destiny of the goat, than that they shall '*send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness*,' and that '*he shall let go the goat in the wilderness*.'⁶⁰⁷ But tradition supplements this information.⁶⁰⁸ The distance between Jerusalem and the beginning of 'the wilderness' is computed at ninety stadia, making precisely ten intervals each half a Sabbath-day's journey from the other. At the end of each of these intervals there was a station, occupied by one or more persons, detailed for the purpose, who offered refreshment to the man leading the goat⁶⁰⁹ and then accompanied him to the next station. By this arrangement, two results were secured: some trusted persons accompanied the goat all along his

⁵⁹⁸ Edersheim, Alfred, *The Temple, Its Ministry and Services as they were at the time of Jesus Christ*, pp.511f. (with added comment and clarification in square brackets; more major comment extraneous to the text; subscripted emphasis added)

⁵⁹⁹ Heb 10:10

⁶⁰⁰ Lev 16:15-19

⁶⁰¹ Lev 16:20f.

⁶⁰² Lev 16:10

⁶⁰³ Lev 16:5

⁶⁰⁴ a footnote to this contains the following: 'the Talmud has it, that the foreign Jews present used to burst into words and deeds of impatience, that the 'sin-bearer' might be gone.'

⁶⁰⁵ termed '*a fit man*' in the K.J.V., whereas the Hebrew brings out the meaning of 'a man ready and prepared.'

⁶⁰⁶ this contention is wrong. Edersheim bases this aberrant notion on his strange understanding that a Judaic accretion holds good, even when it runs counter to the express command of God, and when it had failed spectacularly over a period of forty consecutive years, the years of the Jews' probation, q.v. inf.

⁶⁰⁷ K.J.V., which Edersheim used, has it thus: '*to a land not inhabited*,' and '*into the wilderness*,' Lev 16:21

⁶⁰⁸ actually, here tradition supplants and perverts God's commandment, not 'information,' q.v. inf.

⁶⁰⁹ even tho' a dwelling 'foreigner,' a 'stranger,' or a 'non-Israelite,' any 'refreshment,' taken on Yom Kippu— the day of afflicting the body by abstaining from food and drink—would be forbidden under the Law, as would be providing same, as the Law was all-encompassing within the nation, and would cover these types of persons too.

journey, and yet none of them walked more than a Sabbath-day's journey—that is, half a journey going and the other half returning.⁶¹⁰ At last they reached the edge of the wilderness. Here they halted, viewing afar off,⁶¹¹ while the man led forward the goat, tore off half the 'scarlet tongue,' and stuck it on a projecting cliff; then, leading the animal backwards, he pushed it over the projecting ledge of rock. There was a moment's pause, and the man, defiled by contact with the sin-bearer⁶¹² retraced his steps to the last of the ten stations⁶¹³ where he spent the rest of the day and night. But the arrival of the goat in the wilderness was immediately telegraphed, by the waving of flags, from station to station, till, a few minutes after its occurrence, it was known in the Temple, and whispered from ear to ear, that 'the goat had borne upon him all their iniquities into a land not inhabited.'

What then was the meaning of a rite on which such momentous issue depended? Everything about it seems strange and mysterious—the lot that designated it, and that 'to Azazel;' the fact, that though the highest of all sin-offerings,⁶¹⁴ it was neither sacrificed nor its blood sprinkled in the Temple; and the circumstance that it really was only a part of a sacrifice⁶¹⁵—the two goats together forming one sacrifice, one of them being killed, the other 'let go.'.....Thus these two sacrifices—one in the removal of symbolically represented indwelling sin, the other contracted guilt⁶¹⁶—agreed in requiring two animals, of whom one was killed, the other 'let go.' This is not the place to discuss the various views entertained of the import of the scapegoat. But it is destructive of one and all of the received interpretations, that the sin of the people was confessed not on the goat that was killed, but on that which was '*let go in the wilderness*,' and that it was this goat—not the other—which '*bore upon him all the iniquities*' of the people.'⁶¹⁷ It is at this point that Edersheim proceeds to make another fatal mistake, ascribing the two goats to the Old and New Covenant. The wantings in that should be all too apparent, but they will addressed later, in safeguard.

'After this, it is comparatively of secondary importance [sic!] to discuss, so far as we can in these pages, the question of the meaning of the term 'la-Azazel.' Both the interpretation which makes it a designation of the goat itself (as 'scapegoat' in our Authorised Version), and that which would refer to it a certain locality in the wilderness, being, on many grounds, one of which regards Azazel as a person⁶¹⁸ and donating Satan; while the

⁶¹⁰ since Yom Kippur is the holiest Sabbath Shabbathown in the holy-day calendar, the last would be an absolute necessity (the -own suffix importing the added meaning of emphasis or a singling out). The ancient Near- and Middle-East custom of accompanying someone was a mark of the authority of that person.

⁶¹¹ no human entered the '*wilderness*,' save for the '*ready man*;' the others could only view it from afar.

⁶¹² q.v. inf.

⁶¹³ he had violated the Sabbath-day's journey Law, and had sinned, for one!

⁶¹⁴ it was but a part of the ritual on Yom Kippur.

⁶¹⁵ there was no sacrifice of the second goat in God's Law, but there was under the Judaic perverted accretion, q.v. inf.

⁶¹⁶ sic; q.v. inf. for correct explanation.

⁶¹⁷ Edersheim, Alfred, *The Temple, Its Ministry and Services as they were at the time of Jesus Christ*, pp.511f. (with added comment and clarification in square brackets; more major comment extraneous to the text; sublinear emphasis added)

⁶¹⁸ q.v. inf.

other would render the term by 'complete removal.' The insurmountable difficulties associate with the first of these notions lies on the surface. In reference to the second, it may be said that it not only does violence to Hebrew grammar, but implies that the goat which was to be for complete removal was not even to be sacrificed, but actually 'let go.'⁶¹⁹ Besides, what in that case could be the object of the first goat which was killed, and whose blood was sprinkled in the Most Holy Place? We must here at once state that the later Jewish practice of pushing the goat over a rocky precipice was undoubtedly an innovation, in no wise sanctioned by the law of Moses, and not even introduced at the time of the Septuagint translation was made.⁶²⁰ The law simply ordained that the goat, once arrived in '*the land not inhabited*,' was to be '*let go*' free, and the Jewish ordinance of having it pushed over the rocks is signally characteristic of the rabbinical perversion of its spiritual type. The word Azazel, which only occurs in Leviticus chapter sixteen, is by universal consent derived from a root which means '*wholly to put aside*,' or, '*wholly to go away*.' Whether, therefore, we render 'la Azazel' by '*for him who is wholly put aside*,' that is, the sin-bearing Christ, or '*for being wholly separated*,' or '*put wholly aside or away*,' the truth is still the same. '*Jehovah hath made the iniquities of us all to meet on Him*.'⁶²¹

Common misconceptions

A seriously aberrant but surprisingly common misconception of the identity of Azazel is found in the beliefs of several quasi-Christian denominations / groups. In these, the identity of the person symbolised by the first goat is Christ, and the second goat, the goat of departure, is held to be Satan, upon whom the chief priest lays all the sins of mankind, after which that goat is led into the wilderness, which is then said to represent the bottomless pit. The man leading the goat there is taken to represent the angel who casts Satan into the pit.⁶²² That he washes himself and his clothes afterwards is held to be because he has been in contact with Satan and / or sin, depending on flavour and emphasis. For the credulous, gullible, superficial, or careless in their analysis, this may sound all too plausible, but it falls apart on even the most cursory inspection:

1. Goats, of which there are two in purview, are clean animals,⁶²³ and clean animals are not used to represent Satan. Satan is represented in the Bible by unclean animals: snake, serpent, dragon;⁶²⁴

⁶¹⁹ yet this is exactly what Lev 16:22 commands!

⁶²⁰ as the LXX rendering of Lev 16:26 shows.

⁶²¹ Isa 53:6

⁶²² Rev 20:1-3

⁶²³ Lev 11:3

⁶²⁴ Satan often chooses to portray himself, inter alia, as a strange type of goat, a demonic perversion, symbolised by the 'goats-head of Mendes' and similar such arrangements. These Satan-initiated images have no connection with clean animals.

2. The two goats, as has been seen, are as identical as humanly possible. If one represented Satan, and the other Christ, then they would be identical, and equal. Nowhere, not even in the wildest recesses of theogenic hallucination, could this be thought true!

3. Worse! Leviticus says that the two goats are '*present[ed]....before the Lord*.'⁶²⁵ Not only that, they are so presented '*at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation*.' That is right in front of the Holy Place. The suggestion that God would allow Satan to stand as an equal to Christ in such a holy place is risible in the extreme;

4. Both goats were for a sin offering, to make atonement before the Father. How Satan, steeped in the vilest wickedness, could ever do this is unstated. And there is good reason for the silence: simply, Satan, the vilest of all beings, could not possibly atone for sin;

5. The '*ready man*' has no connection to the angel of Revelation chapter twenty.⁶²⁶ He does not lay hold on the goat, it is handed to him; He does not bind the goat with a chain, he leads it with a rope; he takes the goat to the wilderness, not the bottomless pit; he releases the goat to go free, he does not incarcerate it;

6. His washing of his clothes and bathing,⁶²⁷ is not because he has come into contact with a goat representing Satan, but because a) he has broken the Sabbath-day's journey limit on the most holy day of the year, albeit with divine permission; and b) he has come into contact with the massive sin borne by the goat;⁶²⁸

7. The '*wilderness*' and '*place not inhabited*' is a strange analogy for the bottomless pit or abyss. In fact, the abyss is populated, at this very moment, because a proportion of Satan's demons are still incarcerated there. The wilderness, for its part, is neither excruciatingly and constantly hot (at night it is cold, and, in winter, very cold), nor is it bottomless (it is finite: being territorially and topographically constrained); and,

8. The Bible has a vastly different use of the word '*wilderness*' in analogy. Pentecost was the '*birth of the church in the wilderness*.'⁶²⁹ The church came out of the wilderness.⁶³⁰ The wilderness is not representative of the abyss. It is a place associated closely with the origins of and key events in the church, not with the incarceration of Satan and his demons.

So now to the Judaic accretions, all of which are unbiblical:

⁶²⁵ Lev 16:7

⁶²⁶ Rev 20:1-3

⁶²⁷ Lev 16:26

⁶²⁸ these ablutions can be compared to those in connection with the 'red heifer' ceremony of Num 19:1-10, especially v.10, but it should be noted that while the red heifer is sacrificed, the second goat, the '*goat of departure*,' isn't.

⁶²⁹ Acts 7:38

⁶³⁰ Exodus chpts. 14-40

1. The Judaic substitution of killing the goat by pushing it backwards over a cliff rather than simply loosing it in the wilderness as commanded by God, is a very serious matter. (Indeed, the arrival of the shattered animal at the bottom of the valley of the rock of Bet Hadudo, twelve miles away from the city, was signaled by the waving of shawls to the people of Jerusalem, who celebrated the event with boisterous hilarity amid dancing on the hills).⁶³¹ The Jews, who had a major hand in the death of Our Saviour, are here seen innovating that most vile deed into the azazel goat ceremony. That the Lord was still willing to 'overlook in the interim' even this dread form of 'intent' is seen in the fact that the red cloth retained at the Temple was miraculously turned white upon the death of the azazel goat in the wilderness, indicating atonement for the sins of the people. Once the actual deed was done, however, and Christ had been killed, that interim position no longer maintained. They had killed their Saviour in the flesh, and now there could be no atonement. For the forty years remaining to the doomed Temple, the period of the Jews' probation, the red cloth stubbornly remained red: no atonement, no redemption;

2. The taking of refreshments, apparently another Judaic innovation, is a direct contravention of God's commandment to afflict the body on the day of Atonement,⁶³² and Scripture gives the penalty for infraction: *'For whatsoever soul it be that shall not be afflicted in that same day, he shall be cut off from among his people.'*⁶³³ Some claim, however, that the refreshments were merely offered, to be rejected by the '*fit man*,'

3. The foreign Jews were anxious that the 'sin-bearer be gone as quickly as possible,' taking up 'words and deeds of impatience,' according to the Talmud. Again, how typical of the haste with which the Jewish crowd demanded Jesus' dispatch;⁶³⁴

4. Only the '*fit man*' could enter the wilderness with the goat. The others could only observe from afar. That level of inspection and monitoring will be the maximum permitted those who are debarred from entering the kingdom of God, as seen in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus;⁶³⁵

5. The '*fit man*' was, by tradition, a non-Israelite, although Edersheim's attribution of him to a Roman soldier leading Christ to His death on the cross is woefully wide of the mark. The death of Christ is already prefigured in the sacrifice of the first goat. That the '*ready man*' be non-Israelite is apposite, of course, but whom he represents will be dealt with later; and,

⁶³¹ Yoma vi. 6, 8; Ta'an. iv. 8

⁶³² Lev 23:32

⁶³³ Lev 23:29b, *'he shall be cut off from among his people.'*

⁶³⁴ Mat 27:22-24

⁶³⁵ esp. Luke 16:22-26; parable also highlights the Jews' aberrant belief of the time that Abraham was in heaven and, some maintain, of the Jews' habit at the time of praying to God either through him or with his aid.

6. The final contention, that the goats somehow represent the Old and New Covenants is also deeply flawed. The Old Covenant was not murdered or sacrificed; it was sealed by blood and it is still in force.⁶³⁶ The New Covenant, for its part, is not seized and killed; neither is it taken into the wilderness / the uninhabited place and incarcerated in hell or murdered (depending on the aberrant favour).

All that remains, now, is to describe what the azazel goat stands for, and why:

1. The two kid-goats are as identical as possible, both being clean animals;
2. They are both taken for a sin-offering;⁶³⁷
3. They are both presented ceremonially-clean and without flaw before the Lord;⁶³⁸
4. They are differentiated by divine lot as to representation of function;⁶³⁹
5. The first goat is freely admitted, on all hands,⁶⁴⁰ to be representative of Christ and His atoning death on the cross or stake;
6. If the two ceremonially-clean goats are of equal standing before the Lord, being presented side-by-side before the Lord; if they are as identical as humanly possible; if they both atone, but only one dies, then they must represent the same person in different parts of that person's work. There is no other 'of equal standing before the Lord,' no other in whom there is salvation. The azazel goat must, of absolute necessity, depict Jesus Christ;
7. But in exactly what way? The first goat, slain, depicts Christ's blood sacrifice in atonement. But what does loosing the azazel goat in the uninhabited wilderness represent? And who is depicted by the '*fit*' or '*ready man*'?
8. Edersheim's 'leading away to be crucified' interpretation is obviously wrong. The azazel goat does not die, other than in the Judaic innovation which runs completely contrary to the commandment of God in the matter;
9. The death of the first goat represents Christ's death, but that is as far as the first goat goes: it dies. Christ died, but He was resurrected three days and three nights later, and He lives: initially He was mortal flesh-and-

⁶³⁶ q.v. inf.

⁶³⁷ Lev 16:5

⁶³⁸ Lev 16:7

⁶³⁹ Lev 16:8

⁶⁴⁰ other than in Orthodox Judaism, and the like.

blood here on earth, then immortal on His ascension to heaven. The second goat, for azazel, represents a living Christ; the risen Christ and His work in completing the atonement and salvation of man;

10. The '*wilderness*' represents the place from which cometh the church. Pentecost was the '*birth of the church in the wilderness*.'⁶⁴¹ The church came out of the wilderness.⁶⁴² The wilderness is not representative of the abyss. It is a place associated closely with the origins of and key events in the church, not with the incarceration of Satan and his demons;

11. This key event concerns the firstfruits of the church and their glorious union with Christ in the wedding-feast '*in the air*.'⁶⁴³ This will happen at Pentecost,⁶⁴⁴ one hundred and nine days before the arrival of the glorious Christ and His host on the mount of Olives, on the day of Trumpets;⁶⁴⁵

12. That no one lives there at the moment is patent. That those who are not allowed to enter cannot, is also patent. That it is the birthplace of the New Covenant spirit-being church—that is, the New Covenant church in its highest spirit manifestation, the firstfruits—is more than patent and entirely apposite;

13. Thus the azazel goat is representative of the fulfilling part left wanting by the first goat's representative sacrifice; and, finally,

14. But what of the '*ready man*' waiting and ready to lead Christ into the wilderness of birth of the spirit-being church ? Who is strong enough, and ready, to do that? There is but one: the will of the Father, the Holy Spirit. That is the strong man. Ultimately, it is the Father Himself. He wills it; it is done.

And so the entire dyadic goat ceremony at Atonement—Yom Kippur⁶⁴⁶—is a detailed representation of Christ's death and resurrection, His ascension, and His return for His 'elect,' starting the spirit-being church of His new and better covenant '*in the air*,' an uninhabited place. There is no place in this for Satan and his demons. That, at least, should be patent and unambiguous.

Tabernacles

⁶⁴¹ Acts 7:38

⁶⁴² Exodus chpts. 14–40

⁶⁴³ I Thes 4:16,17

⁶⁴⁴ in 2027AD, q.v.

⁶⁴⁵ calculated using the Sacred calendar extracted from Holy Scripture, not the Judaic perversion adapted from Babylon

⁶⁴⁶ Hebrew: Shabbat Shabbatot, the '*Sabbath of Sabbaths*.'

The one thousand years, commonly known as the Millennium, a time of peace, happiness and spiritual understanding under the government of Christ, is represented by the seven day feast of Tabernacles, at the second harvest in the Holy Land.⁶⁴⁷ This pictures a major spiritual harvest, the time when all on earth will learn how to receive salvation through Jesus Christ. It is then that the Jeremiac prophecy will come to pass: *'And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.'*⁶⁴⁸

Living in booths, or temporary dwellings, pictures the transient state of God's own in today's evil world. At the moment we are heirs to, but not possessors of, a place in God's kingdom according to the promises, *'by faith...sojourn[ing] in the land of promise...dwelling in tabernacles; strangers and pilgrims on the earth.'*⁶⁴⁹

Last Great Day

Following the seven days of the Feast of Tabernacles, there is another holy day described in the Bible as *'the eighth day.'*⁶⁵⁰ This day is known in Christian literature as 'The Last Great Day.'⁶⁵¹ On the last great day of the feast, Christ spoke about the Holy Spirit being made available to anyone who desires it: *'In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Spirit was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified).'*⁶⁵² This feast signifies the resurrection of the rest of the dead: *'But the rest of the dead lived not until the thousand years were finished.'*⁶⁵³

Billions of people will be resurrected at this future time, after the completion of the millennial rule of Christ on earth, and will have the opportunity of the way to salvation, to desire it, and secure it, through the

⁶⁴⁷ Lev 23:33-36

⁶⁴⁸ Jer 31:34

⁶⁴⁹ Heb 11:9,13

⁶⁵⁰ Lev 23:36,39

⁶⁵¹ Hebrew: Shemini Atzeret literally means 'the eighth day of holding back.' It is treated as a separate festival, a regel bifenei azmo, to the seven day Sukkot.

An old but possibly aberrant tradition holds that Jesus was conceived on the first day of Hanukkah, was born on the first day of Sukkot, and circumcised under the Law on the eighth day, on Shemini Atzeret.

The Jews' additional holy day, Simchat Torah, 'rejoicing at the Law,' added on after Shemini Atzeret, is a non-biblical Talmudic tradition (q.v. Meg. 3.1a).

⁶⁵² John 7:37-39

⁶⁵³ Rev 20:5a; Revelation chapt. 20 mentions 'a thousand years,' in relation to the Millennium, six times, responding to each and every completed millennium under man's wrongful rule.

overwhelming grace of God.⁶⁵⁴ *'For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive,'*⁶⁵⁵ presages events covered by the twentieth chapter of Revelation, *'And I saw a great white throne, and him that 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, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and the dead and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire,'*⁶⁵⁶ and also by Ezekiel in the 'valley of dry bones' prophecy: *'The hand of the Lord was upon me, and carried me out in the spirit of the Lord, and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones. And caused me to pass by them round about: and, behold, there were very many in the open valley; and, lo, they were very dry. And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? and I answered, O Lord God thou knowest. Again he said unto me, prophesy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. Thus saith the Lord God unto these bones; behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live: And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the Lord. So I prophesied as I was commanded: and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone. And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above: but there was no breath in them. Then said he unto me, Prophesy unto the wind, prophesy, son of man, and say to the wind, thus saith the Lord God; Come from the four winds, O breath, and breath upon these slain, that they may live. So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army. Then he said unto me, son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel: behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost: we are cut off for our parts. Therefore prophesy and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves. And shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land: then shall ye know that I the Lord hath spoken it, and performed it, saith the Lord.'* There is also a parallel in Isaiah: *'Thy dead men shall live, together with my*

⁶⁵⁴ based on their prior mortal performance and worth, being convicted by their conscience, and on their subsequent openness to the Holy Spirit; Prov 20:27, *'The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord, searching all the inward parts of the belly'*; also cp. parable of the hired labourers, Mat 20:1-16.

⁶⁵⁵ I Cor 15:22

⁶⁵⁶ Rev 20:11-15

*dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead.*⁶⁵⁷

While the Ezekiel prophecy refers to Israel, all the dead of mankind must be resurrected in this manner, fructified, and mortal, save those who previously were resurrected or converted as the firstfruits spirit beings presaged by the feast of Pentecost.⁶⁵⁸ This great multitude, many of whom will have never even heard of Christ, the only name in whom they may be saved, will be judged on their convicted conscience,⁶⁵⁹ and, subject to their names being found written in the book of life, will accept God's Law and be imbued with the Holy Spirit, becoming immortal beings. God has promised to save all who earnestly desire it, *'For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part has happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob.'*⁶⁶⁰

God has purposely blinded the vast bulk of the nation Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles comes in. Only the 'elect' at this time are freed from this. *'What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded. (According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear;) unto this day.'*⁶⁶¹ The references here are to, *'Yet the Lord hath not given you an heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear, unto this day,'*⁶⁶² and to, *'Stay yourselves, and wonder; cry ye out, and cry: they are drunken, but not with wine; they stagger, but not with strong drink. For the Lord hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, and hath closed your eyes: the prophets and your rulers, the seers hath he covered. And the vision of all is become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed, which men deliver to one that is learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I am not learned.'*⁶⁶³

Continuing with the references to fallen, blinded, and ignorant Israel, and salvation being extended to the Gentiles, Paul states, *'And David saith, let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumblingblock, and a recompense unto them: Let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see, and bow down their back alway. I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy. Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fullness? For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office: If by any means I provoke to emulation*

⁶⁵⁷ Ezek 37:1-14

⁶⁵⁸ Isa 26:19; q.v. sup.

⁶⁵⁹ this is not the pagan 'weighing in the scales' of good and bad, for all would fail that test. It is God's unerring judgement of the person on the basis of what they have thought and done, and whether they would have accepted and embraced the Judæo-Christian religion, and all that that imports, had they been presented with it.

⁶⁶⁰ Rom 11:25,26

⁶⁶¹ Rom 11:7,8

⁶⁶² Deut 29:4

⁶⁶³ Isa 29:9-12

*them which are my flesh, and might save some of them. For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead? For if the firstfruit be holy, the lump is also holy: and if the root be holy, so are the branches. And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree; Behold, therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but towards thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off. And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graft them in again. For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree? For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins. For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all.'*⁶⁶⁴ Salvation is open to all; but through Israel,⁶⁶⁵ with the Gentiles being grafted in, thus keeping intact the covenant and the promises made by God. Israel is, after all, God's chosen people.

Only the 'elect,' in this current dispensation, are capable of understanding these matters thoroughly, and it is essential that God's annual holy days are kept in the prescribed form, on the prescribed days. A true Christian's faith lies often in truths that cannot be understood by human reasoning alone. These truths can only be revealed through the gift of God's Holy Spirit. Paul wrote: *'But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.'*⁶⁶⁶

It is for God to decide to whom and when the Spirit of understanding should be granted. *'At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight.'*⁶⁶⁷ By withholding the Holy Spirit, by blinding Israel for a time, God brings in the fullness of the Gentiles, that all the world might be saved: *'For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.'*⁶⁶⁸

⁶⁶⁴ Rom 11:9-17,22-27,32

⁶⁶⁵ viz., simply this: if you're not part of Israel, you're not part of the promises.

⁶⁶⁶ I Cor 2:10-11,14

⁶⁶⁷ Mat 11:25,26

⁶⁶⁸ John 3:16,17

Summary

In summary, the seven annual holy feasts of God⁶⁶⁹ depict the plan of salvation, necessary to make good the fall of mankind, redeem mankind from sin, and to reconcile mankind to God. Strange as it may seem, and to put it another way, God's plan is actually to create a vast, spirit family. This is evidenced in many Scriptures, including, *'But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name, Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God,'*⁶⁷⁰ *'For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself bears witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God. And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together,'*⁶⁷¹ and, *'For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.'*⁶⁷²

Ryle⁶⁷³ calls the people of whom Paul speaks in these verses 'the richest people on earth.' It has to be so, for they are *'heirs with God and joint-heirs with Christ.'*⁶⁷⁴ Their inheritance is that which only can be kept forever; all others, at best, depart upon death, and many even beforehand. The sons of God, born of someone else, are adopted by God upon conversion. Later, on resurrection to immortality, they will become actual, full, spirit-being, sons of God.

Ryle describes their position in the interim: 'All the children of God have a cross to carry. They have trials, troubles, and afflictions to go through for the sake of the Gospel.'⁶⁷⁵ They have trials from the world, trials from the flesh, and trials from the Devil.⁶⁷⁶ They have trials of hurt feelings from their relatives and friends—cruel words, harsh treatment, and unmerciful judgement. They have trials in the matter of character; slander, misrepresentation, mockery, insinuation of false motives—all these often fall heavily on them. They have trials in the matter of worldly interests. They often have to choose whether they will please man and lose glory for God, or gain glory for God and offend man. They have trials from their own hearts. In general, they each have their own *'thorn in the flesh'*—their own resident-devil, who is their worst foe. This is the experience of the sons of God....When Hugh Latimer,⁶⁷⁷ the English preacher and sixteenth-century martyr, was told by his landlord that he had never had any trouble in his life, "Then," said Latimer, "God cannot be here."

⁶⁶⁹ while Jesus Christ kept three annual Sabbaths in Jerusalem, as commanded in Deut 16:16, it is also apparent that He kept others as well, such as the feast of the Dedication, confirmed in John 10:22,23. He was Jewish, so He kept those 'Jewish feasts' also.

⁶⁷⁰ John 1:12,13; cp. *'sons of God,'* Job 2:1a, where sons are identified as angels; born of God is to become a crowned angel of one or other status of three, q.v. inf.

⁶⁷¹ Rom 8:15-17

⁶⁷² Gal 3:26

⁶⁷³ J. C. Ryle.

⁶⁷⁴ Rom 8:17b

⁶⁷⁵ and their salvation.

⁶⁷⁶ who especially persecutes those whom he fears.

⁶⁷⁷ Hugh Latimer.

This is brought out a little more by Boll: 'The period called "this age," or "the age that now is," is always spoken of as an evil age...."*Satan is the God of this age,*"⁶⁷⁸ whose work is to blind, "*the minds of the unbelieving, that the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should not shine unto them.*" Hence, he is called "*the prince of the world,*" and the whole world is said to lie in the evil one.⁶⁷⁹

His throne is here below.⁶⁸⁰ He is the head of "*the world rulers of this darkness,*" the leader of "*the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.*"⁶⁸¹ He is "*the prince of the powers of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the sons of disobedience,*" in accordance to whose will and dictate all sinners walk "*according to the course*"⁶⁸² of this world."⁶⁸³ Therefore, Christians are warned that they be not fashioned according to this age⁶⁸⁴ and that they love not this world.⁶⁸⁵ "*Demas forsook me, having loved this present world.*"⁶⁸⁶ But the Lord Jesus Christ gave Himself for us that He might deliver us out of it and out of all complicity with it.⁶⁸⁷ We are in the world, but we are not of the world. We are commanded to keep our garments unspotted from the world, and are told that the friendship of this world is a spiritual adultery and means "*enmity with God.*"⁶⁸⁸ Like Jesus our Lord, we are strangers here, and go forth without the gate, bearing His reproach.⁶⁸⁹

Another characteristic of the age is that Christ, the King, is absent. During His absence His servants are amid a hostile citizenship administering His goods,⁶⁹⁰ and no other prospect is held out to these servants than that of suffering and persecution until their Lord returns. The more faithful they are, the more true to their Lord and separated from the world, the more certain they are to suffer persecution. "*All that would live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.*"⁶⁹¹ (How foolish is the church when it hopes for the favour of the world and tries to obtain it!). And the promised share in that glory that shall be revealed is for us, only "*if so be that we suffer with him.*"⁶⁹²

Such is the picture of the present age which the New Testament sets before us. The only hope and prospect of a change from these distressful circumstances is connected with the coming of the Lord. Nowhere

⁶⁷⁸ II Cor 4:4

⁶⁷⁹ I John 5:19

⁶⁸⁰ Rev 2:13

⁶⁸¹ Eph 6:12

⁶⁸² or 'age.'

⁶⁸³ Eph 2:2

⁶⁸⁴ Rom 12:2

⁶⁸⁵ I John 2:15,16, 'Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.'

⁶⁸⁶ or 'age'; II Tim 4:10

⁶⁸⁷ Gal 1:4

⁶⁸⁸ James 1:27,4:4

⁶⁸⁹ I John 3:13, 'Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you'; I John 5:19, 'And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness.'

⁶⁹⁰ Luke 19:12-14

⁶⁹¹ II Tim 3:12

⁶⁹² Rom 8:17,18

in the New Testament is the hope of a gradual improvement held out, or the hope that the world will gradually be absorbed in the church until at last the world will become the church. The one and only goal of hope set before the Christian is the Lord's return....The battle will not grow easier, but heavier with the progress of timeYea, the last times will be the worst, not the best.

"Be patient therefore, brethren, until the coming of the Lord," says James.⁶⁹³ The word to be patient means to '*remain under*,'⁶⁹⁴ that is, under a strain, under a burden. When Christ comes, the strain is over, the burden lifted, we need not look for that relief any sooner, so far as conditions in the world are concerned....For *"the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together even until now. And not only so, but ourselves also, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting of our adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body."*^{695 696}

From this it is patent that God is actually in process of refining His 'very elect' and thence, through the '*adoption*,' elevating them into the soon-coming, eternal family of God, and perfecting the entire creation.

New moons

The observance of the New Moons commanded in Numbers has a bearing on the matter in hand, '*And in the beginning of your months ye shall offer a burnt offering unto the Lord*,'⁶⁹⁷ culminating in, '*And one kid of the goats for a sin offering unto the Lord*,'⁶⁹⁸ and, '*Behold, I build an house to the name of the Lord my God, to dedicate it to him, and to burn before him sweet incense, and for the continual shewbread, and for the burnt offerings morning and evening, on the sabbaths, and on the new moons, and on the solemn feasts of the Lord our God.*'⁶⁹⁹

The New Moons were set by God as sacred time. Their observance involved sacrifices, as did the other sacred times. In the time of King David, the New Moons were observed with a monthly king's banquet as well, '*And David said unto Jonathan, Behold, tomorrow is the new moon, and I should not fail to sit with the king at meat.*'⁷⁰⁰ It is also claimed that the Hallel⁷⁰¹ was read in praise.⁷⁰²

'For it is a universal principle in the Old Testament, that 'the first' always stands for the whole—firstfruits for the whole harvest, the firstborn and the firstlings for all the rest; and that '*if the firstfruit be holy, the*

⁶⁹³ James 5:7

⁶⁹⁴ Greek: hupomeno.

⁶⁹⁵ Rom 8:19;22,23

⁶⁹⁶ Boll, Robert Henry, *Christ's Coming: Premillennial and Imminent*, chapter 14.1

⁶⁹⁷ Num 28:11

⁶⁹⁸ Num 28:15

⁶⁹⁹ II Chron 2:4 (sublinear emphasis added)

⁷⁰⁰ I Sam 20:5f.

⁷⁰¹ comprising Psalms chpts. 113–118

⁷⁰² Hallel deriving from the Hebrew halal, meaning 'praise,' although others dispute this.

lump is also holy.' And so the burnt-offerings and the sin-offerings at 'the beginning' of each month consecrated the whole.'⁷⁰³

Sacrifices on the new moon are commanded: '*And in the beginning of your months ye shall offer a burnt offering unto the Lord; two young bullocks, and one ram, seven rams of the first year without spot; And two tenth deals of flour for a meat offering, mingled with oil, for one ram; And a several tenth deal of flour mingled with oil for a meat offering unto one lamb; for a burnt offering of a sweet savour, a sacrifice made by fire unto the Lord. And their drink offerings shall be half an hin of wine unto a bullock, and the third part of an hin unto a ram: this is the burnt offering every month throughout the months of the year. And one kid of the goats for a sin offering unto the Lord shall be offered, beside the continual burnt offering, and his drink offering.*'⁷⁰⁴

Since sacrifices do not pertain to the Judæo-Christian, Christ being the '*once for all*' sacrifice,⁷⁰⁵ the form of observance of the New Moon is difficult, in some ways, to ascertain in any detail from the scriptural record. That it involves a meal, praise, and prayer can be inferred or implied, but a formal prescription is not specified. It is a sacred feast, actually a completely formal Shabbathown, as at one time the Jews and the Israelites maintained abstinence from work.⁷⁰⁶

References

There are a number of references to New Moons in the Bible:

1. Season for inquiring of God's messengers: '*And he said, Wherefore wilt thou go to him today? It is neither new moon, nor sabbath. And she said, it shall be well;*'⁷⁰⁷
2. Worship in God's house: '*And it shall come to pass, from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the Lord.*'⁷⁰⁸

⁷⁰³ Edersheim, Alfred, *The Temple - Its Ministry and Service*, chpt. 15, 'The New Moons.'

⁷⁰⁴ Num 28:11-15

⁷⁰⁵ Heb 7:27

⁷⁰⁶ the frequently referenced tract in this context is Amos 8:4,5 (sublinear emphasis added), '*Hear this, O ye that swallow up the needy, even to make the poor of the land to fail, Saying, When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell corn? and the sabbath, that we may set forth wheat, making the ephah small, and the shekel great, and falsifying the balances by deceit.*' The '*new moon*' Hebrew: chodesh, is a simple reference to the monthly New Moons, the day of the lunar conjunction, q.v. inf. In many ways these are similar to Yom Teruah, the Day of Trumpets, which itself falls on a New Moon, and where, again, little detail is given on the conduct of the feast, and little is said directly on the meaning or significance, although it can be inferred. The king's New Moon feast pictures the wedding supper of the Lamb, which takes place '*in the air*' before Christ's arrival on the mount of Olives, and which involves the '*firstfruits*' as guests. This is barred to or hidden from all others, presaged by the '*hidden moon*'; the -own suffix imports the added meaning of emphasis or a singling out.

⁷⁰⁷ II Kings 4:23

⁷⁰⁸ Isa 66:23

3. Feasting with the king: *'And David said unto Jonathan, Behold, tomorrow is the new moon, and I should not fail to sit with the king at meat: but let me go that I may hide myself in the field unto the third day at even. Then Jonathan said to David, Tomorrow is the new moon: and thou shalt be missed, because thy seat will be empty.'*⁷⁰⁹

4. New moon observed with great solemnity: *'And to offer all burnt sacrifices unto the Lord in the sabbaths, in the new moons, and on the set feasts, by number, according to the order commanded unto them, continually before the Lord.'*⁷¹⁰

5. Sacred ordinance: *'Behold, I build an house unto the name of the Lord my God, to dedicate it to him, and to burn before him sweet incense, and for the continual shewbread, and for the burnt offerings morning and evening, on the sabbaths, and on the new moons, and on the solemn feasts of the Lord our God. This is an ordinance for ever to Israel.'*⁷¹¹

6. Sacred ordinance: *'Even after a certain rate every day, offering according to the commandments of Moses, on the sabbaths, and on the new moons, and on the solemn feasts, three times in the year, even in the feast of unleavened bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles.'*⁷¹²

7. Sacred ordinance: *'He appointed also the king's portion of his substance for the burnt offerings, to wit, for the morning and evening burnt offerings, and the burnt offerings for the sabbaths, and for the new moons, and for the set feasts, as it is written in the law of the Lord.'*⁷¹³

8. New moons restored after the captivity: *'And afterward offered the continual burnt offering, both of the new moons, and of all the set feasts of the Lord that were consecrated, and of every one that willingly offered a freewill offering unto the Lord.'*⁷¹⁴

9. Sacred ordinance: *'For the shewbread, and for the continual meat offering, and for the continual burnt offering, of the sabbaths, of the new moons, for the set feasts, and for the holy things, and for the sin offerings to make an atonement for Israel, and for all the work of the house of our God.'*⁷¹⁵

⁷⁰⁹ I Sam 20:5,18

⁷¹⁰ I Chron 23:31

⁷¹¹ II Chron 2:4

⁷¹² II Chron 8:13

⁷¹³ II Chron 31:3

⁷¹⁴ Ezra 3:5

⁷¹⁵ Neh 10:33

10. Mere outward observance hateful to God: *'Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and the sabbaths, the calling assemblies, I cannot away with: it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting. Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them.'*⁷¹⁶

11. New moons disliked by the ungodly: *'Saying, When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell corn? and the sabbath, that we may set forth wheat, making the ephah small, and the shekel great, and falsifying the balances by deceit?'*^{717 718}

12. The Jews deprived of the new moons, because of sin: *'I will also cause all her mirth to cease, her feast days, her new moons, and her sabbaths, and all her solemn feasts,'*⁷¹⁹ and,

13. New moons observed by Christians: *'Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon,'*⁷²⁰ *or of the sabbath days; Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body of Christ.'*⁷²¹

⁷¹⁶ Isa 1:13,14

⁷¹⁷ Amos 8:5

⁷¹⁸ Cripps, Richard S., *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Amos*, p.243 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'Amos 8:5a, 'Saying, when will the new moon be gone, that we may sell corn? and the sabbath, that we may set forth wheat?' This religious festival is mentioned by other eighth-century prophets (Isa 1:13,14; Hos 2:11); but in the Pentateuch it is taken into account only twice (viz., Num 10:10,28:11-15). As to the mode of observance in Israel of 'the new moon,' (1) to a certain extent Num 28:11-15 and Ezek 46:2b,3 confirm that which is implied in the present verse, viz., that upon the new moon, even as upon the Sabbath, there was cessation of work; (2) also it seems a fair inference from I Sam 20:5,34 that, at least in early times, *'the new moon'* was celebrated with a household feast.'

As to the centuries pertaining to the cadence of new moon references in Scripture, we have:

Numbers:	16th-c BC.
David (before being king):	12th-c BC.
Amos:	8th-c BC.
Isaiah:	8th-c BC.
Hosea:	8th-c BC.
Paul (to Colossians):	1st-c AD.

That gives almost a seventeen centuries' span of references to keeping the New Moon. Seventeen centuries is the total length of time taken in writing the Bible, from beginning to end.

⁷¹⁹ Hos 2:11

⁷²⁰ Greek: neomhioa, the sole use of the word in the New Testament.

⁷²¹ that the body of Christ, in Col 2:16,17 is the church (and as a consequence it is for the church to decide on the compliance of an individual with the Law in matters of new moons, etc.) is seen in Col 1:24b, *'...for His body's sake, which is the church.'*

The *'body of Christ'* is the church, and it is not for any old person (not being a member of Christ's church) to *'judge'* (Greek: akrino) or to *'approve'* in such matters; it is reserved for the church alone to do so. And in that case, the church would judge or approve with reference to the Law and Christ's own words on the matter, for He came to fulfil (expound and keep more fully) the Law, not to destroy it (Greek: kataluno, meaning *'to dissolve, demolish, or overthrow'*), as seen in Mat 5:17. The phrase *'the body of Christ'* is used by Paul to refer to the church, cf. Rom 12:5; I Cor 10:16,12:12; Eph 4:12. It is for the church, at large, to judge the keeping of the Sabbaths, etc., and not for outsiders, disbelievers, or enemies, and certainly not the Jews. The closing phrase should not read *'but the body is of Christ,'* for *'is'* is a translator's addition, and does not appear in the original Greek.

Judaic calendar 'new moon'

The correct method of extracting the date of worship is obviously not as stated by Spier: 'The New Moon, Rosh Hodesh,⁷²² is celebrated the first day of each lunar month. If the previous month has thirty days, however, the thirtieth day is celebrated as Rosh Hodesh, but the start of the new month remains unaltered.'⁷²³ The reason for this is that the Judaic calendar is schematic, and does not place the molads⁷²⁴ correctly.

⁷²² despite the Judaic calendar's failure to land the start of the months on the actual New Moon day, q.v., rosh hodesh, from chadesh, or chodesh, which relate to chadar, meaning 'to surround,' 'enclose,' 'conceal,' or 'curtain.' This is a reference to the correct New Moon, the time and day of the dark lunar conjunction.

Similarly, in Psa 81:3, K.J.V., 'appointed' b'kehseh, meaning 'hidden,' 'cloaked,' 'plumped' (with clothing; i.e., hidden); the concealment; and also the appointed time, or the time of the appointment (with God). In Arabic, the equivalent word means 'the end of something,' consonant with the dark lunar conjunction.

Gesenius' Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament (last before):

'Prov. 7:20 and Psa 81:4, the full moon, Syr.,...according to Isa Bar [Ibn] Ali is the first day of the full moon, also the whole time of the full moon, and so it is often used by Bar-Hebræus and Ephraim Syrus. The etymology is not clear to me, for it is not satisfactory to say that it is so called from the whole moon being then covered with light. Verbs of covering are often applied in the sense of hiding and covering up, but never, as far as I know, to that of giving light.'

⁷²³ Spier, Arthur, *The Comprehensive Hebrew Calendar* (introductory notes)

⁷²⁴ viz., conjunctions or dark moons; *Wikipedia* (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

Molad Emtzai (Average Molad)

The molad emtzai (average molad [non-astronomical], used for the traditional Hebrew calendar) is based on a constant interval cycle that is widely but incorrectly regarded as an approximation of the time in Jerusalem of the mean lunar conjunction. Each molad moment occurs exactly 29 days 12 hours 44 minutes and $3\frac{1}{3}$ seconds after the previous molad moment. This interval is numerically exactly the same as the length of the mean synodic month that was published by Ptolemy in the *Almagest*. Although this interval quite closely approximates the average time between lunar conjunctions, in the present era it is about $\frac{3}{5}$ second too long.

The traditional epoch of the cycle was 5 hours 11 minutes and 20 seconds after the mean sunset (considered to be 6 hours before midnight) at the epoch of the Hebrew calendar (first eve of Tishrei of Hebrew year 1).

Historically, the original molad reference meridian of longitude was halfway between the Nile river and the end of the Euphrates river, but the excess length of the molad interval causes it to drift progressively eastward at an accelerating rate — in the present era it is at a meridian that passes near Qandahar, Afghanistan!

Although the moment of the traditional Hebrew calendar molad is announced in synagogues on the Shabbat prior to each month (except before Tishrei), its only relevance to the present day fixed arithmetic lunisolar Hebrew calendar is that the molad of the month of Tishrei determines the date of the New Year Day (Rosh hashanah) [sic], subject to possible postponements of 0, 1, or 2 days (depending on certain postponement rules).

Traditionally, the announced or printed molad moment is quoted in terms of the hours, minutes, and 18^{ths} of a minute elapsed from mean sunset, because Hebrew calendar days begin at sunset. Some printed sources subtract 6 hours to convert the molad moment to "civil" time, but doing so causes the Hebrew weekday to be wrong 25% of the time (whenever the molad moment is between sunset and midnight). Also, some printed sources even add an hour during the summertime for "daylight saving," but that is also a mistake because that would affect the molad of Tishrei and occasionally imply an erroneous date for Rosh hashanah.

Molad Amiti (True Molad)

The molad amiti (true molad), which has no relevance to the Hebrew calendar, is the time at which the actual astronomical lunar conjunction occurs, often expressed either as the mean solar time in Jerusalem (Universal Time + 2h 20m 56s or simply + 2h 21m) or as the clock time in Israel. If the moment is desired for ritual or social purposes then it may be best to express it in terms of the local clock time.

On average the traditional molad of the Hebrew calendar is currently >2 hours late, and there are substantial periodic variations in the astronomical lunar cycle length, such that in the present era it varies over a 28-hour span ranging from 12 hours early to 16 hours late, compared to the Jerusalem mean solar time molad amiti, if all months are included in the evaluation. If the evaluation is limited to a single Hebrew month, however, for example Tishrei, then the portion of the variations that are due to Earth orbital eccentricity are for the most part eliminated and the average has an offset

Epstein adds this interesting piece of accretion, pertaining to more recent times: '[One of the innovations of the Safed school was] a fast on the eve of the New Moon—a fast instituted by Cordovero,⁷²⁵ under the name of Yom Kippur Katan, the minor Day of Atonement—the New Moon being conceived as an appropriate time for a monthly spiritual stocktaking.'⁷²⁶

Observance

'The New Moon and the Sabbath were closely linked as both were holy, set-apart days unto Yahweh Himself and the celebration of the new moon is placed in importance in the scriptures alongside keeping the Sabbath. It is not cited in the Torah until Numbers chapter ten because it is a celebration based upon the testimony of Yahweh's corporate people being established as His luminary in the world. Yahweh called Israel to be a light to the Gentiles, a holy, set-apart nation which reflected His glorious light.⁷²⁷ At the beginning of each month they were called to come aside from their normal functions for existence in this world, to reflect upon their ordained purpose of reflecting His presence in the world and revitalizing their spiritual lives in Him.

As His Bride [the church] keeps this feast of her appointment with Yahweh and comes into alignment with Him, she will reflect His light in ever increasing degrees of magnitude, until she actually shines with the glory of the Son of righteousness. "But we all with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of Yahweh."^{728 729}

New moons are held on the first day of the month: '*Also in the day of your gladness, and in your solemn days, and in the beginnings of your months, ye shall blow with the trumpets over your burnt offerings, and over the sacrifices of your peace offerings; that they may be to you for a memorial before your God: I am the Lord your God,*⁷³⁰ and are celebrated with blowing of trumpets, often conflated with '*Blow up the trumpet,*⁷³¹ which is

that is month-specific, such that presently the molad of Tishrei varies over about a 20-hour span ranging from 4 hours early to 16 hours late.

⁷²⁵ Moses Cordovero (1522–1576AD)

⁷²⁶ Epstein, Isidore, *Judaism*, p.249 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets); in the 16th-century, this 'eve of Jewish New Moon' fast, Yom Kippur Katan (on the day preceding the Jewish New Moon on 8 months of the year), would exhibit a tendency to occur on the actual day of the correct New Moon, just as it does today. Much earlier than the 16th-century, this would not occur nearly so often, for the Judaic calendar was woefully inept at getting even close to the lunar conjunctions in the first thousand years of its operation.

In essence, this means that religious Jews have a tendency towards fasting on the correct (dark moon lunar conjunction, q.v.) New Moons when Judæo-Christians are feasting in accordance with the scriptural record. As the New Moon '*king's feast*' pictures the wedding feast of the Lamb, whether wittingly or not, Judaism is confirming the absence of its adherents from that wedding and celebration. Only the 'elect' can and will participate, and the 'elect' are not to be found in Judaism.

⁷²⁷ Ex 19:5-8; 1 Peter 2:4,5

⁷²⁸ II Cor 3:18

⁷²⁹ *Wikipedia* (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁷³⁰ Num 10:10 (sublinear emphasis added)

⁷³¹ Psa 81:3a

a ram's horn⁷³² rather than a silver trumpet.⁷³³ New Moons had two silver trumpets,⁷³⁴ but, in addition, the shofar was used on Yom Teruah, the seventh New Moon, a chag festival.⁷³⁵ This ties the moon in question to the seventh moon through the testimony in Joseph, for his was the birthright of the firstborn—through his sons Ephraim and Manassah—standing for all of the firstborn of the Lord: *'Blow up the trumpet in the new moon, in the time appointed,'⁷³⁶ on our solemn feast day. For this was a statute for Israel, and a law of the God of Jacob. This he ordained in Joseph for a testimony when he went out through the land of Egypt.*⁷³⁷

Even during ancient times of severe religious decay, the New Moons were kept, albeit in vain, as seen in, *'Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting. Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them,'⁷³⁸ and, 'And now will I discover her lewdness in the sight of her lovers, and none shall deliver her out of mine hand. I will also cause all her mirth to cease, her feast days, her new moons, and her sabbaths, and all her solemn feasts.'*⁷³⁹ Amos records the severe declension in relation to the northern kingdom of Israel: *'Hear this, O ye that swallow up the needy, even to make the poor of the land to fail, Saying, When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell corn? And the sabbath, that we may set forth wheat, making the ephah small, and the shekel great, and falsifying the balances by deceit? That we may buy the poor for silver, and the needy for a pair of shoes; yea, and sell the refuse of the wheat?'*⁷⁴⁰ The kingdom of Israel's abstention from work on the New Moon indicates a divinely-sanctioned Sabbathown. This is bolstered by the future or higher meaning of the New Moons given in Isaiah, *'And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me,'⁷⁴¹ saith the Lord,'⁷⁴² and also in Ezekiel, *'Thus saith the Lord God; The gate of the inner court that looketh toward the east shall be shut the six working days; but on the sabbath it shall be opened, and in the day of the new moon it shall be opened. And the prince shall enter by way of the porch of that gate without, and shall stand by the post of the gate, and the priests shall prepare his burnt offering, and his peace offerings, and he shall worship at the threshold of the gate: then he shall go forth; but the gate shall not be shut**

⁷³² Hebrew: shofar.

⁷³³ Hebrew: chatsotserah.

⁷³⁴ Num 10:2; Hebrew: chatsrot.

⁷³⁵ a chag, at the time of the end, for the wedding supper ends with the return of Christ et al. to the mount of Olives—a form of pilgrimage, if you will.

⁷³⁶ Hebrew: kece—from kacah—'cloaked,' 'concealed,' 'hidden'; certainly not light emitting.

⁷³⁷ Psa 81:3-5a; 'ordained in Joseph for a testimony' or 'appointed in Joseph under an oath,' for 'the birthright was given unto the sons of Joseph,' 'and was Joseph's,' cf. I Chron 5:1,2.

⁷³⁸ Isa 1:13,14

⁷³⁹ Hos 2:10,11

⁷⁴⁰ Amos 8:4-6

⁷⁴¹ refers to activity in spirit rather than an act of physical propinquity. In other words, since Christ is omnipresent, all flesh need not physically travel to Jerusalem on the weekly Sabbath and monthly New Moon.

⁷⁴² Isa 66:23; Tanakh omits 'before.'

*until the evening. Likewise the people of the land shall worship at the door of this gate before the Lord in the sabbaths and in the new moons.*⁷⁴³

In the past, the New Moon has been associated with the church, presumably through the close correlation with the sacrifices on each day of the feast of Unleavened Bread, by which means those in the church come out of sin, as precursor of the wedding-feast for the marriage of the Bride—the church purified and presented to Christ. Certainly, the New Moon was sanctified, with sacrifices, trumpets, and a bringing of the people into remembrance before God,⁷⁴⁴ but while the *modus* appears valid, even retrospective (in terms of the sin offering),⁷⁴⁵ the sin offering of a goat⁷⁴⁶ sits ill with the purified, risen church.⁷⁴⁷ Therefore the New Moons observed today, recited by Paul, *'Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy-day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body of Christ,'*⁷⁴⁸ also picture, as *'a shadow,'* the Millennium worship of the people of the world before Christ.⁷⁴⁹ These, by dint of the trespass and sin offering,⁷⁵⁰ are not comprised of the 'intermediate peoples' or the church during the Millennium, for these people can and will sin, albeit inadvertently. The New Moons, therefore, picture the new spirit of worship among the mortal people of the Millennium, for all *'people in the land'* will worship, *'for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.'*⁷⁵¹ In the highest meaning, of course, the New Moon is symbolic of the consummation, the 'elect,' without any need of vicarious blood sacrifice.⁷⁵²

King's feast

The calendar date of the New Moon is set at Jerusalem. That 'date' moves around the world as the planet revolves on its axis, starting at each point on the globe (which has a daily sunset) with sunset. Therefore, Yom Teruah, the day of Trumpets, the first day of the seventh month,⁷⁵³ set at Jerusalem, identifies the holy day, which is kept around the world on that calendar date, starting at each point on the globe at local sunset.

⁷⁴³ Ezek 46:1-3

⁷⁴⁴ God vests the New Moon with considerable significance, for it is the day on which God frequently acts, as can be seen from many biblical passages, e.g., Hos 5:7, *'They have dealt treacherously against the Lord: for they have begotten strange children: now shall a new moon devour them with their portions;'* also cf. meaning of Rosh hashanah, sup.

⁷⁴⁵ q.v. inf.

⁷⁴⁶ Num 28:15

⁷⁴⁷ Judæo-Christian 'elect' king's feast gives the highest association, q.v.inf.

⁷⁴⁸ Col 2:16,17

⁷⁴⁹ other than in the 'elect' keeping the king's feast or supper or banquet, sup.

⁷⁵⁰ Ezek 46:20

⁷⁵¹ Isa 11:9

⁷⁵² Christ was the *'once for all'* sacrifice, cf. Heb 10:10

⁷⁵³ it is clear that the sacred New Moons are to be reckoned from the conjunction in Jerusalem time, and not from local time, else the New Moon / Yom Teruah could be a two-day affair, with the local new moon one day displaced from the first day of Ethanim Jerusalem New Moon / Yom Yeruah.

God's 'elect' observe the king's feast. A foregleam is found in Samuel: *'and when the new moon was come, the king sat down to eat meat.'*⁷⁵⁴ The actual King's feast⁷⁵⁵—which is kept at the exact time of the conjunction, all around the world, marking the currency and end of the King's (Christ's) wedding supper in the sky and His return to Earth, landing on the mount of Olives—is a fixed point in time, and must always fall within the calendar date for Jerusalem.⁷⁵⁶

Sabbaticals & Jubilees

Concerning other things 'extra annual calendar' having a bearing on the matter, there are seventh-year Sabbatical and fiftieth-year Jubilee years.

The seventh-year Sabbath of rest, sometimes referred to as the Sabbatical year,⁷⁵⁷ was not kept properly by the Jews, but, at best, highly intermittently and in some extremely debased form until the Babylonian captivity;⁷⁵⁸ thereafter it was put on hold for seventy years, recorded by Jeremiah: *'And this whole land shall be desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the Lord, for their iniquity, and the Land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations,'*⁷⁵⁹ and *'For thus saith the Lord, That after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place.'*⁷⁶⁰ This is referred to again in Chronicles, *'To fulfil the word of the Lord by the prophet Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her sabbaths: for as long as she lay desolate she kept sabbath, to fulfil threescore and ten years.'*⁷⁶¹

Jewish tradition has it that the Sabbaticals started after entry into the Promised Land by the children of Israel, actually commencing at the expiry of twenty years thereafter, this representing seven years for the first

⁷⁵⁴ I Sam 20:24b

⁷⁵⁵ with the then attendance by invitation only—it was not open to the public at large; similarly, with Christ the King's wedding supper / feast in the air, q.v. sup.

⁷⁵⁶ as the longitudinal distance substantially increases from Jerusalem, either to the east (ahead of Jerusalem time) or to the west (lagging Jerusalem time), and / or as the conjunction tends toward the start or end of the Jerusalem Shabbathown, the conjunction point can, on occasion, for those more 'remote' locations, stray outside the actual Jerusalem-based date set for the first day of the month, falling on the next date in the east which is ahead of the Jerusalem date, and on the last before date in the west which is behind the Jerusalem date. On such (and, indeed, on every) occasion, the 'King's feast' is kept at the conjunction, and the Shabbathown is kept in accordance with the date of the New Moon, sup.

⁷⁵⁷ in Leviticus 25:1-7, two other aspects of the Sabbatical year or year of Release, Hebrew: shemitta, are emphasized. One is a religious angle; that the sabbatical year is to be *'a Sabbath unto God.'* The other is the ecological; the seventh year is to be *'a Sabbath for the land,'* in which the land renews itself.

⁷⁵⁸ Jews in Babylon were marred by paganism before the captivity, as the parable of the loincloth shows, q.v. Jer 13:1-10, where the marring and uselessness of the cloth represents a process already completed, the people being morally corrupted by the malignant influence that had percolated to it from the Euphrates.

⁷⁵⁹ Jer 25:11,12

⁷⁶⁰ Jer 29:10

⁷⁶¹ II Chron 36:21

conquest, a further seven years for the proper division of the Holy Land, and, following thereupon, the first six of the seven year 'first' Sabbatical cycle.⁷⁶² Moreover, Jewish tradition has it that the seventy-year period described in Jeremiah and Chronicles represented all of the Sabbatical years omitted since the time of King Solomon, and that all of these were taken together. The Jews then resumed Sabbaticals, but Yobels⁷⁶³ were not kept generally as a religious ordinance, and this general situation continued beyond the destruction of the Second Temple, with the last Yobel year—which incidentally was but kept in some debased form or other—reported as occurring early in the second century.⁷⁶⁴ Were this to be correct,⁷⁶⁵ then the date is significant, for it means that one Yobel fell during the life of Christ,⁷⁶⁶ and, if anything had been amiss with the date, something would have been noted in the New Testament, which indeed it was. Some contend that the Jews, after the destruction of the Second Temple, reduced the cycle to forty-nine years, thereby omitting the Yobel, but this falls as the cycle straddling the destruction was recorded as a full fifty-year cycle. Furthermore, there is no biblical authority for such a reduction.

Maimonides' cycle gives 2005AD as the next Yobel, but the Jews of the present day have decided that the year of the inauguration of the political state of Israel⁷⁶⁷ was the start of a new fifty-year cycle, since many Jews, but not a majority, were in the then new state of Israel. This reckoning gives 1998AD as a Yobel year, but they did not keep it properly in any event, even if it had happened to be the due year. Again, there is no biblical authority for changing the phasing of the cycle in such a way.⁷⁶⁸

There are further and considerable difficulties: 'Problems with the Talmudical Chart: The first problem noticed about the Talmud chart was that the Rabbis, in the year 352BC when they made the correction from the fifty-year cycle to what they thought was the correct forty-nine year cycle,⁷⁶⁹ did not retrace their steps to recalculate the previous years all the way back to the conquest and allotment of Palestine. They just continued along with the new way of counting.⁷⁷⁰ [However] [j]ust as the Sabbaths have existed since creation and were 'restored' to Israel when they came out of Egypt by the miracle of the manna, so I think the knowledge of the

⁷⁶² cp. the fall of Jubilee years and their key part in the '7,000 year chronology,' inf.

⁷⁶³ Jubilees.

⁷⁶⁴ 113AD

⁷⁶⁵ which it isn't.

⁷⁶⁶ calculated by subtracting 2 x Jubilee years, viz., 100 years, leaving 13AD as the putative, but wrong, Jubilee; the Jews' later reduction to a 49-year cycle, or a combination of the two, is also incorrect.

⁷⁶⁷ 1948AD

⁷⁶⁸ grouping together of any Sabbaticals missed cannot apply in this instance as there were no omissions of Sabbaticals in the period prior, from the restoration from Babylon to the destruction of the Second Temple, and, hence, no 'back-log.'

⁷⁶⁹ in Hezekiah's reign, there is mention of an obvious Sabbatical year followed by a Jubilee in Isa 37:30, something that would not have been possible had there been forty-nine years in a Jubilee rather than fifty.

⁷⁷⁰ this despite the clear 50-year cycle described in Lev 25:9-13 by numbering forty-nine years, with the fiftieth the Jubilee. It is even mentioned as a fifty-year cycle in an ancient Jewish tract, q.v. Johnson, Ken, '*Ancient Seder Olam: A Christian Translation of the 2,000-year-old Scroll*,' p.61.

Sabbath and Jubilee years was 'restored' when they ceased the wandering in the desert and entered the Promised Land, the Lord giving them an exact date at that time for beginning the count.

The next problem with the Talmudical chart is that they somehow come up with the year 422BC as the destruction of the Temple. This is not right. The destruction occurred in 588–587BC. They then say that there were seventeen Jubilees (using the fifty-year cycle) from the destruction of the temple back to the entrance to Palestine placing the year of entrance at 1271BC.⁷⁷¹

The third problem with the Talmudical chart is that it will not reach six thousand years, which is the estimated time of the first resurrection, until 2239AD. This date is too far away for the first resurrection and tellsthat there is something wrong with their counting of the years of creation. If the Talmudical chart is not accurate, [one] must find the answer to this dilemma in the Bible itself.

The Bible Answer: In Ezekiel we read the following: *"Now it came to pass in the thirtieth year, in the fourth month, in the fifth day of the month, as I was among the captives by the river of Chebar, that the heavens were opened and I saw visions of God. In the fifth day of the month, which was the fifth year of King Jehoiachin's captivity."*⁷⁷²

[Notice] in particular the phrase *'the thirtieth year.'* What is this the thirtieth year of? In the Liberty Bible Commentary the proposed interpretations of the thirtieth year are listed:

1. Thirtieth year of Jehoiachin's age;⁷⁷³
2. Thirtieth year after Josiah's reform;⁷⁷⁴
3. Thirtieth year of the Neo-Babylonian Empire;⁷⁷⁵
4. Thirtieth year of Manasseh;⁷⁷⁶
5. Thirtieth year of Artaxerxes III;⁷⁷⁷
6. Thirtieth year of Ezekiel's age; and,
7. Thirtieth year of a Jubilee cycle.⁷⁷⁸

⁷⁷¹ $17 \times 50 = 850$ years; $422\text{BC} + 850$ years = 1271BC; the correct date is given in the *Bible Chronology* in the Appendix where the 'year of entry' into the Promised Land is shown as 1559BC.

⁷⁷² Ezek 1:1,2 (sublinear emphasis added)

⁷⁷³ 585BC

⁷⁷⁴ 593–592BC

⁷⁷⁵ 606–605BC

⁷⁷⁶ 667BC

⁷⁷⁷ 328BC

Ezekiel's⁷⁷⁹ *'thirtieth year'* could not possibly be a reference to the 'thirtieth year of the captivity' or 'exile' of Jehoiachin since the following verse⁷⁸⁰ gives the year in question as the fifth year of the captivity. The phrase used in the Bible for years of the exile is very specific and found in Kings, where Jeconiah⁷⁸¹ was released from prison *'in the thirty-seventh year of the exile,' 'on the twenty-seventh day of the twelfth month.'*⁷⁸² Neither is it a reference to the age of Jehoiachin. He reigned for only three months and ten days.⁷⁸³

Jeremiah cursed Jeconiah,⁷⁸⁴ owing to his wickedness,⁷⁸⁵ that none of his descendants would ever sit on the throne of David, ruling over Judah, so there would be no reason whatsoever to date the thirty years from Jeconiah's birth. Indeed, dating events from a person's birthday is decidedly unbiblical. The Bible only mentions birthdays thrice, once regarding Pharaoh, and twice regarding Herod the Great.⁷⁸⁶

A Jewish interpretation, based on their Babylonian calendar system, focuses on the phrase *'on that very day,'*⁷⁸⁷ a phrase used three times in Leviticus⁷⁸⁸ to refer to the day of Atonement.⁷⁸⁹ This is always observed on the tenth day of the seventh month, an autumn month, the first day of which the Jews regard, erroneously, as Rosh hashanah. The true Rosh hashanah,⁷⁹⁰ translated correctly *'in the beginning of the*

⁷⁷⁸ Casale, Marie J., *The Law of Sabbath and Jubilee Years* (paraphrased for brevity, with added comment and clarification in square brackets; subscripted emphasis added)

⁷⁷⁹ Ezek 1:1

⁷⁸⁰ Ezek 1:2

⁷⁸¹ Jeconiah, another name for Jehoiachin, also known as Coniah.

⁷⁸² II Kings 25:27

⁷⁸³ II Chron 36:9. The reference to his age on ascending the throne, eight, should probably be eighteen years of age (q.v. Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate versions). Challenor's note in the Douay-Rheims Bible attempts to reconcile this discrepancy: "He was associated by his father to the kingdom, when he was but eight years old; but after his father's death, when he reigned alone, he was eighteen years old." Given the actual text of v.9, this explanation remains deeply unconvincing.

Nebuchadnezzar II seized Jerusalem in March 15 / 16, 597BC, and Jehoiachin was taken captive to Babylon shortly after, almost certainly on the tenth day of the first month, along with his entire household and three thousand prestigious Jews. Zedekiah, his uncle, was given local rulership of Judah by Nebuchadnezzar after Jehoiachin's deportation. Given that Jehoiachin was eighteen and not eight when he ascended to the throne, then the year in question would have been 585BC, a year without any significance in the grand train of events.

⁷⁸⁴ Jer 22:28-30

⁷⁸⁵ Jer 22:22

⁷⁸⁶ Gen 40:2 for Pharaoh's birthday; Mat 14:16; Mark 16:21 for Herod's.

⁷⁸⁷ Hebrew: be-etsom ha-yom ha-zeh; Ezek 40:1.

⁷⁸⁸ Lev 23:28-30

⁷⁸⁹ despite manifold errors in their calendar system, the Jews, were they to apply their understanding of Ezek 40:1, would arrive at the same fall of Jubilee year, but not the same sequence number, as Judæo-Christians, and then the Jews would not be left to the assumption of their Yobels based on the inauguration year of the modern political state of Israel.

⁷⁹⁰ confirmation that the correct start of Yobel and Sabbatical years is 1st Abib, and not in the 7th-month as the Jews have it, can be extracted from Hos 6:2: *'After [Hebrew: achar, 'hind part'] two days will he revive us: in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight.'* 'The Seven Seals of Revelation' in the Appendix gives the 'reviving' or 'transforming' of the 'elect' to spirit beings as occurring on Pentecost, 2027AD. The 'two days' refers to the two thousand years of the church age, and the 'third day' to the Millennium, on the day-for-a-thousand years basis found in Psa 90:4. If the Jews' assertion were correct, it would render Hosea's prophecy devoid of meaning, for Pentecost falls before the autumn feasts in the 7th-month, and the 'raising up' would fall in the 49th-year of the Yobel cycle, and not in the Jubilee year, the final year of the church age, the year of restitution. Officially, the Millennium of rest does not start until the day following the end of the Jubilee year, i.e., 1st Abib, 2028AD.

*year*⁷⁹¹ in the first verse, gives off the tenth day of the first month of the sacred calendar, in the spring, the day on which the sacrificial lamb for Passover was selected.⁷⁹² It is inconceivable that God would choose the day of affliction of the soul⁷⁹³ to give a detailed vision of the coming kingdom of the Lamb in the Millennium of Rest. Much better to identify that kingdom with the day in the first month when the sacrificial lamb was chosen, for that act symbolized the start of the train of events that leads to the availability of the kingdom for God's 'elect.'

Where Ezekiel is dealing with cumulative years since the exile, however, he uses the phrase, '*in the [Nth.] year of our captivity*,'⁷⁹⁴ but where he uses the bare phrase '*in the [Nth.] year*,'⁷⁹⁵ it does not refer to the exile / captivity, nor does it refer to the fall of Jerusalem,⁷⁹⁶ for in the latter instance his phraseology is: '[N] years after....the city was smitten.'⁷⁹⁷ The notion that '*in the [Nth.] year*' refers back to any of a number of preceding events concerning either of two kings, Josiah and Manasseh; an empire, the neo-Babylonian; or a subsequent king, Artaxerxes III, appears implausible as almost all of the dates deriving from such fail to mesh with those from secular history, and the few that do lack continuity and, thus, significance.

Addressing them in turn, Josiah became king of Judah at the age of eight, after the assassination of his father, king Amon, and reigned for thirty-one years.⁷⁹⁸ As king, he instituted major reforms, including the discovery and public reading of the Temple scrolls known as The Book of the Law. He encouraged the exclusive worship of Jehovah and outlawed all other forms of worship.⁷⁹⁹ He is also one of the kings (along with his father) mentioned in the genealogy of Jesus in Matthew. His death is recorded in two accounts in the Bible,⁸⁰⁰ the latter being the lengthier, stating that Josiah was fatally wounded by Egyptian archers and was brought back to Jerusalem to die. The date of his reforms, in the eighteenth year of his rule,⁸⁰¹ gives a thirtieth year⁸⁰² thereafter which is compatible with the date of the destruction of Jerusalem.⁸⁰³

The difficulty with the view that the date of Josiah's reforms gives off the base date for the thirty years is that, by that thirtieth year,⁸⁰⁴ Josiah was long dead, and owing to accumulated sins and a total disregard for the sabbaths of the land,⁸⁰⁵ Jerusalem was nearing the point of being destroyed, the Temple and its worship

⁷⁹¹ K.J.V. translation et al.

⁷⁹² Ex12:3

⁷⁹³ Lev 23:29

⁷⁹⁴ Ezek 1:2,33:21,40:1

⁷⁹⁵ Ezek 1:1

⁷⁹⁶ 587BC

⁷⁹⁷ Ezek 33:21,40:1

⁷⁹⁸ II Kings 22:1; 641 / 640 to 610 / 609BC; also known as Yoshiyahu.

⁷⁹⁹ II Kings 23

⁸⁰⁰ II Kings 23:29; II Chronicles 35:20-27

⁸⁰¹ II Kings 22:3f; usually taken as 623–622BC.

⁸⁰² 593–592BC

⁸⁰³ in 587BC

⁸⁰⁴ 593BC

⁸⁰⁵ II Chron 36:21; viz., the seven-year Sabbatical system.

ended,⁸⁰⁶ and the new king taken into exile, never to return. There is no possible continuity in that train of events. It was a dead end. Jecohiah had been written childless so far as the throne of Judah was concerned, and his replacement, Zedechiah, was but a puppet of the king of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar II,⁸⁰⁷ from whom no issue would ever sit on the throne of David. And if the thirty years were such, then the fifty would be even more remote and unconnected, unless that fiftieth year was vested with other and much greater import, since that was the year that God gave the vision of the Millennium of rest and the Temple to Ezekiel.

King Manasseh's time, of course, was far too early, and does not correlate, even remotely, with the date of destruction of Jerusalem. The same, in the opposite direction, can be said of Artaxerxes III. That one is far too late, by about a quarter of a millennium.

The thirtieth year of Ezekiel's age could only possibly have any relevance—and here we have to disregard any objection on the ground of defective syntax—in Ezekiel being a priest, for on attaining the age of thirty, he would have been able, had circumstances permitted, to occupy in his priestly duties in the Temple in Jerusalem. Ezekiel, however, was not in Jerusalem; he was a captive in Babylon, by the river Euphrates.⁸⁰⁸ Also, had it been an age-related reference, probably it would have contained 'my' or 'on my attaining capacity as a priest' or some such to identify it, based on Ezekiel's approach to other dates, such as that of the destruction of Jerusalem. Indeed, 'in the thirtieth year' means that, at the time, he could only have been twenty nine, so any potential relevance attaching to his age vanishes.

Casale gives the thirtieth year of the Neo-Babylonian Empire incorrectly,⁸⁰⁹ but as that empire started in 625–624BC, its thirtieth year would have fallen in 595–594BC. While this corrected date meshes—Ezekiel gives the fiftieth year as the twenty-fifth year of the captivity of the Jews⁸¹⁰ which, in secular history, can be established as 574BC—there would be no good compelling reason for Ezekiel to count from the formation year of a Gentile, conquering empire. Gentile empires had their own means of counting, often starting from their own founding date, but the Jews did not adopt their dating systems, as their later refusal to adopt the date derived from the Roman A.U.C.⁸¹¹ would show.

All of which leaves, by a process of elimination, the thirtieth year of the Jubilee cycle. Thus Scripture provides a record enabling the determination of the Jubilee cycle and the exact time of the Jubilee, in a broadly analogous way to that by which it provides the calendar. The only part of the holy days not addressed in this way is the weekly Sabbath, which God has preserved through the Jews.⁸¹²

⁸⁰⁶ Lam 4:1f.

⁸⁰⁷ reigned c.605–562BC; the Akkadian name, Nabû-kudurri-ušur, means 'O god Nabu, preserve / defend my (firstborn) son.' In Rabbinical literature he is called ha-rasha, 'the Wicked One,' cf. Meg. 11a; Hag. 13b; Pes. 118a.

⁸⁰⁸ Chebar.

⁸⁰⁹ as 606–605BC

⁸¹⁰ Ezek 40:1

⁸¹¹ date usually given for the inauguration of Rome (A.U.C., Latin: anno urbis conditae).

⁸¹² the only commandment of the ten which starts '*Remember*' is that concerning the Sabbath.

Continuing with Casale: 'A corresponding scripture strongly indicates that this is the thirtieth year of a Jubilee cycle: *"In the five and twentieth year of our captivity, in the beginning of the year, in the tenth day of the month, in the fourteenth year after that the city was smitten, in the selfsame day the hand of the Lord was upon me and brought me thither. In the visions of God brought he me into the land of Israel and set me upon a very high mountain."*⁸¹³

This was when Ezekiel saw the vision of the future [Millennial] temple. He saw this vision in the twenty-fifth year of the captivity,⁸¹⁴ exactly twenty years from the thirtieth. Twenty years from the thirtieth would make this the fiftieth or Jubilee year. So Ezekiel saw the vision of the future temple which shall be built in the Kingdom of God in a Jubilee year!...[Now] the fifth year of Jehoiachin's captivity (the thirtieth year) was 594BC. So the twenty-fifth year (the year of the Jubilee) was 574BC. This gives an accurate date, a benchmark from the Bible itself for counting the Sabbath and Jubilee years backwards and forwards.

The Correct Dates and the Correct Method: But there is a problem with the forty-nine year cycle chart. It does not coincide with Luke chapter four⁸¹⁵ which shows that Jesus preached⁸¹⁶ a Jubilee message in 27AD.

The forty-nine year cycle chart gives 28AD as a Sabbath year. But notice that we can connect the Ezekiel benchmark (574BC) and the Luke 4 benchmark (27AD) perfectly if we use the fifty-year cycle counting method! Using this method, 27AD is a Jubilee. This [shows] that the Ezekiel chapter one benchmark establishes the correct dates for the Sabbath Jubilee cycle. When we add to it the Luke chapter four benchmark we further establish the correct method (the fifty-year cycle) which is God's will for [His own] to use. Both of these dates are established from the Bible itself, not from the Talmud....These two benchmarks restore to us the knowledge of the Sabbath-Jubilee years.

⁸¹³ Ezek 40:1

⁸¹⁴ Ezek 1:1,2

⁸¹⁵ Luke 4:16-21(sublinear emphasis added), *'And he went into the synagogue....And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord. And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him. And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.'* The Jews of the present time maintain that Christ could not have been the Messiah since there was no reign of peace after He departed. This is wilful ignorance, for He read from Isa 61:1,2a, but stopped before v.2b, *'the day of vengeance of the Lord'*, an event which will happen at His Second Coming. After that, Isa 61:2c, *'to comfort all that mourn'* will usher in the era of peace on earth in the Millennium. Mat 3:12 gives John the Baptist's entire overview through to the lake of fire, but Christ had it in distinct stages, only the first being realized at that time.

Barclay, William, *The Gospel of John*, Vol.2, pp.117,118 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets): John 12:12-16. '[Jesus, entering Jerusalem] came riding upon an ass's colt. Now that was two things. First, it was a deliberate claim to be the Messiah....But, second, it was a claim to be a peculiar kind of Messiah. We must not misunderstand this picture. With us the ass is lowly and despised; but in the East it was a noble animal....The point is that a king came riding upon a horse when he was bent on war; he came riding upon an ass when he was coming in peace. This action of Jesus is the sign that He was not the warrior figure men dreamed of, but the Prince of Peace.'

⁸¹⁶ Greek: kerusso, *'heralded.'*

The fulfilment of the Jubilee: When the Sabbath Jubilee years [are calculated] from the Ezekiel benchmark backwards to creation and forwards to the end of the millennium using the fifty-year cycle, [it is] found that the next Sabbath year is 1998AD⁸¹⁷ and the next Jubilee year is 2027AD (#120⁸¹⁸ since creation, giving six thousand years in all).⁸¹⁹

Working through the subsequent years of the Sabbaticals and the Jubilees gives an exact correlation with the words of Christ in 27AD, and the Jubilee of restitution. The number in Jubilees from 27AD to 2027AD, two millennia, is forty; the same number as the years of the Exodus in the wilderness. The wilderness years were to consume the 'generation' that was not fit to enter the Promised Land. Only thereafter those who were fit were to enter. There is a possible parallel here with Christ's words in Matthew: *'Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.'*⁸²⁰ The term 'generation' is taken as forty years in the Bible, with forty Jubilees giving the two thousand-year Christian era.⁸²¹ So in addition to the normal meaning, it may also be taken as a reference to the need of the expiry of the current two thousand year dispensation, that of the church, and the fulfilling of all woes recited by Christ, before the start of His Millennial reign of peace.

Acts mentions the time of restitution of all things in the context of Christ's sojourn in heaven: *'Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.'*⁸²² This final restitution is prefigured in the Jubilee in Leviticus: *'it shall be a jubile unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family.'*⁸²³ It is wholly appropriate that the actual event occurs in the year of the fortieth Jubilee.⁸²⁴

Sabbatical / Jubilee observance

There is one further outstanding and highly important question concerning the Sabbatical year observance: the extent to which it impacts upon and applies to general economic activity.⁸²⁵ All known authorities and

⁸¹⁷ followed by 2005, 2012, 2019, 2026, and then by the Jubilee in 2027AD.

⁸¹⁸ actually #120 from the expulsion from the garden of Eden, excluding the 70 years' *'Sabbaths of rest to the land.'*

⁸¹⁹ Casale, Marie J., *The Law of Sabbath and Jubilee Years* (paraphrased for brevity, with added comment and clarification in square brackets and subscripted emphasis added)

⁸²⁰ Mat 24:34

⁸²¹ 6,000 years in 3 x 2,000 year blocks, each of 40 jubilees = 120 jubilees, with the world under the sway of Satan, and with God contending with man. Interesting correlation with Gen 6:3, *'And the Lord said, my spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh; yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years.'* Just as sinful man then had 120 years to repent before destruction in the flood, sinful mankind has 120 jubilees before destruction in the Day of the Lord in 2027AD, q.v. sup.

⁸²² Acts 3:21

⁸²³ Lev 25:10c

⁸²⁴ 2027AD; and so the next Yobel / Jubilee will occur in 2027AD, and Sabbaticals in 1998, 2005, 2012, 2019, and 2026AD; all of them commencing on Rosh hashanah, the first day of Abib in those years, the start of God's annual calendar, and not as the Jews have it in the seventh month as they interpret their civil / religious schematic calendar year.

⁸²⁵ reproduced in another section, q.v. inf.

commentators cite the tract on the Law as either an interdiction only of arable production or of arable production but only within the Promised Land: *'And the Lord spake unto Moses in Mount Sinai, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye shall come into the land which I give you, then shall the land keep a sabbath unto the Lord. Six years thou shalt sow thy field, and six years thou shalt prune thy vineyard, and gather in the fruit thereof; But in the seventh year shall be a sabbath of rest unto the land, a sabbath for the Lord: thou shalt neither sow thy field, nor prune thy vineyard. That which groweth of its own accord of thy harvest thou shalt not reap, neither gather the grapes of thy vine undressed: for it is year of rest unto the land. And the sabbath of the land shall be meat for you; for thee, and for thy servant, and for thy maid, and for thy hired servant, and for thy stranger that sojourneth with thee. And for thy cattle, and for the beast that are in thy land, shall all the increase thereof be meat.'*⁸²⁶

But there is a fundamental difficulty with these commonly held viewpoints for, if the interdiction applied only to arable land, the economic activity not directly related to agricultural production would not have to respect a Sabbatical year. The inference from this is that non-agricultural economic activity would continue on a three-year tithing cycle, and this would not result in a fiftieth-year Yobel, for the simple reason that forty-nine is not exactly divisible by a three-year repeating module.

While the Sabbatical year is also a year of release from debts incurred by Israelites of Israelites⁸²⁷—and some cite this as compliance by non-agricultural economic activity of the Sabbatical—it does not address the fundamental difficulty, for debt release has no impact whatsoever on the seven-year tithing cycle, and the fundamental problem with the tithing cycle and the Yobel remains.

The only cogent resolution of this is found by investigating the activities of the children of Israel at a time shortly after they entered the Promised Land, for theirs was an agricultural society. Indeed, the economic activity of Israel was almost exclusively agricultural in nature. Such an economic regime would have the effect of rendering virtually the entire economic activity of the people subject to the Sabbatical year of rest. It is, as the emphasis added above, *'a sabbath for the Lord.'* The requirement of the Law to pay tithes on a seven year cycle consisting of 'three+three+one,' the last a fallow or non-productive year, indicates that all economic activity in the seventh year would not produce titheable increase, for if this did not pertain, tithing would be due in the seventh year as God's due tithe arising from work and its concomitant increase. The seven-year tithing cycle, with a tithing Sabbatical in the seventh year, can only indicate a total cessation of economic activity, both agricultural and non-agricultural, in the Sabbatical year. This is bolstered by Josephus: '[A]nd as the siege was

⁸²⁶ Lev 25:1-7 (sublinear emphasis added)

⁸²⁷ q.v. Deut 15:1-3, but cp. 31:10, where the *'end of seven years'* is given as occurring at the feast of Tabernacles, so the actual time of release would not be the end of the sacred year, i.e., sometime in March or April, but in autumn, at the time of the feast, making more sense in a predominantly agricultural society harvesting immediately beforehand.

drawn out in length by this means, that year on which the Jews used to rest, came on; for the Jews observe this rest⁸²⁸ every seventh year, as they do every seventh day.^{829 830}

The reference goes on⁸³¹ to intimate that at that time the Jews kept a rest from making war in a Sabbatical year. This could have had no connection with the land's Sabbath of rest unless it formed part of a much wider proscription on production and work, and equated in these terms with the weekly Sabbath. Indeed, the term '*sabbath of rest*,'⁸³² used of the Sabbatical year,⁸³³ is also used of the day of Atonement and other high holy days on which no work was done. Thus weekly Sabbaths, Sabbatical years, and Yobels are all '*Sab-baths of rest*.' In the Sabbatical Year, people were released from both business and agriculture, according to Edersheim.^{834 835 836}

No commercial activity should be undertaken in Sabbatical and Jubilee years.

⁸²⁸ i.e., the Jews' rest, not the land's rest.

⁸²⁹ i.e., comparable to the Jews' rest on the weekly Sabbath.

⁸³⁰ Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, 13.234, which speaks of the days of the high priest John Hyrcanus (with added comment and clarification in square brackets).

⁸³¹ Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, 13.235

⁸³² Hebrew: shabbath shabbathon.

⁸³³ Lev 25:4

⁸³⁴ Edersheim, Alfred, *Jesus the Messiah*, p.193

⁸³⁵ Sabbatical year is a year of rest unto the land. That there is no work or economic activity to be done can be seen from a comparison with the tithing laws, where there is no tithe of increase to be paid in the seventh year, the ineluctable inference being: no tithe, therefore no income, therefore no work.

⁸³⁶ this has certain ramifications, for some, keen to discover any possible discrepancy in the New Testament—and there is a marked tendency to make play of alleged discrepancies between the synoptic gospels and between them and the gospel of John—point to the synoptic and Johanne accounts of the calling of the disciples as a good case in point. While John 2:43-51 recounts the calling of Philip and Nathanael, and also mentions, in its introduction, Andrew and Peter, it is important to note that in contradistinction to Philip and Nathanael, neither Andrew nor Peter are mentioned as being told at that time by Jesus to '*Follow me*.' (Peter, Andrew, James, and John became disciples of Jesus Christ several months later at the lakeside near Capernaum, forsaking their boats, nets, and fishing business to become '*fishers of men*' after sight of Jesus' miracle of the great draught of fishes, Luke 5:5-11). The next recorded event, in John 2:1-11, is the wedding feast at Cana of Galilee, followed by His recourse to Capernaum, q.v. John 2:12, where His sojourn there is described as '*continu[ing]....not many days*,' whereupon, in v.12, He goes up to Jerusalem for the Passover. When taken with Luke 4:14-21 (an account of Jesus' declaring the Jubilee year, which could only have taken place on the day of Atonement (Yom Kippur), 27AD), it gives the overall time-flow from Yom Kippur in October, 27AD to the following year's Passover in April.

Since Jesus' stay in Capernaum was but short, the events which took place at that time in or around Capernaum, and on or beside the lake of Gennesaret / the sea of Galilee, q.v. Luke 5:1 are, of necessity, compressed. The only instance of work recorded in Scripture which conceivably could fall within a Sabbatical or Jubilee year—and so far as the ban on economic activity and work is concerned, the two are identical—is mentioned in Luke 5:5. However, since in that verse Simon, later called Peter, answered Jesus and said that '*we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing*,' that night's fruitless fishing toil out on the lake of Gennesaret must have taken place in that same compressed period shortly before Jesus' departure for Jerusalem. Passover, falling on the evening of 14 Abib, would leave more than sufficient time after Rosh hashanah (on the New Moon of 1 Abib) for the events at the lakeside and on the lake to play out, including a proportion of His teaching on the Sabbaths (q.v. Luke 4:31), and then for Jesus and His disciples to travel to Jerusalem (about four or five days' journey on foot). It follows that the strong balance of probability is that that night's fishing expedition occurred after Rosh hashanah—in other words, in the year following the Jubilee, not in it. Of course, when the import of Scripture's Sabbatical and Jubilee injunctions on economic activity are taken into account, it is clear that the date of the fishing trip could not possibly have fallen in the Jubilee year.

The effect of the second- and third-tithes on the Sabbatical year question are dealt with later in 'Tithing,' q.v. inf.

Chapter 35

God's Calendar—The Sacred Year

Man-devised calendars have been producing problems ever since first conceived. The year 2000AD, for example, is alternatively the year 2544 to the Buddhist, 6236 to the ancient Egyptian, 5761 to the Jew, and the 'Year of the Dragon' to the Chinese. In the history of the commonly accepted Western calendar (the Gregorian from the Julian), days have been invented, as by Julius Cæsar⁸³⁷ when the need of an additional eighty days was perceived; days have been lost, as by the then pope, Gregory XIII, when ten days were deleted;⁸³⁸ and days have been moved, as when Augustus purloined a day from February to ensure that his month, August, had the same number of days, thirty-one, as Julius Cæsar's month of July.

Judaic calendar

One calendar system that has had much claimed for it is the Hebrew calendar, frequently portrayed, especially by the Jews, as 'God's calendar.' Much has been written on its complexities and adjustments. Despite the claimed provenance, this calendar is hereinafter referred to as the Judaic calendar, for that is what it is: largely a product of rabbinic Judaism.⁸³⁹ Questions surrounding the validity of this calendar, including its nineteen-year cycle⁸⁴⁰ its losing one day every two hundred and sixteen years or so⁸⁴¹ against the solar cycle; its

⁸³⁷ 46BC

⁸³⁸ in 1582AD

⁸³⁹ with its roots found in ancient Babylon, q.v. inf.

⁸⁴⁰ Metonic; or Hebrew: mahzor.

⁸⁴¹ $216 = 6 \times 6 \times 6$, the Pythagorean period of regeneration and rebirth; others more realistically claim every 224 years;

postponements;⁸⁴² its seven thirteen-month leap years in each cycle; and all the rest, have served in the past as rich propagation for a wide variety of speculations and fanciful ideas.

One fundamental question which demands serious consideration is whether the Judaic calendar is biblically accurate, with its civil year commencing on the first day of Tishri,⁸⁴³ which itself can be subject to a one-day or two-day, or, on a rare occasion, three-day postponement, depending on the operation or otherwise of the four postponements.⁸⁴⁴ The resulting impact on Trumpets, Atonement, Tabernacles, and the Last Great Day has perplexed many. The same question applies to the first day of Nisan in Jewish chronology and modus, and Passover / Unleavened Bread, and even Pentecost, when fixed by 'counting' in the Jewish manner,⁸⁴⁵ as opposed to the Judæo-Christian / biblical system.⁸⁴⁶

These are, indeed, considerations of a most fundamental nature, for, on the accuracy of the Judaic calendar, stands or falls much of the practice and fecundity of worship on the part of many Christian sects and groupings which simply follow the Judaic calendar unquestioningly, or nearly so. Should this calendar be found to be systematically unreliable in identifying and hallowing the holy days, however, then those following it are worshipping amiss.

Before commencing upon this question, it is useful to recall the proximate quality of the Judaic calendar, in that it loses about six-and-a-half minutes every year, resulting in the loss of a day in every two-hundred plus years, and four-and-a-half days in a millennium. It completes an entire time cycle every nineteen years,⁸⁴⁷ with intrinsic inaccuracy, and manages to start the months on or near the molad, but in many cases not with any real accuracy. It's leap years are asynchronous,⁸⁴⁸ and this deviation or volatility is alarming to those desirous of biblical accuracy.⁸⁴⁹ The first question then, particularly in instances of postponement and a

Wikipedia: The Hebrew calendar year is longer by about 6 minutes and $25\frac{25}{57}$ seconds than the present-day mean solar year, so that every two hundred and twenty-four years, the Hebrew calendar will fall a full day behind the modern solar year, and about every two hundred and thirty-one years it will fall a full day behind the Gregorian calendar year.

⁸⁴² *Wikipedia*: 'Newton's date for the Crucifixion: 'Newton's choice....depended on invoking a postponement rule from the modern Hebrew calendar which Zeitlin (1966AD) has effectively argued was not used at th[e] time [of Christ].'

⁸⁴³ Jewish New Year.

⁸⁴⁴ Hebrew: dehioth, 'postponements.'

⁸⁴⁵ viz, alighting on 6th Sivan every year, rather than on a variable day year by year.

⁸⁴⁶ q.v. inf.

⁸⁴⁷ Greek: enneadecateris, based on the Greek astrologer Hipparchus' observations and calculations of 146BC

⁸⁴⁸ q.v. inf.

⁸⁴⁹ Eliau (pen-name for Clark, Frank T., an S.D.A.), *God's Sacred Calendar*, pp.17,18 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'The formula they adopted results in a Jewish calendar, which is a 19-year cycle of 235 lunar months. This is known as the Greek Metonic cycle and was a part of Babylonian Chronology dating to 626BC. This formula results in a year that averages 365.2468 days long (exactly 365 days 5 hours 55 minutes and $25\frac{25}{57}$ seconds). The solar tropical year is about 365.24219 days long (365 days 5 hours 49 minutes and zero seconds). Therefore, the Jewish calendar year is about 6 minutes and $25\frac{25}{57}$ seconds longer than the solar tropical year. This results in a "drift" of the Jewish calendar of about a day every two hundred and twenty-four years. This means the year begins later and later as the centuries pass.

synchronicity, is a simple one: are they near enough to be considered accurate? Worryingly, the Encyclopædia Britannica states: 'The [Judaic] calendar is....schematic and independent of the true New Moon.'⁸⁵⁰

New moon

Consideration of the 'New Moon' introduces the question of the correct definition of the term, which is not the visible crescent moon carelessly assumed by some, but the conjunctive, or dark / black, moon,⁸⁵¹ called a molad by the Jews, although the Jew's calculation of the molad nowadays incorporates a substantial degree of error. On this latter point, all sensible authorities agree.

Despite this, many Orthodox Jews contend that the 'New Moon' is the first sliver of visible moon observable from Jerusalem; this backed by Talmudic references to the practice known as the 'Sanctification of the New Moon' conducted by the chief priests after examining and confirming two satisfactory witnesses. Enticements by way of feasting levels of food and drink were on offer in order to ensure a sufficiency of enthusiastic potential witnesses.

This errant view is easily refuted by reference, in the first instance, to Maimonides, who defined the molad as: 'The moment in which the sun and moon, in their uniform motion, become conjoined in a certain part of the sky, which occurs in the same way everywhere—in contrast to the varying times at which the new

Thus, on average today, Jews celebrate their holidays about eight days later than did their ancestors in 4119 (Jewish year which is 358–359AD Julian / Gregorian) [Cox, Wade, P124: 'originating in 344AD in Babylon'], at the time the fixed calendar rules were said to have been published by Hillel II. At some point, the Jewish man-made rules and traditions also created rules called postponements which were not Biblical and corrupted the calendar even further. The beginning of the year was postponed a day or two based on arbitrary rules contrary to the commandment of God. These errors and other disagreements in calendar determination result in differences of a day or two in the beginning of the month. And occasionally the exact month of the year can be in dispute.'

The 'eight days' slippage is a calculated and not an actual representation. Jewish authorities admit that their calendar went through much amendment during the time from the destruction of the Temple until about 800–850AD, or possibly 900AD, when it finally settled. Such were the range and frequency of amendments that it is impossible to be certain about key aspects of the Jewish calendar during that time. Jewish authorities are unable to demonstrate a coherent continuity of a calendar system throughout this period. Indeed, the Jewish calendar even now is slipping by about 6½ minutes per annum, something which has led the Jews to expect their Messiah soon since they consider he will correct their calendar before it gets hopelessly and utterly out of synchronization.

⁸⁵⁰ *Encyclopædia Britannica*, p.466 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁸⁵¹ *Wikipedia* (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'In astronomical terminology, the phrase new moon is the lunar phase that occurs when the Moon, in its monthly orbital motion around Earth, lies between Earth and the Sun, and is therefore in conjunction with the Sun as seen from Earth. At this time, the dark (un-illuminated) portion of the Moon faces almost directly toward Earth, so that the Moon is not visible to the naked eye.

[Some claim that t]he original meaning of the phrase new moon was the first visible crescent of the Moon, after conjunction with the Sun. This takes place over the western horizon in a brief period between sunset and moonset, and therefore the precise time and even the date of the appearance of the new moon by this definition will be influenced by the geographical location of the observer (and the local atmospheric conditions). The astronomical new moon, sometimes known as the dark moon to avoid confusion, occurs by definition at the moment of conjunction in ecliptic longitude with the Sun, when the Moon is invisible from the Earth. This moment is unique and does not depend on location, and under certain circumstances it is coincident with a solar eclipse].'

crescent first becomes visible in different areas....as a rule, the day of the molad is the day of declaration, except in the four cases of postponementIf the conjunction falls at any of these four periods, New Moon day [Tishri] is declared to be not on the day of the molad, but on the following day, or on the day after the following day.⁸⁵²

From this it would be clear that, excluding the Jewish system of postponement, which is another matter, for the Jews at the time of Maimonides, the occurrence of the molad or conjunction determined the day of the New Moon. But that must be balanced against another comment by Maimonides, to the effect that the modern Jewish calendar is based upon the 'mean motions of the sun and moon, the true having been set aside.'⁸⁵³

Of course, the very notion that the chief priests could ever decide upon and 'sanctify' what God had long-before set and sanctified is wildly misguided, there being no biblical authority whatsoever for such a system. It is pure arrogation.

Interestingly, the Day of Trumpets, commonly known to the Jews as Rosh hashanah,⁸⁵⁴ is also known as Yom Hakeseh in the Talmud and Yom Teruah in both the Scriptures and the Talmud. Yom Hakeseh means 'the day of the concealed moon,' and Yom Teruah means 'the day of trumpets.' The remaining biblical name for this day, Zicharon Teruah, means '*the remembrance of trumpets*.' '*Remembrance*' harks back both to the Lord's delivery of the children of Israel at the Red Sea⁸⁵⁵ with the destruction of Pharaoh's forces, and to the first coming of Jesus Christ, and '*trumpets*' looks forward to His glorious Second Coming, the destruction of the forces of evil, and the salvation of His people. Trumpets, of course, falls on the first day of the seventh month, and, being on the day of the 'concealed' or dark moon, rarely alights on the Jewish first day of Tishri which is related to the Jewish molad and its vagaries, and then postponed by one or two days in more than sixty-percent of occasions. Jewish commentaries concede the point of there being no visible crescent: 'On all other festival holidays, which occur during the middle of the month, the moon is either full or very close to full. However, Rosh hashanah, which falls on the first of the month, appears when the moon is not even in view.'⁸⁵⁶

The Tanakh's Psalm, which in the Jewish view is taken to speak of the Jewish Rosh hashanah, contains this imperative: '*Sound the shofar at the new month [moon], at the concealed time for our festival day.*'⁸⁵⁷ Rosh Chodesh, '*the new month [moon]*,' meaning, literally, '*beginning renewal*' or '*beginning rebuilding*,' does

⁸⁵² Maimonides, *Code of Maimonides*, book 3, treatise 8, '*Sanctification of the New Moon*,' pp.31,32,89 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets; sublinear emphasis added)

⁸⁵³ Maimonides, *Kiddush Ha-hodesh*

⁸⁵⁴ although there is no biblical authority for this name used in connection with this feast. Jewish sages considered it to be a reference—Ezek 40:1a, '*in the beginning of the year, on the tenth of the month*'—with relation to the Day of Atonement falling in a Jubilee year, but this is erroneous too for the phrase '*in the beginning of the year*' clearly refers to the first month, the first month of God's calendar, sometimes called Abib. The '*tenth day*' reference is, in fact, one to the day of selecting the lamb for slaughter at Passover, as a foregleam to Christ's death.

⁸⁵⁵ Hebrew: Yam-Suph, sea of reeds, or weeds, viz, The Gulf of Aqaba, south of Eilat; cf. I Kings 9:26

⁸⁵⁶ (sublinear emphasis added); on the day of the astronomical new moon, the moon rises in the sky with the sun at dawn, and sets in the evening with the sun, at sunset.

⁸⁵⁷ Tanakh, Psa 81:4 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

not mean 'emitting some light' or 'crescent,' and cannot refer to the first visible crescent moon, the sight of which is subject to considerable variability due to atmospheric conditions and pollution levels. The first crescent moon is usually seen in the early evening at dusk low on the horizon and close to the sun. As a result, it is difficult to determine with any accuracy. Clouds, mist, or fog can obscure the crescent. Due to this wide-ranging variability, the accurate prediction of the first visible crescent is surprisingly difficult.

What might be termed the 'molad identification problem' is exacerbated by the schematic and recurring nature of the Judaic calendar. The fall of days in successive months in the Judaic regime is 30,29,30,29, and so on, with only a little local irregularity in the sequence occurring around leap years, whereas the actual lunation—the time between successive molads or dark moons—varies quite markedly,⁸⁵⁸ and so gives off an irregular fall of months.⁸⁵⁹ It follows that a schematic calendar, even if properly formulated, simply cannot alight on all of the true molads, and this fatal flaw is compounded further by the operation of the calendar postponement system.

Sometimes, in about four percent of cases over the period 2000–2005AD, for example, the Judaic calendar does start a month with the actual, conjunctive, or dark new moon. Most of the time, however, it is one, two or even three days late. This spread appears to depend largely on whether there is a one or two day Rosh hashanah postponement, and then whether a new month starts after a thirty-day month. It should be obvious that a 'three or four day spread' over the astronomical conjunction is irreconcilable with any form of coherent, first visible crescent system. Indeed, matters are getting progressively worse, albeit slowly, as the average period between astronomical conjunctions is getting longer, so the Jewish average or 'virtual' molad will eventually end up occurring before the actual astronomical conjunction. In such circumstances, the Jewish New Moon would, on occasion, precede the real New Moon, the correct astronomical conjunction. This anomaly is appreciated by some religious Jews who hold that: 'In about a hundred years from now the Jewish calendar approximation will no longer 'work,' with the moon being sighted a day after the first of the month according to the Jewish calendar. Hence the Messiah must come in the next hundred years, and re-establish the High Court of Jerusalem which will work not according to pre-set calendars but according to the actual sighting of the moon.'⁸⁶⁰

Background

In order to appreciate the ramifications of this, it is meet to consider a little background, restricting it to where there is at least some measure of common ground between most of the views on the accuracy or otherwise of the schematic calendar.

⁸⁵⁸ q.v. inf.

⁸⁵⁹ e.g., 29,29,30,29,29,30,29,30,30,29,30,30 in the year 2000–2001.

⁸⁶⁰ Rav S. A. Rappoport (sublinear emphasis added; concluding error ignored).

The Judaic calendar is luni-solar, meeting two requirements, solar and lunar, and this accounts for its relative complexity. The solar year of three hundred and sixty-five days and some hours is about eleven days longer than twelve lunar months, and so the calendar has the task of balancing-off the solar and the lunar year.

According to Spier, 'A special committee of the Sanhedrin, with its president as chairman, had the mandate⁸⁶¹ to regulate and balance the solar with the lunar year. This 'Calendar Council,'⁸⁶² calculated the beginnings of the seasons⁸⁶³ on the basis of astronomical figures which had been handed down of old. Whenever the eleven-day differential between the solar and lunar years had accumulated to thirty days or so, a thirteenth month, Adar II, was inserted before Nisan in order to ensure that Nisan and Passover would occur in Spring, and not retrogress toward winter. Talmudic sources also suggest the intercalation of a month when Spring was not sufficiently evident.⁸⁶⁴

In the fourth-century,⁸⁶⁵ when oppression and persecution threatened the existence of the Sanhedrin, Hillel II made public the system of calendar calculation which up until that time had been a closely guarded secret, and had been used as a check on the probity of claimed New Moon witnessing and to determine the beginnings of the Spring season.⁸⁶⁶

⁸⁶¹ merely claimed, arrogated; they did not have any such authority.

⁸⁶² Hebrew: Sod Haibbur.

⁸⁶³ Hebrew: Tekufoth.

⁸⁶⁴ in other words, a late spring, in current parlance, although this would appear to be somewhat problematical when made to operate alongside a predetermined astronomical system of calculation, as they would appear, at least in large part, to be inimical. If, however, there was a declension from a strict, astronomical calculated system to some system or other which tended to result in bringing the Passover earlier in the year, then such matters as the then apparent late onset of spring would begin to come into play. There is more to this, however, than a mere declension. The '*observers of times*,' Hebrew: anan, meaning '*those who watch the clouds*' in order to determine when the rainy season was over and when the spring harvest season would begin, are condemned in the Bible in II Chron 33:6; Deut 18:10,11; II Kings 21:6; Lev 19:26. Anan, also literally '*observing the heavens*,' was a distinct form of enchantment, cf. Jer 27:9. If the Jewish authorities were watching the skies and the weather and setting their spring harvest season accordingly, they were not merely in declension, they were in the pit of abject folly and sin, and subject to the judgement in Isa 47:12-14 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets): '*Stand now with thine enchantments, and with the multitude of thy sorceries, wherein thou hast laboured from thy youth; if so be thou shalt be able to profit, if so be thou mayest prevail. Thou art wearied in the multitude of thy counsels. Let now the astrologers, the stargazers, the monthly prognosticators [or 'that make known months,' viz., what shall come to pass every month] stand up, and save thee from these things that shall come upon thee. Behold, they shall be as stubble; the fire shall burn them; they shall not deliver themselves from the power of the flame: there shall not be a coal to warm at, nor fire to sit before it.*' God utterly forbids this practice.

⁸⁶⁵ 358–359AD

⁸⁶⁶ Spier, Arthur, *The Comprehensive Hebrew Calendar*, p.1 (slightly paraphrased for brevity); there is grave doubt, however, over whether the Hillel account represents the full story, or, indeed, anything remotely like it, for many claim that the Hillel calendar system was introduced with a view to securing the wholesale acceptance of the rabbinic system of calendar control, and that the astronomical system of the Sadducees theretofore was not used as a check, but as the core and sole system.

Cox, Wade, *Letter to the Churches of God re the New Moons and the Hillel Calendar*:

'Many false statements are made by these various ministers of the W.C.G. system. Much of it is through ignorance, but much of it also is by devious deceit. We have seen some of these people actually claim that the Hillel calendar was in use at the time of Christ in the Temple, when any basic student of the subject would tell you it was not introduced until two rabbis brought it from Babylon in 344CE and Hillel II authorised its use in 358CE. It was developed from there on

Construction & problems

Turning now to the construction of the schematic calendar, in particular to the method of setting the first of the months, the method of determining the first of the first month in God's reckoning, and, in addition, Rosh hashanah, the four postponements, and the insertion of the intercalary month. The first point of importance is found in Genesis: *'And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years.'*⁸⁶⁷ In the Tanakh it reads: *'God said, "Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate day from night; and they shall serve as signs for the set times—the days and the years."'* The difference between the two is essentially the reference to 'seasons' which appears in the former but is possibly elided in the latter. The word translated 'seasons' in the K.J.V. is from a Hebrew word⁸⁶⁸ that also appears in Psalms, on which the K.J.V. and the Tanakh are in agreement, the Tanakh rendering it: *'He made the moon to mark the seasons; the sun knows when to set.'*⁸⁶⁹

It will become evident that the inclusion of the marking of seasons in the purpose of the lights in the firmament has profound ramifications when it comes to extracting the correct calendar from the Bible. Concerning the seasons,⁸⁷⁰ Spier notes: *'With the introduction of the permanent [Judaic] calendar, the solar and lunar years have been adjusted by a calculation which guarantees the coincidence of the lunar months with the seasons as required by the law. Therefore the independent computation of the beginnings of the four seasons, the Tekufoth, has lost its importance.'*⁸⁷¹

This is a candid though amazing admission, as later it will be shown that the seasons, especially those determined by the equinoxes, are of critical importance in the regulation of the calendar. Yet here there is an admission that the computation of the seasons has lost its impact on the Judaic calendar, being watered down to some vaguely worded 'coincidence.'

This divergence is also linked to disregarding the celebration of the New Moons in the Jewish rite. When the New Moons, called *'memorials before your God'*,⁸⁷² had become so ill-respected and downgraded, the critical role they played in the regulation of God's calendar was neutralised. The result was that months could then be structured on an inaccurate and schematic formula; the formal civil New Year, on which Scripture is utterly silent, could be conformed to the system in Babylon; the names of months altered to a heady Babylonian / Canaanite mix of pagan references; and a formalised intercalary system could be imposed in lieu

until Maimonides or Rambam in the twelfth century. The Jews themselves proclaim those facts in their reference material.'

⁸⁶⁷ Gen 1:14; K.J.V.

⁸⁶⁸ Hebrew: moed.

⁸⁶⁹ Psa 104:19

⁸⁷⁰ Hebrew: tekufoth.

⁸⁷¹ Spier, Arthur, *The Comprehensive Hebrew Calendar*, p.19 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁸⁷² Num 10:10

of God's specified regulatory mechanism.⁸⁷³ The Jewish sages ruled that the names of the months were to remain Babylonian, even though admittedly idolatrous, until the Messiah⁸⁷⁴ would restore all Israel to the Promised Land. In the interim, the sages claimed that the idolatrous names are a reminder of things to come, and, indeed, that these same Babylonian names speak to God's people today. If that were the case, then what could they possibly have to say? The entire apostate and obscene Jewish presumption in all of this can be seen in the following statement from the Jewish Encyclopedia: 'Heaven itself yields to the authority of the earthly court of justice as to the fixing of the calendar and the festival days.'⁸⁷⁵

TABLE OF MONTHLY NAME COMPARISONS

<u>Jewish name</u> ⁸⁷⁶	<u>Pagan name</u> ⁸⁷⁷ & meaning (where known)	<u>Jews' symbol</u> ⁸⁷⁸	<u>Zodiac sign</u> ⁸⁷⁹
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⁸⁷³ q.v. inf.

⁸⁷⁴ viz., the Jewish Messiah.

⁸⁷⁵ *Jewish Encyclopedia*, p.337

⁸⁷⁶ *Karaite Korner*:

'In the Torah the months are numbered as First Month, Second Month, Third Month, etc (Leviticus 23; Numbers 28).

During their sojourn in Babylonia our ancestors began to use the pagan Babylonian month names, a fact readily admitted in the Talmud: "The names of the months came up with them from Babylonia." (Jerusalem Talmud, Rosh Hashanah, 1:2 56d).

The pagan nature of the Babylonian month names is epitomized by the fourth month known as Tammuz. In the Babylonian religion Tammuz was the god of grain whose annual death and resurrection brought fertility to the world. In the book of Ezekiel, the prophet described a journey to Jerusalem in which he saw the Jewish women sitting in the Temple "weeping over Tammuz" (Ezekiel 8:14). The reason they were weeping over Tammuz is that according to Babylonian mythology Tammuz had been slain but had not yet been resurrected. In ancient Babylonia the time for weeping over Tammuz was the early summer, when the rains cease throughout the Middle East and green vegetation is burnt by the unrelenting sun. To this day the Fourth Month in the rabbinical calendar is known as the month of Tammuz and it is still a time for weeping and mourning.

One field of Babylonian religious influence was in the observance of Yom Teruah as a New Years' celebration. From very early times the Babylonians had a lunar-solar calendar very similar to the biblical calendar. The result was that Yom Teruah often fell out on the same day as the Babylonian New Year's festival known as "Akitu." Akitu fell out on the 1st day of Tishrei which coincided with Yom Teruah on the 1st day of the Seventh Month. The fact that the Jews had started calling the Seventh Month by the Babylonian name Tishrei paved the way for turning Yom Teruah into a Jewish Akitu. At the same time the Rabbis did not want to adopt Akitu outright so they Judaized it by changing the name of Yom Teruah (Day of Shouting) to Rosh hashanah (New Year's). The fact that the Torah did not give a reason for Yom Teruah no doubt made it easier for the Rabbis to proclaim it the Jewish New Year's.

It may seem bizarre to celebrate Yom Teruah as New Year's considering that it falls out on the first day of the Seventh Month, but in the context of the Babylonian culture this was perfectly natural. The Babylonians actually celebrated Akitu, New Year's, twice every year, once on the first of Tishrei and again six months later on the first of Nisan. The first Babylonian Akitu celebration coincided with Yom Teruah and the second Akitu coincided with the actual New Year's in the Torah on the first day of the First Month.'

⁸⁷⁷ *Encyclopedia Judaica*, p.48:

'These names belong to the Babylonian calendar which was adopted, with relatively minor alterations over the centuries, by the Jews. The Babylonian calendar was a lunisolar calendar with years consisting of 12 lunar months, each beginning when a new crescent moon was first sighted low on the western horizon at sunset, plus an intercalary month inserted as needed by decree. This system came into use sometime before 2000BC.

Until the 5th. century BC the calendar was fully observational, but beginning about 499BC the months began to be regulated by a lunisolar cycle of 19 years equalling 235 months. Although usually called the Metonic cycle, Meton (432BC) probably learned of the cycle from the Babylonians. After no more than three isolated exceptions, by 380BC the months of the calendar were regulated by the cycle without exception. Within the cycle of 19 years, the month

<u>Nisan</u>	<u>Nisanu</u> —month of sacrifice	Lamb	Aries
<u>Iyyar</u>	<u>Ayar</u> —month of procession	Ox or bull	Taurus
<u>Sivan</u>	<u>Simanu</u> —month of brick-making	Twins	Gemini
<u>Tammuz</u>	<u>Du-uzu</u> —month of Tammuz, fertility god	Crab / lobster	Cancer
<u>Ab</u>	<u>Abu</u> —month of torches	Lion	Leo
<u>Ellul</u>	<u>Elulu</u> —month of purification	Virgin or maid	Virgo
<u>Tishri</u>	<u>Tishritu</u> —month of beginning	Scales	Libra
<u>Heshvan</u>	<u>Arah-samna</u> —the eighth month	Scorpion	Scorpio
<u>Kislev</u>	<u>Kislimu</u> —month of warfare or rainbow?	Bow	Sagittarius
<u>Tebeth</u>	<u>Tebet</u> —month of plunging (into water)	Flowing water	Aquarius
<u>Shabat</u>	<u>Shabatu</u> —month of rains and storms	Goat	Capricorn
<u>Adar</u>	<u>Adaru</u> —month of the threshing floor	Fish	Pisces

Months of the Jewish Calendar - Pre-Exilic Calendar:

<u>Biblical Month Name</u>	<u>Month Number</u>	<u>Meaning of Biblical Month Name (Descriptive)</u>
<u>Aviv</u>	1	<u>Chodesh Ha-Aviv</u> , Hebrew: 'month of Spring' in Hebrew ⁸⁸⁰
<u>Ziv</u>	2	<u>Chodesh Ziv</u> , Hebrew: month of Radiance ⁸⁸¹
3rd month	3	3rd month in relation to the month of <u>Aviv</u>
4th month	4	4th month in relation to the month of <u>Aviv</u>
5th month	5	5th month in relation to the month of <u>Aviv</u>
6th month	6	6th month in relation to the month of <u>Aviv</u>
<u>Eisanim</u> or <u>Ethanim</u>	7	<u>Yerach Eisanim</u> , Hebrew: 'month of Natural Forces' ⁸⁸²
<u>Bul</u>	8	<u>Yerach Bul</u> , Hebrew: 'month of Bountiful Harvests' ⁸⁸³

Adaru 2 was intercalated, except in the year that was number 17 in the cycle, when the month Ululu 2 was inserted. During this period, the first day of each month (beginning at sunset) continued to be the day when a new crescent moon was first sighted—the calendar never used a specified number of days in any month.

The earliest document listing all the Babylonian months in succession is Megillath Ta'anith, compiled in the late 1st. or early 2nd. century AD (since it is already quoted in the Mishnah, a 2nd. century work).

According to a tradition quoted in the name of Hai Gaon (d.1038AD), the present Jewish calendar was introduced by the patriarch Hillel II....in 358–359AD....While it is not unreasonable to attribute to Hillel II the fixing of the regular order of intercalations, his full share in the present fixed calendar is doubtful.'

⁸⁷⁸ these astrological signs and symbols, originating with pagan Chaldean astrologers c.2100BC, were adopted by the Jews during and after the Babylonian captivity.

⁸⁷⁹ Taqizadeh, S. H., *Old Iranian Calendars*:

'The seventh Babylonian month—Tishritu—had, as its patron, Shamesh, the Babylonian sun-god. The feast of Mithra (or Bâga) was one of the most popular, if not the greatest of all the festivals of ancient Persia. Originally a pre-Zoroastrian and old-Aryan feast consecrated to the sun-god, its place in the old-Persian calendar was surely in the month belonging to that deity, Bâgaayâ or Bâgaayâh, which almost certainly corresponded to the seventh Babylonian month of Tishritu.'

⁸⁸⁰ Ex 13:4,23:15,34:18; Deut 16:1

⁸⁸¹ I Kings 6:1,37

⁸⁸² I Kings 8:2

⁸⁸³ I Kings 6:38

9th month	9	9th month in relation to the month of <u>Aviv</u>
10th month	10	10th month in relation to the month of <u>Aviv</u>
11th month	11	11th month in relation to the month of <u>Aviv</u>
12th month	12	12th month in relation to the month of <u>Aviv</u>

What little has survived by way of records from the second-century AD reveals a period when the Jews neglected to intercalate, making their Nisan occur earlier and earlier in the year. In an attempt at remediation, consecutive years with thirteen months were introduced, but the accuracy of the entire calendrical system was obviously open to serious question, even on the basis of the Jewish systemology.

In light of all of the radical changes, most of which actually took place over the protracted period of time between the fourth- and eleventh-centuries, it is necessary to determine the system that was in operation under the Sadducees during the Second Temple period, and during the life of Christ, for the only annual feast then observed by the majority of the Jews that appears in the New Testament and highlighted as being incorrect was Passover.⁸⁸⁴ Pentecost, established by use of the Sadducean system, was correct, alighting on a Sunday after a fifty-day Omer count, confirmed by Bruce: 'In general, the Jewish Calendar in New Testament times (at least before [the date of destruction of the Second Temple]) followed the Sadducean reckoning, since it was by that reckoning that the Temple services were regulated. Thus the day of Pentecost was reckoned as the fiftieth day after presentation of the first harvested sheaf of barley, that is, the fiftieth day (inclusive) from the first Sunday after Passover;⁸⁸⁵ hence it always fell on a Sunday, as it does in the Christian calendar. The Pharisaic reckoning, which became standard after [the date of destruction of the Second Temple], interpreted 'Sabbath' in Leviticus⁸⁸⁶ as the festival day of Unleavened Bread and not the weekly Sabbath; in that case Pentecost always fell on the same day of the month [sixth day of the month Sivan].'⁸⁸⁷

The beginning of the year is month-one; not month-seven. The methodology for fixing the Jewish Rosh hashanah,⁸⁸⁸ on Jewish first day of Tishri, is based on the following data reported in Encyclopedia Judaica, and by Spier: '[Rosh hashanah] is rarely on the day of the molad; postponements occur about sixty-percent of the time, so the postponements are the rule rather than the exception, as there are four obstacles or considerations, called dehiyyah, in fixing the first day of the month (rosh hodesh). Each dehiyyot may cause a postponement of two days:

⁸⁸⁴ late by one day, but this did not affect the calendar, as Christ kept it on the evening of the 14th Abib—'the evening before' or 'early-14th' in common parlance, while the bulk of the Jews kept in on the 15th Abib.

⁸⁸⁵ Lev 23:15

⁸⁸⁶ Lev 23:15

⁸⁸⁷ Bruce, F. F., *The Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, Vol. 1, p.223, article on 'Calendar' (with added comment and clarification in square brackets). Of course, the authorities of the time had the Sabbatical years and the Jubilees incorrectly observed, if at all, but that is another matter, q.v. sup.

⁸⁸⁸ also known as the Jewish New Year.

1. When the Molad Tishri occurs on a Sunday, Wednesday or Friday, Rosh hashanah is postponed to the following day, mainly in order to prevent the Day of Atonement (10th Tishri) from falling on Friday or Sunday, and Hoshana Rabba (the seventh day of Sukkot; 21st Tishri) from falling on Saturday, but in part also serving an astronomical purpose....
2. Entirely for an astronomical reason, if the molad is at noon or later Rosh hashanah is delayed by one day, or, if this day is a Sunday, Wednesday or Friday, then to Monday, Thursday or Sabbath because of Dehiah 1....
3. When the Molad Tishri of a common year falls on Tuesday, 204 parts after 3am, Rosh hashanah is postponed to Wednesday, and, because of Dehiah 1, to Thursday....
4. When, in a common year succeeding a leap year, the Molad Tishri occurs on Monday morning 589 parts after 9am, Rosh hashanah is postponed to the next day.⁸⁸⁹

It is claimed by many commentators that these rules of postponement simply were unknown in, say, the time of Christ, or at the time of the preparation of the Talmud. It is also claimed that the Mishnah clearly shows that the Day of Atonement sometimes fell on a Friday or on a Sunday up to the time of its compilation and, hence, did so at the time of Christ some two centuries previously: 'They do not count less than four full months in a year, and never have appeared more than eight.'⁸⁹⁰ The Soncino's⁸⁹¹ footnotes confirm that, contrary to the postponements system, the day of Atonement, Yom Kippur, did fall, sometimes, on a Friday or a Sun-day.⁸⁹²

It is therefore impossible for the postponement system to have been in place at the time of Christ. Dehiyyot, calendar postponements, are not derived from Scripture. Nowhere are they mentioned, and they are nowhere commanded by God. They are simply the devious manoeuvrings of an apostate people to render their Babylonian-derived pagan calendar—most probably first encountered during the Jews' captivity in Babylon,⁸⁹³ but kept suppressed until after the time of Christ—more amenable to their apostate comfort and needs.

From all of this, it would appear an unavoidable conclusion that the regularised flow of twenty-nine and thirty day months, and the postponements pertaining, for they are related, could not have been in place at the time of Christ. Given that, it also strongly suggests that a formalised, repetitive-cycle schematic calendar form was also lacking. Schurer adds: 'In the context of the passage cited,⁸⁹⁴ possible minimum and maximum limits are given with regard to the most varied things. The above-mentioned oscillation in the length of the year was therefore actually observed, and in the time of the Mishnah was still regarded as possible. As a matter of fact,

⁸⁸⁹ *Encyclopedia Judaica*, p.44, with interleaved excerpts from Spier, Arthur, *The Comprehensive Hebrew Calendar*, p.15

⁸⁹⁰ Arakhin 2:2

⁸⁹¹ part of the Talmud.

⁸⁹² Shabbath 114b (footnote 16); Menachoth 100b (footnote 12); K'rithoth 19a (footnote 10).

⁸⁹³ starting 597BC

⁸⁹⁴ mArak. 2:2

the statement appeared so remarkable to the authorities of the Babylonian Talmud that attempts were made to give it a new interpretation.^{895 896}

Referring back to Spier's comments on the Tekufoth—'Therefore the independent computation of the beginnings of the four seasons, the Tekufoth, has lost its importance'—and considering further its impact, there appears to be two main, or compounded, 'seasons' in Scripture: '*While the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease*,⁸⁹⁷ and, '*Thou hast set all the borders of the earth: thou hast made summer and winter*.⁸⁹⁸ The vernal equinox was termed '*the return of the year*,⁸⁹⁹ and the autumnal equinox was termed '*the going out of the year*,' '*and the feast of ingathering, which is in the end [going out of] the year*.⁹⁰⁰

Surprisingly many nowadays contend that the month in which the Passover occurs is determined from the New Moon nearest to the vernal equinox in the northern hemisphere. This appears to rest solely on questionable 'inferences' derived from extra-biblical information and sources, such as Josephus: 'Passover is in the fourteenth day of the lunar month, when the sun is in Aries, for it was in Aries that the children of Israel went out of Egypt [departing on 15th Abib].⁹⁰¹ The Encyclopedia Americana adds, 'The vernal equinox is still called "The First of Aries."⁹⁰²

If the vernal equinox was then the beginning of Aries, and taking this with Josephus' information, then, in the absence of any more convincing 'evidence,' the matter is open as to whether the first molad of the month in which Passover falls was on or after the vernal equinox, since both could satisfy Josephus' criterion, but only the former satisfies the Aries equinox criterion. Placing it before the equinox is problematical, however, for there is nothing to support it in the evidence led.

The Jews' 'nearest molad to the vernal equinox' arrangement, however, would always satisfy the Josephus criterion on the Jewish fifteenth of Abib Passover, but not always for the fourteenth of Abib, which, on this basis, could fall one day prior to the vernal equinox. And again, on the Jewish basis, the 'molad after the vernal equinox' would satisfy it about fifty-percent of the time. Being indeterminate, this settles nothing and leaves open the question of whether the Sacred Year could actually start with the molad before the vernal equinox, for it would then be starting in the time of '*the going out of the year*,' in the winter season.⁹⁰³

⁸⁹⁵ cf. bArak. 8b-9a; *Zuckerman Materialen*, pp.64f.

⁸⁹⁶ Schurer, Emil, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ*, footnote #12, p.592

⁸⁹⁷ Gen 8:22

⁸⁹⁸ Psa 74:17

⁸⁹⁹ I Kings 20:22,26; Hebrew: teshubah.

⁹⁰⁰ Ex 23:16 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets); Hebrew: yatsa, 'going out.'

⁹⁰¹ Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, 3.10.5. (with added comment and clarification in square brackets); cp.Ex 13:21b.

⁹⁰² *Encyclopedia Americana*, article, 'Aries.'

⁹⁰³ cp. Gen 8:22; Psa 74:17; Hebrew: choreph, meaning 'crop gathered,' 'autumn + winter season' as opposed to 'spring + summer season.'

It would seem strange that the beginning of the first full season, summer, at the vernal equinox, could possibly occur at a time when the true Sacred Year had already started. If the vernal equinox were a sign or a marker, which it gives every appearance of being, then it is difficult to see, *prima face*, why it would be set and then the entire 'back-lapped,' as it were, by starting the Sacred Year before it. The normal arrangement would be for the sign, and only thereafter that which was signalled.

It appears from historical records that the Samaritans and the Sadducees kept exactly the same method of determining the start of their months from their calculation of the molad vis-à-vis the vernal equinox. The Samaritan records show, however, that their method of determining the start of the first month of the year was on the molad subsequent upon the vernal equinox; never before it. The Samaritans, however, set their vernal equinox immutably on the twenty-fifth of March, and this has had a slowly cumulative effect of displacing their feast days, tending to place some years one month behind compared with the adjusted vernal equinox, which was regressing very, very slowly over the centuries. The point remains, however, that by the time of the Second Temple, the Samaritans were celebrating their feasts sometimes—albeit infrequently—a month behind the Sadducees due to their late and slipping equinox. The Sadducees, for their part, were observing the same rule as the Samaritans by commencing the first month of the year on the first molad after the vernal equinox.

'The Imperial Library at St. Petersburg also possesses some Samaritan calendars, or astronomical tables....[The] Samaritan Pentateuch, an ancient version of the book of Moses, which has been preserved by the Samaritans and, along with the book of Joshua, constitutes their sacred scriptures. The Samaritan Pentateuch is most probably a recension of the same original as that from which the Jewish came, and possesses an independent value in determining the text [sic]. It is written in a non-Hebrew character, probably older than that of the Hebrew Septuagint [sic]. A manuscript copy of the Samaritan Pentateuch is in existence which is said by the Samaritans to have been written by Abishu, the great-grandson of Aaron.'⁹⁰⁴

How much of this is true is open to question, of course, and the Samaritan text can have no value in determining the true text, for the oracles of God were committed to the Jews,⁹⁰⁵ but it does indicate an ancient continuity, and some regard for the Law. The question, then, is whether the Samaritans have retained a first month regime, albeit not reconciled to the current date of the vernal equinox, that is none other than that which was in place during the First Temple period, and, later, during the Second Temple period, but which became lost to the Jews in the period after the latter temple's destruction when the rabbinical struggle for control was at its height.

Evidence of a fixed and promulgated, as opposed to covert, Jewish intercalary system does not appear by even the second-century, according to Schurer. Concerning the decision of whether to intercalate, Shurer remarks: 'The Feast of Passover, to be celebrated at full moon in the month of Nisan [fourteenth], must always

⁹⁰⁴ *Encyclopedia Americana*, articles, 'Samaritan Language and Literature,' & 'Samaritan Pentateuch.'

⁹⁰⁵ Rom 3:2; oracles committed, but with some severe qualification, q.v. inf., and termination.

fall after the vernal equinox⁹⁰⁶....Anatolius, in a preserved fragment of great importance for the history of the Jewish calendar,⁹⁰⁷ characterises this as the unanimous view of all the Jewish authorities....The statements of Philo and Josephus also accord with it. If therefore, it was noticed towards the end of the year that Passover would fall before the vernal equinox, the intercalation of a month before Nisan was decreed.⁹⁰⁸

Sadly, this again proves nothing conclusive in the context of the positioning of the first molad vis-a-vis the vernal equinox. Anatolius was Patriarch of Constantinople⁹⁰⁹ well after the period of interest, so 'the unanimous view of all the Jewish authorities' was several centuries later than the period in question and subsequent to the introduction of the Hillel calendar which was structured, theoretically at least, on the basis of 'the nearest molad.' Neither Philo nor Josephus provides an incontrovertible answer to the basic question of whether to commence the first molad of the year before or after the vernal equinox.

Both spring and autumn festivals coincide with harvests, but a maximum displacement of two weeks by operating the 'molad after the vernal equinox regime' in comparison with the Judaic model—anything more has the effect of a leap year having thirteen months, or, more correctly, a rearrangement of the fall of leap years—and an average of just over one week, on its own provides little or nothing by way of evidence in deciding the matter. The Judaic calendar, however, by dint of its aberrant Passover 'control' vis-a-vis the vernal equinox, manages, on occasion⁹¹⁰ to land the first day of Tabernacles before the autumn equinox.⁹¹¹ In other words, its configuration permits, from time to time, the 'mid-point' of the seventh month⁹¹² to fall within the six month fixed summer season.⁹¹³ This error—and it is an obvious error—flows directly from the Judaic calendar's placing the first day of Nisan before the vernal equinox in certain years.

The relationship to the main harvest is seen in, *'and the feast of ingathering, which is in the end of the year, when thou hast gathered in thy labours out of the field.'*⁹¹⁴ The feast of Ingathering, or Tabernacles, falls after the physical harvest, and the final harvest is not brought in until a point at or about the equinox. The *'autumn and winter season'*⁹¹⁵ also means *'crop or harvest gathered,'* and it is obvious that the feast of Tabernacles, being the *'harvest-gathered feast,'* must fall within what is termed the fruit harvest-gathered season, and not in the earlier spring and summer grain harvest season. Tellingly, in the first millennium of the

⁹⁰⁶ Greek: meta isemerian earninen.

⁹⁰⁷ in Eusebius HE vii 32, 16-19

⁹⁰⁸ Schurer, Emil, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ*, Appendix 3

⁹⁰⁹ 449–458AD

⁹¹⁰ e.g., 2002, 2013, 2021

⁹¹¹ e.g., a non-postponed, dark lunar conjunction calendar, but with Passover positioned on Jewish reckoning vis-a-vis the vernal equinox, in 2016D gives the first day of Tabernacles as 17 Sept., while the autumnal (fall) equinox is on 22 Sept., five days later.

⁹¹² 15th day of the 7th month.

⁹¹³ i.e., spring & summer season, Hebrew: qayits; leap years always have a mix of six summer months and seven winter months, as Adar II is added at the end of the year as a 7th winter month, so the summer season is always six months long.

⁹¹⁴ Ex 23:16b

⁹¹⁵ Hebrew: choreph.

use of the Hillel calendar, the relationship was even more obtuse, with the whole of the feast of Tabernacles falling before the autumn equinox on about ninety separate occasions.⁹¹⁶

Borrowings & errors

The Jewish adoption of the Babylonian nineteen-year cycle calendar, with its pagan names of the months; its autumnal start of the so-called civil year on the first day of Tishri; the method of calculation of leap years; the reconciliation to a supposed and erroneous date for the creation of man;⁹¹⁷ the four arbitrary postponements; the general alternating pattern of twenty-nine- / thirty-day months; and the modus of New Moon determination, have served to obscure and confuse matters. Jewish tradition actually claims that God gave express permission to Moses on the mount of Sinai to devise and operate a schematic, postponed calendar!

In the Judaic calendar:

1. The nineteen-year cycle loses one day every two hundred and twenty-four years or so against the solar cycle;
2. The Jewish molad does not always occur on the first day of the Hebrew month—it misses surprisingly many;
3. The Jewish molad is now out of synchronism with the correct astronomical conjunction, varying by as much as +/- seventeen hours;
4. The Judaic calendar's vernal equinox now stands on the 7th / 8th April, whereas the true equinox now occurs on 20th / 21st March;
5. Even on their calendar, the Jewish method of calculating the first day of Tishri gets the date placed further from their molad about two times out of three owing to the complex system of postponements used;
6. Then working to the first day of Abib, the start of God's year, the Jewish system usually manages to get that wrong too, as it is a count from an incorrect base;

⁹¹⁶ an approximation, surely; a somewhat similar phenomenon occurs with the Judaic New Moon on occasion—as in April, 2002AD, that being a year with no dehiyyah postponements—where the Judaic calendar, due to its rigidly schematic nature, managed to place the New Moon one day in advance of the true lunar conjunction: the antithesis of what is, by and large, at root, a schematically approximate system.

⁹¹⁷ 3760BC

7. While in the Judaic calendar, one hundred and seventy-seven days before the first day of Tishri is the first day of Nisan, the new moon might not agree. This is for two reasons, a) an accurate average count is not actually a round number of days, and b) the moon's speed around the earth varies;⁹¹⁸

8. Then the Jewish system starts the first day of Nisan on the calculated first day of the month⁹¹⁹ on the quasi-basis of whichever first day of the month is nearest the vernal equinox, though, in turn, this is kept subject to the schematic workings of the Judaic calendar, with the result that:

9. Some Jewish Nisans commence in the winter season;

10. The Jewish leap years are out of phase; and, to compound matters;

11. The Jews then hold Passover and Pentecost on the wrong days of their wrong calendar; and,

12. Most of their other annual Holy Days fall in error too, for the Judaic calendar fails to secure accurate starts to the months.⁹²⁰

Despite all these pagan borrowings, inaccuracies, and errors—"In Judaism, the [Judaic] calendar is used for divination, astrology, and numerology"⁹²¹—some not only contend that the Judaic calendar is God-inspired and relevant today, but that it was in operation more than two-and-a-half millennia before the earliest Jewish record of it. These utterly ridiculous assertions are based on wildly aberrant readings of the biblical account of the Flood and the Exodus.⁹²²

⁹¹⁸ the moon is on an elliptical, not a circular orbit around the earth. Its path takes it farther, then closer, to the earth. When the moon is closer to the earth its speed from horizon to horizon increases. Conversely, when it is farthest from the earth, its speed decreases. As a result of this variability, Molad determination of 1st Nisan by the Jewish method of counting a round number of days from their assumed 1st Tishri is fraught with error.

⁹¹⁹ usually wrongly.

⁹²⁰ the Jews' first day of Tabernacles, on 15th Tishri, by reason of the error in the Jews' New Moon determination allied to the operation of the postponements, often lands not on the true 15th Ethanim, but on the Mihragen, the day of the Babylonian feast of Mithra.

⁹²¹ Hoffman, Michael, *Judaism Discovered*, p.924 (with added comments and clarifications in square brackets)

⁹²² the claim for the flood is based on a calculation that gives 385 days for the year of the flood, and that the only calendar exhibiting a 385-day leap year is the Judaic calendar. In order to show 385 days, the undernoted period of 150 days has to be counted twice, the period of 40 days assumed to be separate and excluded from the period of 150 days, thirty days has to be taken for the month Nisan in the 600th. year of Noah's life (the first month of the year in God's sacred calendar may have either 29 or 30 days), and the start and finish dates for the actual 150-day period given in Scripture either ignored or regarded as being in error. It is worse, for by starting with the 'exclusive' 40 days, the timeline for the then first 190 days is as follows: 40 days starting on the 17th. of month 2, gives a 150-day start on the 28th. day of month 3, and ending on 29th. day of month 8, so from the 28th. to the 28th. doesn't give the 150 days inclusive for 5 months, as the Bible states, neither does it accord with the dates given in chpts. 7 and 8 for the start and termination of the 150 days (cf. notes 2-7 inf.).

Flood cadence in the Bible is as follows:

1. rain (windows of heaven opened) and the waters of the deep broken up: 17th. day of 2nd. month (Gen 7:11).

Biblical resolution

There is, however, a sound biblical foundation for the simple resolution of these difficulties, and it is found in the words of King David in Psalms: *'He appointed the moon for seasons; the sun knoweth his going down.'*⁹²³ This verse contains a verifiable statement on the moon vis-a-vis the seasons,⁹²⁴ but only if the true molad or conjunction starting the '*summer season*' is the first after the vernal equinox. If the first month 'straddles' the vernal equinox, as often happens in the Judaic calendar, it would be 'part-in and part-out' of the summer season, and as such could not mark the start of the summer season. The conclusion, therefore, so far, is that the start of the year must be with the first true molad or conjunction after the vernal equinox. The Hebrew

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2. rain continued: 40 days (v.12) (The rain was of limited duration, as most of the flood water would come from the earth. It is known that there is much more water in the ground and at the surface than is contained in the clouds).
 3. waters prevailed (from Hebrew: gabar, to be strong) in vv.18-20,24, from the day that the fountains of the deep were broken out (17th. of 2nd. month) for 150 days, v.24.
 4. Gen 8:3, *'And the waters returned [(from Hebrew: shroob, 'turned back,' 'receded') continually (from Hebrew: halak, 'went') and after the end of one hundred and fifty days were abated (from Hebrew: chacer, 'diminished')]*.
 5. the waters prevailed, or were strong, and none could resist the flood, from the first day (17th. of the 2nd. month) for 150 days, 'til the 17th. of the 7th. month.
 6. so what happened on that day in the 7th. month?
 7. v.4, *'And the ark rested in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, upon the mountains of Ararat.'* The word translated 'rested' does not mean, as some erroneously contend, 'floating and stationary' 15 cubits above the summit of the mountain. That is ridiculous. The waters were, by that time, receding or diminishing, cf. v.3, and the ark came to rest, grounded, on the summit of the mountain. Given that the draught of such a large vessel would be quite considerable, the tip of the mountain would not be visible at the time of grounding.
 8. the waters continued to decrease until, on the 1st. day of the 10th. month, the surrounding mountain tops were visible, v.5.
 9. 40 days later, Noah opened the window and released the raven, vv.6,7.
 10. and after a further 7 days, v.10.
 11. and after another 7 days, v.12.
 12. then in v.13....*'and it came to pass (an added phrase) on (rosh hashanah, the 1st. day of the 1st. month of Noah's 601st. year). The water was gone. This is apposite, for rosh hashanah is often the start of major things in the Bible.*
 13. v.14, on 27th. of the 2nd. month, the surface was dry, permitting Noah et al to disembark.
- Rappoport, Rav S. A., points out that there are not two periods of 150 days; there is only one [in Hebrew, the question of whether the 40 days of Gen 7:17 is included in the 150 days period or not can appear moot, at first, but is clarified by the fact that the sole 150 days period starts on 17th. of the 2nd. month and ends on the 17th. of the seventh month, so the 150 day period is inclusive of the 40 day period].
- Rappoport also states that there is no hard evidence of it being a leap year. It might have been, but it is impossible to tell from the information provided in Genesis chpts. 7 and 8.
- The second claim is based on an aberrant reading of events surrounding the time of the Exodus, and the year following, deriving from Exodus chpt. 16 and Num 1:1, where a 385-day year is claimed on the assumption that God spoke on a weekly Sabbath day, with reference to Num 1:1, and then makes the further assumption that God usually spoke to man on either a weekly Sabbath or an annual holy day, and that the day in question was therefore a weekly Sabbath, which on the peculiarities of the operation of the Judaic calendar's leap year, is then said to 'prove' a 385-day year.
- This is nonsense, for Num 1:1 tells us *exactly* what that day was: it was the first day of the second month, so it was a New Moon day, a Shabbathown, when God most certainly talks to His people on that Day (e.g. Ezek 26:1,29:17,30:20,31:1,32:1, etc.) Since a New Moon can and does fall on any day of the week, the 'weekly Sabbath' assumption is utterly ill-founded, and with it falls any contention on the 385-day calendar deriving from Exodus chpt.

16.
⁹²³ Psa 104:19

⁹²⁴ for consideration of the meaning '*appointed times*,' q.v. inf.

word here translated '*moon*'⁹²⁵ contains the idea of a complete lunation or month marking out the beginning of the year, and not that of a part-month in the old autumn and winter season⁹²⁶ and a part-month in the new spring and summer season.⁹²⁷

The Sacred Year commences with the first month, as set by God, '*And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, This month*'⁹²⁸ *shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you,*'⁹²⁹ and not the seventh month as operated by the Jews under continuing influence from their Babylonian captivity. This is perhaps rendered a little clearer for some if the word '*month*' is substituted by '*new moon*,' for that is the meaning of the Hebrew: '*And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, This new moon*'⁹³⁰ *shall be unto you the beginning of new moons: it shall be the first new moon of the year to you.'* Taking this in tandem with the idea of a complete lunation, and the restriction of the feast of ingathering to the going out of the year, it leaves no room for doubt that the Sacred Year commences with the first new moon after the vernal equinox.

God's way

Surprisingly, the following incredibly simple rules apply:

1. The astronomical conjunction,⁹³¹ the correct molad, gives the true first day of the first month of God's calendar, the first day of Abib;
2. This is the first true molad after the vernal equinox;⁹³²
3. All subsequent months commence with astronomical conjunctions;
4. This automatically gives the correct placement of leap years;
5. It is completely accurate, as it always reconciles to the vernal equinox; and, as a result,
6. It doesn't lose any time against the celestial / solar cycle.

⁹²⁵ Psa 104:19; Hebrew: yareach, deriving from yerach, meaning '*lunation*.'

⁹²⁶ Hebrew: choreph.

⁹²⁷ Hebrew: gayits.

⁹²⁸ in which the Passover occurred; the Hebrew: ha-chodesh ha-zeh is much more specific, actually meaning '*this very month*.'

⁹²⁹ Ex 12:1,2

⁹³⁰ Hebrew: chodesh.

⁹³¹ the Moon's travel round the earth takes 24 hours, 50 minutes. In the event of no relevant and accurate astronomical data being available, then the time of the dark lunar conjunction can be estimated by the following means: at the last quarter phase of the moon, at sunrise, measure centre-to-centre the distance between the sun and the moon, in centimetres, divide by 0.51, and the answer gives the number of hours until the lunar conjunction. Using a piece of string, held 600mm from the eye, measure the above c/c distance in cms, and double it (the width of a thumb is approximately a centimetre). This gives a close approximation of the conjunction, apparently to within 20 minutes, if done carefully.

⁹³² equinox currently falls on 20th or 21st March.

The Earth loses about half-a-second every century, but God's calendar self-adjusts to this as the start of the Sacred Year is governed by the vernal equinox. As such, God's calendar is remarkably simple, and self-adjusting. The Sacred Year always starts with the first true molad, also known as the dark moon, or the conjunction, after the vernal equinox. The first day of the Sacred Year is that day in which falls the first true molad. All subsequent months start with the fall of the subsequent true molads. Leap years occur automatically, as the vernal equinox acts as a regulator, or bar, preventing the first month's true molad regressing beyond the date of the vernal equinox.

Methodology

In order to be able to calculate the correct months of God's Calendar, and derive the correct annual Holy Days, the following information is necessary:

1. The date and time of the vernal equinox (universal time);
2. The date and time of the lunar conjunctions (universal time); and,
3. The local time of Jerusalem sunsets.⁹³³

The calculations thereafter are as follows:

1. Once the vernal equinox is determined in universal time, two hours are added to give Jerusalem standard time. This sets the Jerusalem time of the vernal equinox, and the bar earlier than which the first New Moon of God's Sacred Year cannot occur;
2. This sets leap years automatically;
3. The same procedure is carried out with the lunar conjunctions in universal time to arrive at Jerusalem standard time;
4. The first conjunction after the specific time of the vernal equinox is the first New Moon of God's Sacred Year, calculated as follows:
5. The Jerusalem date and time of this conjunction is then compared with the Jerusalem sunset which has been adjusted for altitude⁹³⁴ to ensure that the actual conjunction does not fall in the following day for Jerusalem, God's day being sunset to sunset;

⁹³³ adjusted for altitude of Jerusalem above sea level.

6. This gives the time and correct date of the conjunction for Jerusalem;
7. The day on which this conjunction occurs (for Jerusalem) is the first day of Abib;
8. This procedure is repeated for all subsequent conjunctions for Jerusalem, giving the complete Sacred Year monthly calendar;
9. The annual Holy Days are then added in the normal manner on the dates set by God; and,
10. This completes the Sacred Year calendar.

It should be noted that by using this methodology, there is no need of any adjustment for Israeli Daylight Saving Time,⁹³⁵ commonly termed Israeli Summer Time in determining the fall of the holy days.

Illustration of divergence

Year: 2000–2001 <u>Holy Day/New Moon</u>	Correct calendar date	Judaic calendar date
Passover [14 th Abib] observed 'previous evening,' but by Jews on their 15 th Nisan:	18 April, 2000	20 April, 2000
Unleavened Bread:	19–25 April, 2000	20–26 April, 2000
Pentecost:	11 June, 2000	9 June, 2000
Trumpets:	28 September, 2000	30 September, 2000
Atonement:	7 October, 2000	9 October, 2000
Tabernacles:	12–18 October, 2000	14–20 October, 2000
Last Great Day / <u>Shemini Atzeret</u> :	19 October, 2000	21 October, 2000

⁹³⁴ c.2,440 feet above sea level measured from the Temple Mount; at most latitudes on the Earth, the effect of increased altitude is the same: it makes the Sun rise earlier and set later than it would at that same location from the ground. The variation with altitude is approximately linear, and so sunset is later by one minute for every 1.5 kilometres in altitude, and sunrise earlier by the same amount. In terms of Jerusalem, the elevation gives a minute deviation, too short to adjust with any meaningful accuracy data on sunrise and sunset which are accurate to one minute.

The visible sun (not from Jerusalem as it is blocked by hills) is seen earlier than sunrise and later than sunset. This is because of the refraction of the light from the Sun by the Earth's atmosphere since the Earth's atmosphere bends the path of the light so that we see the Sun in a position slightly differently from where it really is. The magnitude of this effect varies with latitude, but it's strongest at the equator, where the Sun rises two minutes earlier than it would if the Earth had no atmosphere, and sets two minutes after it would if the Earth had no atmosphere. This has no impact on the matter under consideration since the base data is taken from the geometrical sunrise and sunset, not the apparent.

⁹³⁵ I.D.S.T.

First Day of Month:

Month 1 (<u>Abib</u> : 'sprouting'):	5 April, 2000	6 April, 2000 ⁹³⁶
Month 2 (<u>Ziv</u> : 'flowering'):	4 May, 2000	6 May, 2000
Month 3:	2 June, 2000	4 June, 2000
Month 4:	2 July, 2000	4 July, 2000 ⁹³⁷
Month 5:	31 July, 2000	2 August, 2000
Month 6:	29 August, 2000	1 September, 2000 ⁹³⁸
Month 7 (<u>Ethanim</u> : 'flowing rivers'):	28 September, 2000	30 September, 2000
Month 8 (<u>Bul</u> : 'rain'):	27 October, 2000	30 October, 2000 ⁹³⁹
Month 9:	26 November, 2000	28 November, 2000
Month 10:	26 December, 2000	27 December, 2000
Month 11:	24 January, 2001	25 January, 2001
Month 12:	23 February, 2001	24 February, 2001 ⁹⁴⁰

And, on occasion, the divergence can be much greater, as in certain leap years. Note that in no fewer than eight of the Judaic calendar's thirteen months which appear in Year 2002–2003 (Judaism's Year 5763), while the molad places one day earlier, the schematic calendar renders the dates of the first of the months as shown:

Year: 2002–2003 <u>Holy Day/New Moon</u>	Correct calendar date	Judaic calendar date
Passover [14 th Abib] observed 'previous evening,' but by Jews on their 15 th Nisan:	26 April, 2002	28 March, 2002
Unleavened Bread:	27 April–3 May, 2002	28 March–4 April, 2002
Pentecost:	16 June, 2002	17 May, 2002

⁹³⁶ Judaic calendar places molad one day earlier, but the schematic calendar renders the dates of the first of the months as shown in the table. This is due to a rule in the Judaic calendar that a 29-day month be succeeded by a 30-day month,⁹³⁶ irrespective of the fall of the Jewish molad or the sighting of the New Moon.

⁹³⁷ q.v. sup.

⁹³⁸ q.v. sup.

⁹³⁹ q.v. sup.

⁹⁴⁰ q.v. sup.

Trumpets:	6 October, 2002	7 September, 2002
Atonement:	15 October, 2002	16 September, 2002
Tabernacles:	20–26 October, 2002	21–27 September, 2002
Last Great Day / <u>Shemini Atzeret</u> :	27 October, 2002	28 September, 2002
<u>First Day of Month:</u>		
Month 1 (<u>Abib</u> : 'sprouting'):	13 April, 2002	14 March, 2002
Month 2 (<u>Ziv</u> : 'flowering'):	12 May, 2002	13 April, 2002 ⁹⁴¹
Month 3:	11 June, 2002	12 May, 2002
Month 4:	10 July, 2002	11 June, 2002 ⁹⁴²
Month 5:	9 August, 2002	10 July, 2002
Month 6:	7 September, 2002	9 August, 2002 ⁹⁴³
Month 7 (<u>Ethanim</u> : 'flowing rivers'):	6 October, 2002	7 September, 2002
Month 8 (<u>Bul</u> : 'rain'):	5 November, 2002	7 October, 2002 ⁹⁴⁴
Month 9:	4 December, 2002	6 November, 2002 ⁹⁴⁵
Month 10:	3 January, 2003	6 December, 2002 ⁹⁴⁶
Month 11:	1 February, 2003	4 January, 2003
Month 12:	3 March, 2003	3 February, 2003 ⁹⁴⁷
Month 13:	N / A	5 March, 2003 ⁹⁴⁸

New moon observance

By way of a form of codicil to this chapter, it is considered meet to review the observance of the New Moons commanded in Numbers: *'And in the beginning of your months ye shall offer a burnt offering unto the*

⁹⁴¹ q.v. sup.

⁹⁴² q.v. sup.

⁹⁴³ q.v. sup.

⁹⁴⁴ q.v. sup.

⁹⁴⁵ q.v. sup.

⁹⁴⁶ q.v. sup.

⁹⁴⁷ q.v. sup.

⁹⁴⁸ q.v. sup.

Lord,'⁹⁴⁹ culminating in, 'And one kid of the goats for a sin offering unto the Lord.'⁹⁵⁰ Chronicles adds, 'Behold, I build an house to the name of the Lord my God, to dedicate it to him, and to burn before him sweet incense, and for the continual shewbread, and for the burnt offerings morning and evening, on the sabbaths, and on the new moons, and on the solemn feasts of the Lord our God.'⁹⁵¹

The New Moons were set by God as sacred time. Their observance involved sacrifices, as did the other sacred times. In the time of King David, the New Moons were observed with a monthly king's banquet as well: 'And David said unto Jonathan, Behold, tomorrow is the new moon, and I should not fail to sit with the king at meat.'⁹⁵² It is claimed by some that the Hallel⁹⁵³ was read in praise during the New Moon celebrations, although others dispute this.

As sacrifices do not pertain to the Judæo-Christian, the form of observance of the New Moon is difficult, in some ways, to ascertain in any detail from the scriptural record. That it involves a meal, praise, and prayer can be inferred or implied, but the prescription is not detailed. It is a sacred feast, verging on or actually being a completely formal Sabbath,⁹⁵⁴ as at one time the Jews and the Israelites abstained from work. A frequently referenced tract in this context is found in Amos: 'Hear this, O ye that swallow up the needy, even to make the poor of the land to fail, Saying, When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell corn? and the sabbath, that we may set forth wheat, making the ephah small, and the shekel great, and falsifying the balances by deceit.'⁹⁵⁵ In many ways these are similar to the day of Trumpets, which itself falls on a New Moon, and where, again, little detail is given on the conduct of the feast, and little is said directly on the meaning or significance, although, with care and divine guidance,⁹⁵⁶ it can be extracted. For example, the king's New Moon feast pictures the wedding supper of the Lamb, which takes place 'in the air' before Christ's arrival on the mount of Olives, and which involves the 'firstfruits' as guests, and is barred or hidden from all others, presaged by the 'hidden moon.'

Tracing the New Moon observance through the Scriptures there is a special Psalm for the New Moon which appears to refer to Ethanim, which mentions the 'solemn feast day.' This might not be so, however, as, 'Blow up the trumpet in the new moon, in the time appointed, on our solemn feast day,'⁹⁵⁷ is better rendered: 'Blow up the horn'⁹⁵⁸ in the new moon, at the covered time, on the day of our feast.' '[T]he covered time' refers to

⁹⁴⁹ Num 28:11

⁹⁵⁰ Num 28:15

⁹⁵¹ II Chron 2:4 (sublinear emphasis added)

⁹⁵² I Sam 20:5

⁹⁵³ comprising Psalms chpts. 113–118; Hallel deriving from Hebrew halal, meaning 'praise.'

⁹⁵⁴ actually a Shabbathown.

⁹⁵⁵ Amos 8:4,5 (sublinear emphasis added); 'new moon' translation from Hebrew: chodesh, a simple reference to monthly New Moons.

⁹⁵⁶ through the Holy Spirit.

⁹⁵⁷ Psa 81:3; LXX: 'Blow the trumpet in the new moon at the glorious day of your feast.'

⁹⁵⁸ Hebrew: shophar.

the dark or New Moon.⁹⁵⁹ Thus it could refer to all New Moons, being feasts, not just the day of Trumpets, Yom Teruah,⁹⁶⁰ since Ibn Ezra confirms that the shophar was blown on all New Moons.⁹⁶¹

The Tanakh, however, translates this same verse, as verse four,⁹⁶² thus: *'Blow the horn on the new moon, on the full moon for our feast day.'* The juxtaposition here of new moon and full moon is incongruous. The only feasts that occur on or about a day on which there is a full moon are the first day of Unleavened Bread,⁹⁶³ and the first day of Tabernacles,⁹⁶⁴ but Scripture does not specify either as a full moon feast, or for horn⁹⁶⁵ blowing. The significance of the first day of Unleavened Bread is that the children of Israel went out of Egypt by night.⁹⁶⁶ The full moon was not light for their night-time journey, but rather that described in Exodus: *'And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night.'*⁹⁶⁷ There is no 'full moon feast' in Judæo-Christianity. So why has the Tanakh chosen to translate *'the covered or hidden moon'* as *'the full moon'*? The answer appears to be simply a facile device in order to disguise the shift of the New Moon in rabbinical Judaism from the dark moon synodic conjunction to a sighting of the first visible crescent.⁹⁶⁸ Without introducing the obscuring phrase *'the full moon,'* Judaism would be confronted with the unshakable dark moon conjunction.

Moving the New Moon also resulted, of course, in a shift of the annual holy days. In order to gain control of the religious observances of the Jews after the destruction of the Second Temple, and to preclude any possibility of a return to the Sadducaic system, the Pharisees and their heirs and successors determined to alter the sacred calendar so fundamentally as to render it utterly inoperable and irrevocable, in their eyes at any rate, until at the last their false-messiah would come to give the Sadducaic system its final denouement.

⁹⁵⁹ 'covered' from Hebrew: kicceh, deriving from kacah and kasah, meaning 'closed, concealed, secret, hidden, veiled, covered, or plumped by being encased in flesh or clothed with apparel.' According to Gesenius' Hebrew Lexicon, last before, it never applied to or inferred light emitting.

⁹⁶⁰ Yom Teruah is one of the two annual holy days in the Bible not based on an historical event or agricultural activity. It was not considered the New Year by the Jews until after the Babylonian captivity.

⁹⁶¹ C.C.G. p.213, but a rather lacking reference.

⁹⁶² as Psa 81:4

⁹⁶³ 15th Abib.

⁹⁶⁴ 15th Ethanim.

⁹⁶⁵ Hebrew: shophar.

⁹⁶⁶ Deut 16:1; they travelled by day and by night, however, cf. Ex 13:21,22

⁹⁶⁷ Ex 13:21 (sublinear emphasis added)

⁹⁶⁸ Wikipedia (with added comment and clarification in square brackets): [The nascent crescent], the first visible crescent of the Moon, [appears] after conjunction with the Sun. This takes place over the western horizon in a brief period between sunset and moonset, and therefore the precise time and even the date of the appearance of the new moon by this definition will be influenced by the geographical location of the observer. The astronomical new moon, sometimes known as the dark moon [or the dark lunar conjunction] to avoid confusion, occurs by definition at the moment of conjunction in ecliptic longitude with the Sun, when the Moon is invisible from the Earth. This moment is unique and does not depend on location, and under certain circumstances it may be coincident with a solar eclipse.

In the Torah, only two things are enjoined in the observance of the New Moon: the blowing of trumpets,⁹⁶⁹ *'for a memorial before God,'* and special festive sacrifices.⁹⁷⁰ The express object is that it would be *'for a memorial,'* that they be *'remembered before God.'*

Edersheim comments: 'So far as we can gather, the following was the order of service on New Moon's day. The Council sat from early morning to just before the evening sacrifice, to determine the appearance of the new moon. The proclamation of the Council—'It is sanctified!'⁹⁷¹—and not the actual appearance of the new moon, determined the commencement of the feast. Immediately afterwards, the priests blew the trumpets which marked the feast. After the ordinary morning sacrifice, the prescribed festive offerings were brought, the blood of the burnt offerings being thrown round the base of the altar below the red line, and the rest poured into the channel at the south side of the altar; while the blood of the sin-offering was sprinkled or dropped from the finger on the horns of the altar of burnt-offering, beginning from the east, the rest being poured out, as that of the burnt-offerings. The two bullocks of the burnt-offerings were hung up and flayed on the uppermost of the three rows of hooks in the court, the rams on the middle, and the lambs on the lowest hooks. In all, no less than one hundred and seven priests officiated at this burnt-offering—twenty with every bullock, eleven with every ram, and eight with every lamb, including, of course, those who carried the appropriate meat-offerings and drink-offerings. At the offering of these sacrifices the trumpets were again blown. All of them were slain at the north side of the altar, while the peace and freewill-offerings, which private Israelites were wont at such seasons to bring, were sacrificed at the south side. The flesh of the sin-offering and what of the meat-offering came to them, was eaten by the priests in the Temple itself; their portion of the private thank-offerings might be taken by them to their homes in Jerusalem, and there eaten with their households.'⁹⁷²

⁹⁶⁹ Num 10:10

⁹⁷⁰ Num 28:11-15

⁹⁷¹ only in the Rabbis' own eyes acting with powers to determine the calendar by being ordained judges, Hebrew: semikhah, as seen from Shemos Rabbah 12, 'God said to Israel: Until now, it was in My hands...from now on it is given to you.'

⁹⁷² cp. Barclay, William, *The Mind of Jesus*, pp.172,173 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets): 'The perquisites of the priests were enormous. Of all the sacrifices offered in the Temple, only the burnt-offering was entirely consumed by the fire of the altar. In every other case, only a quite small part of the victim was burned, and of the rest the priest received a very large part. In the case of the sin offering, which was the offering not for an individual sin but for man as a sinner, only the fat was burned, and all the meat was the perquisite of the priests. It was the same in the case of the trespass-offering, which was the offering for particular sins. In the case of the peace-offering, which was the offering for special occasions of thanksgiving, the fat was burned on the altar; the worshipper received the greater part of the meat; but the priest received the breast and the right shoulder. The one remaining offering was the meat-offering, which was offered along with every other offering. The name is nowadays deceptive, for the meat offering consisted of flour and oil; it is called the *'cereal offering'* in the R.S.V. Of it only a small part was burned and the priests received all the rest. With the single exception of the burnt-offering there was no offering of which the priest did not receive a substantial part. No class of the people knew such luxury in food. In Palestine the ordinary working man was more than fortunate if he tasted meat once a week, whereas the priests suffered from an occupational disease consequent on eating too much meat. It is to be noted that even when a priest was not on actual Temple duty, and even if he was debarred from actually officiating at sacrifices because of physical blemish, he still received his full share of the offerings; for by far the greater amount of the meat which fell to the share of the priests need not be

At the blast of the priest's trumpets they ranged themselves before His throne, and this symbolical confession and proclamation of Him as their God brought them before Him, at the start of each month, to be remembered....And so every season of '*blowing of trumpets*,' whether at New Moons, at the Day of Trumpetsat other festivals, in the Sabbatical and the Year of the Jubilee, or in the time of war, was a public acknowledgement of God as King. Accordingly, we find the same symbols adopted in the figurative language of the New Testament. As of old, the sound of the trumpet summoned the congregation before the Lord at the door of the Tabernacle, so 'His elect' shall be summoned by the sound of the trumpet in the day of Christ's coming, '*And he shall send his angels with the great shout of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.*'⁹⁷³ And not only the living, but those also who had '*slept*,'⁹⁷⁴ and '*the dead in Christ.*'⁹⁷⁵ Similarly, the heavenly hosts are marshalled to successive judgements, till, '*The kingdom of this world is become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.*'^{976 977}

Even during ancient times of severe religious decay, the New Moons were kept, albeit in vain, as seen in, '*Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting. Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them,*'⁹⁷⁸ and, '*And now will I discover her lewdness in the sight of her lovers, and none shall deliver her out of mine hand. I will also cause all her mirth to cease, her feast days, her new moons, and her sabbaths, and all her solemn feasts.*'⁹⁷⁹ Amos records the severe declension in relation to the northern kingdom of Israel, '*Hear this, O ye that swallow up the needy, even to make the poor of the land to fail, Saying, When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell corn? And the sabbath, that we may set forth wheat, making the ephah small, and the shekel great, and falsifying the balances by deceit? That we may buy the poor for silver, and the needy for a pair of shoes; yea, and sell the refuse of the*

consumed in the Temple itself, but could be eaten in any clean place, and could, therefore, be distributed to the non-officiating priests in their own homes.

Nor did the privileges and perquisites of the priests end there. The priests received '*the first fruits of the seven kinds*' (Ex 23:19), i.e., of wheat, barley, the vine, the fig-tree, the pomegranate, the olive, and honey....For the personal support of the priests there was brought to the Temple the [Hebrew:] terumah, which consisted of the choicest fruits of every growing thing (Num 18:12). One-fiftieth of the crop was the average amount brought to the priests. In addition to this there were the tithes (Num 18:20-22), which consisted of one-tenth of everything which could be used as food [or converted into currency, q.v.]. This was for the support of the Levites, but the priests received their share. Still further, there was the [Hebrew:] challah, or offering of kneaded dough. The priests were entitled to one twenty-fourth part of the dough used in baking.'

⁹⁷³ Mat 24:31; concluding phrase more correctly rendered in Green's Literal Translation, '*from the ends of the heavens to their end.*'

⁹⁷⁴ I Cor 15:52

⁹⁷⁵ I Thes 4:16

⁹⁷⁶ Rev 11:15

⁹⁷⁷ Edersheim, Alfred, *The Temple: Its Ministry and Services*, chpt. 15 (paraphrased for brevity)

⁹⁷⁸ Isa 1:13,14

⁹⁷⁹ Hos 2:10,11

wheat?'⁹⁸⁰ The kingdom of Israel's apparent abstention from work on the New Moon does seem to indicate a divinely-sanctioned Sabbath. This is reinforced by the future or higher meaning of the New Moons given in Isaiah, '*And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the Lord,*'⁹⁸¹ and also in Ezekiel, '*Thus saith the Lord God; The gate of the inner court that looketh toward the east shall be shut the six working days; but on the sabbath it shall be opened, and in the day of the new moon it shall be opened. And the prince shall enter by way of the porch of that gate without, and shall stand by the post of the gate, and the priests shall prepare his burnt offering and his peace offerings, and he shall worship at the threshold of the gate: then he shall go forth; but the gate shall not be shut until the evening. Likewise the people of the land shall worship at the door of this gate before the Lord in the sabbaths and in the new moons.*'⁹⁸²

Epstein adds this interesting snippet pertaining to more recent times: '[One of the innovations of the Safed school was] a fast on the eve of the New Moon—a fast instituted by Cordovero,⁹⁸³ under the name of the Minor Day of Atonement⁹⁸⁴—the New Moon being conceived as an appropriate time for a monthly spiritual stocktaking.'⁹⁸⁵

In the sixteenth-century, this 'eve of Jewish New Moon' fast, Yom Kippur Katan, on the day preceding the Jewish New Moon on eight months of the year, would exhibit a tendency to occur on the actual day of the correct New Moon, just as it does today. Much earlier than the sixteenth-century, however, this would not occur nearly so often, for the Judaic calendar was woefully inept at getting even close to the lunar conjunctions in the first thousand years of its operation.

In essence, this means that religious Jews have a tendency toward fasting on the correct, dark moon lunar conjunction New Moons when Judæo-Christians are feasting in accordance with the scriptural example. Since the New Moon 'king's feast' pictures the wedding feast of the Lamb, Judaism, whether wittingly or not, is confirming the absence of its adherents from that wedding and celebration. Only the 'elect' can and will participate, and the 'elect' are nowhere to be found inveigled in Judaism.

New moon foreshadows what?

In the past, the New Moon has been associated with the church, presumably through the close correlation with the sacrifices on each day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, by which means those in the church come out of sin, and as a precursor of the great wedding feast for the marriage of the Bride, with the church

⁹⁸⁰ Amos 8:4-6

⁹⁸¹ Isa 66:23; Tanakh omits '*before.*'

⁹⁸² Ezek 46:1-3

⁹⁸³ Moses Cordovera, 1522–76

⁹⁸⁴ Hebrew: Yom Kippur Katan.

⁹⁸⁵ Isidore Epstein, Isidore, *Judaism*, p.249 (added comment and clarification in square brackets)

purified and presented to Christ. Certainly, the New Moon was sanctified, with sacrifices, trumpets, and a bringing of the people into remembrance before God, but the sin offering of a goat⁹⁸⁶ appears to sit ill with the purified, risen church, but only in part, for while alive and before rising to meet the Saviour, they are still touched by sin.

The New Moons observed today, recited by Paul, *'Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body of Christ'*⁹⁸⁷—other than in the king's banquet—picture, as *'a shadow,'* or foreshadow the Millennium worship of the general people of the world before Christ. These, by dint of the trespass and sin offerings,⁹⁸⁸ are not comprised of the 'intermediate peoples' or the greater church during the Millennium. They are mortal, they can and will sin, inadvertently. The New Moons, therefore, picture the new spirit of worship among the mortal people of the Millennium, for all *'people in the land'* will worship, *'for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.'*⁹⁸⁹

Exact date & time

The method of extracting the date of worship is not as stated by Spier: 'The New Moon, Rosh Hodesh, is celebrated the first day of each lunar month. If the previous month has thirty days, however, the thirtieth day is celebrated as Rosh Hodesh, but the start of the new month remains unaltered.'⁹⁹⁰ The reason, as noted, is the Judaic calendar's schematic structure, which does not place the molads, conjunctions or dark moons, correctly.

It is clear that these sacred New Moons are to be reckoned from the conjunction in Jerusalem time, and not from local time elsewhere, else the New Moon / Yom Teruah could be a two-day affair, with the local new moon one day displaced from the first day of Ethanim Jerusalem New Moon / Yom Yeruah.

God vests the New Moon with considerable significance, for it is the day on which God frequently acts, as can be seen from many biblical passages, for example: *'They have dealt treacherously against the Lord: for they have begotten strange children: now shall a new moon devour them with their portions.'*⁹⁹¹

⁹⁸⁶ Num 28:15

⁹⁸⁷ Col 2:16,17

⁹⁸⁸ Ezek 46:20

⁹⁸⁹ Isa 11:9

⁹⁹⁰ Spier, Arthur, *The Comprehensive Hebrew Calendar* (paraphrased for brevity)

⁹⁹¹ Hos 5:7

Imported complexities

It is held by many that the original calendar had a three hundred and sixty-day year in twelve equal months of thirty days. This is based on a reading of Genesis where it is recorded that the period of Noah's flood in its unabated state was from the second month, seventeenth day⁹⁹² until the seventh month, seventeenth day.⁹⁹³ This span is held to equal exactly five months and comprise one hundred and fifty days in length.⁹⁹⁴ The one hundred and fifty days is inclusive, however, and so the actual time lapse from the end of the seventeenth of the second month to the end of the seventeenth of the seventh month was one hundred and forty-nine days.⁹⁹⁵ Looking at the fall of days in the sacred year spanning 2000–2001, there is found this sequence: 29,29,30,29,29,30,29,30,30,29,30,30. Interestingly, the last five consecutive months aggregate one hundred and forty-nine days, mark to mark, to which should be added 'one' for the 'inclusive' period, thus totalling one hundred and fifty. This shows that the calendar of Noah's time was the same as used by Judæo-Christians today. God's sacred calendar didn't change. How could it?

Another claim is that the '*feast*' in Psalms,⁹⁹⁶ from chag, indicates that the New Moon is the full moon of the three chagim or '*pilgrim*' feasts, chag being taken to be restricted purely to these feasts. But the second of these, Shavuot or Pentecost, fixed on the sixth day of the month Sivan in the Judaic calendar, falls nowhere near a full moon, so the claim falls. That chag possibly refers to other than these three feasts is seen in Judges and Exodus,⁹⁹⁷ but what is common to all is the idea of travelling.⁹⁹⁸ New Moons, also referred to as '*appointed times*,'⁹⁹⁹ were days of communal feasting, and, for those attending, would oft-involve travel.¹⁰⁰⁰ The use here of chag for '*feast*' is very specific and very telling, for, in context, it indicates the commanded assembly of the 'elect' on the New Moon for the 'King's feast,' and that, in turn, clearly presages their travelling to and attendance at the wedding supper of the Lamb '*in the air*.'¹⁰⁰¹

⁹⁹² Gen 7:11

⁹⁹³ Gen 8:4

⁹⁹⁴ Gen 7:24,8:3

⁹⁹⁵ 150 – 1 = 149

⁹⁹⁶ Psa 81:3

⁹⁹⁷ Judg 21:19 and Ex 10:9; use of the Hebrew word chag for a so-called pilgrim feast is not universally adopted in the Old Testament. Chag (which some attribute to a feast but not always a pilgrim feast) can be applied to feasts other than those usually termed '*pilgrim*,' while the correct term for the three annual commanded assembly feasts is shalosh regalim. The New Moons are feasts, involving the '*King's feast*,' q.v. inf. and cf. I Sam 20:24b., where attendees would travel to the king's palace, a foregleam of events at the Second Coming, q.v. sup.; Teruah, or Trumpets, is the culminating, massive chag at the last, for the spirit 'elect' having risen to partake of that feast then come with Christ to the mount of Olives on His glorious return.

⁹⁹⁸ Hebrew: chagim, '*feet*,' with root word chagag, '*marching*;' also defined as '*to hold a feast, hold a festival, make pilgrimage, keep a pilgrim feast, celebrate, dance*,' and even '*stagger*.'

⁹⁹⁹ Hebrew: moedim.

¹⁰⁰⁰ I Sam 20:5; here differentiated from Hebrew: shalosh regalim, the pilgrimage festivals of Israel, q.v. sup. and inf.

¹⁰⁰¹ since the exact point of the dark lunar conjunction is an instant in time in the orbit of the moon when the sun, moon, and earth align, then the New Moon feast, celebrated by the 'elect' around the world, should be celebrated at that same instant, around the world, regardless of whether it be day or night.

The infatuation with the full moon has its roots firmly bedded in paganism, for it derives from a word meaning 'head-dress' or 'cap',¹⁰⁰² and also the notion of 'the full moon as a tiara of the moon god....as a feast day.'¹⁰⁰³ Full moon feasts and observances are profoundly pagan, having sprung from a variety of moon-worshipping cults in the Middle East.¹⁰⁰⁴

¹⁰⁰² C.C.G. p213; Hebrew: kuseu.

¹⁰⁰³ q.v. *New Brown-Driver-Briggs-Gesenius Hebrew Lexicon*.

¹⁰⁰⁴ Gesenius' *Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament Scriptures*, translated by Samuel Prideaux Tregelles, p.367:

'A people of Arabia, of the race of the Joktanites....the Alilai living near the Red Sea in a district where gold is found; their name, 'children of the moon,' so called from the worship of the moon, or Alilat.'

Chapter 36

Father & Son—or Trinity?

If the Holy Spirit is a person, as opposed to the Power of God, then there is a monumental and immediate doctrinal problem: concerning the conception and birth of Jesus Christ, Mary was '*found with child of the Holy Spirit*.'¹⁰⁰⁵ Now if a person, this means that Jesus is the son, not of God the Father, but of a third person called the Holy Spirit. If this be the case, Jesus was, and is, a fraud, as He would not then be the Son of God. And there is worse. The non-biblical Greek word meaning 'one in substance and being'¹⁰⁰⁶ with the Father is a decidedly non-Judæo-Christian concept. It is closer if not identical to the Roman Catholic doctrine where the 'Holy Trinity' is thought to be bound in a form of hypostatic union which can only expose in one form at a time. God can expose as the Father, or the Son, or the Holy Spirit, but not as two or more simultaneously. This has obvious problems, of course, for Jesus Christ died, and at that point, taking the Roman doctrine literally, the ineluctable conclusion is that the Godhead died with Him. Of course, the Roman belief is both illogical and ridiculous, and the Trinity doctrine is deeply pagan in origin, bearing no relationship whatsoever to Judæo-Christian doctrine and belief.

¹⁰⁰⁵ Mat 1:18

¹⁰⁰⁶ Greek: homoousios; cf. Nicene creed.

Personality?

Concerning the personality aspect in the use of the word '*he*' in connection with the Holy Spirit,¹⁰⁰⁷ many cite references such as, '*he*'; '*a Comforter*'; and of speaking to individuals;¹⁰⁰⁸ of being lied to;¹⁰⁰⁹ of being grieved.¹⁰¹⁰

However, the language Jesus used in speaking of the Holy Spirit was Hebrew or Aramaic, in which Spirit is feminine, not masculine. The New Testament, on the other hand, was written in Koine Greek,¹⁰¹¹ and '*Spirit*' is neuter in that language. The ancient language which does have '*Spirit*' as masculine is Latin, and so in the Vulgate Holy Spirit becomes an '*he*.' There is no biblical basis for such a manoeuvre to claim that the Holy Spirit is a person, so other texts must be compared to see whether the Holy Spirit is a separate personage, for various language and grammatical mores cannot determine it, especially any in which the original was not written, like Latin. The three languages under consideration exhibit, between them, all three grammatical genders for the Holy Spirit: feminine, neuter, and masculine. Concerning the '*Comforter*,'¹⁰¹² the Greek here is masculine, so the translators used the word '*he*' to refer to this Comforter. It does not import a gender or personality; rather, it is Greek grammar.¹⁰¹³

As to being lied to, and being grieved—both human attributes—the latter comes from the Greek meaning '*to distress*.'¹⁰¹⁴ It is perfectly acceptable to distress something other than a person. Material can be distressed, for example, and so can a Spirit that is the Power of God, for it comes from and goes back to God the Father. As for lying to the Holy Spirit, the Greek means '*to deceive or utter an untruth with intent to deceive*.'¹⁰¹⁵ It is here speaking of deception, or, rather, attempted deception by Ananias,¹⁰¹⁶ and not spoken words to a divine Holy Spirit personage.

Citing these texts as support for and proof of the existence of a third divine being called the 'Holy Ghost' or the 'Holy Spirit' is woefully weak and aberrant. The notion of a personality known as the Holy Spirit or Holy

¹⁰⁰⁷ K.J.V., et al.

¹⁰⁰⁸ Acts 8:29,10:19,20,20:28,16:7,9

¹⁰⁰⁹ Acts 5:3

¹⁰¹⁰ Eph 4:30

¹⁰¹¹ Daniell, David, *Tyndale's New Testament*, p.xviii:

'The New Testament is written in koine Greek; only Luke 1:1-4 is written in classical Greek. There is a great difference between the Greek of the four gospels, and between them and the Hebrew mind of Paul writing in philosophical, theological Greek, to say nothing of the special effects of the epistle to the Hebrews or of Revelation.'

To add further complexity to this, in his English translation, Tyndale gave us his 'self-coined' words, such as 'Jehovah,' 'Passover,' 'scapegoat,' which were intended to explain complex notions in a single word or phrase, but which often merely served to divert or deflect that understanding.

¹⁰¹² John 14:17

¹⁰¹³ Greek: parakletos, also used by the Greeks for a large rescue ship which would set out and draw alongside a small ship in trouble in the storm, and guide it to a safe harbour; an excellent analogy for the work of God's Holy Spirit in aiding the poor Christian adrift in a world of sin.

¹⁰¹⁴ Greek: lupeo.

¹⁰¹⁵ Greek: pseudomartur.

¹⁰¹⁶ Acts 5:1f.

Ghost is more correctly known as a sub-division of the Trinity doctrine: Tritheism. This differentiates it from the other common notion of the Trinity that God can be manifest as one of three Hypostases,¹⁰¹⁷ Father, Son, or Holy Ghost, but only in one at any time. This is nothing other than a pagan, Greek, philosophical speculation, and has no part in Judaeo-Christian belief. It is, in fact, a sub-division of Mithraic sun worship.

The doctrine of the Trinity is not in the Bible. *'For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit: and these three are one'*¹⁰¹⁸ is acknowledged to have been a spurious and late addition in only two Greek manuscripts, one fifteenth- and the other sixteenth-century, and does not appear in any of the earlier, better manuscripts.¹⁰¹⁹ Thus John's three witnesses are: *'The spirit, the water, and the blood, and the three agree in one.'*¹⁰²⁰ There is no biblical support whatsoever for the concept of the 'Holy Trinity.' So when and where did the notion of a Third Person or Being in the Godhead, or a Third Emanation, a Trinity, or Triune, first become inveigled in so-called Christian faith?

The nearest thing to an early formal statement is found in the Athanasian Creed¹⁰²¹ which, in an obscure argument on the 'divine nature,' states that the 'Trinity' is incomprehensible; something that fits well with much of the rest of the 'creed.' Later, Theophilus of Antioch used the Greek word trias to describe a 'three-in-one' concept, and Tertullian¹⁰²² noted it as trinitas, explaining it as 'one substance, three persons.' This was adopted at the Councils of Nicæa,¹⁰²³ and Constantinople,¹⁰²⁴ and developed over time until Augustine of Hippo produced the definitive work on the subject: 'De Trinitate.' In all this, there is not one single biblical foundation. Time and time again, Paul and other apostles, with open opportunity to define the Godhead in three beings, restrict themselves to the actual Godhead¹⁰²⁵ of Father and Son.¹⁰²⁶ The Bible teaches a dyadic Godhead: God the Father and God the Son (formerly the Word), with the Power of God as the Holy Spirit. This last is not the third person in a Trinity or Triune.

Dyadic Godhead

'And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every freeman, hid themselves in the dens, and in the rocks of the moun-

¹⁰¹⁷ or Hupostases.

¹⁰¹⁸ I John 5:7

¹⁰¹⁹ *The Parallel Bible Commentary* notes that the words after 'heaven,' in verse 7, and the first nine words of verse 8 are not original, and are not to be considered part of the word of God.

¹⁰²⁰ I John 5:8 (corrected)

¹⁰²¹ neither a creed, nor composed by Athanasius.

¹⁰²² c.200AD

¹⁰²³ 325AD

¹⁰²⁴ 381AD

¹⁰²⁵ cp. Greek: '*monogenesis*': from monos, '*alone*,' and genos, '*race, stock, or family*,' implying one family.

¹⁰²⁶ Rom 1:7; I Cor 1:3,8:6; II Cor 1:2; Gal 1:1,3; Eph 1:3,5:20,6:23; Phil 1:2,2:11; Col 1:2,3,2:2,3:17; I Thes 1:1,3,3:13; II Thes 1:1,2; I Tim 1:2; II Tim 1:2; Titus 1:4; Phil 1:3; I Peter 1:3; II John 1:3,9; Jude 1

tains; And said to the mountains and rocks, fall on us and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne,¹⁰²⁷ and from the wrath of the Lamb: For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?'.¹⁰²⁸ There are only two divine beings mentioned here—the Father and the Son!—confirmed once again in, 'And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation [by] our God which sitteth upon the throne, and [by] the Lamb.'¹⁰²⁹ No mention of the supposed third divine being called the Holy Ghost or Spirit.

'For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.'¹⁰³⁰ 'But when the Comforter is come, [which] I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, [it] shall testify of me.'¹⁰³¹ The Holy Spirit is here identified as the power or will of the Father, and not as a separate being in a trinity, which is a concept adopted from paganism.

Two YHWHs

'one hundred and thirty-four alterations were made in the Old Testament to the name JHVH, rendering it as Adonay, a variation of Adon, which means 'Lord.' Both Adonay and Adon are used in many passages in the original Hebrew text as names of God. While Adonay is used exclusively to name the true God, Adon is often used to refer to human 'lords,' or masters, and sometimes refers to false gods.

Two Divine Beings are clearly and undeniably revealed in Psalms. In all but one of these passages, the original inspired words were altered in ancient times by the keepers of the Hebrew texts. Under the pretext of reverence for the name of JHVH, the name Adonay was substituted for JHVH in selected verses. By systematically modifying the vowel points of the noun JHVH, this name of God was wrongly changed to Adonay in one hundred and thirty-four places in the Old Testament—including key verses in the Psalms which reveal that there were two JHVHs! These alterations to the Hebrew texts were carefully documented. The ancient levitical Massorites, custodians of the Hebrew texts, recorded every passage in which the name JHVH was modified to Adonay.

Why did the Massorites alter selected verses in the Hebrew text by substituting Adonay for JHVH? It has been claimed that these pious Levites revered the name JHVH so greatly that they could not speak it, and therefore they changed JHVH to Adonay. If this be true, why did they not change every occurrence of the name JHVH in the Old Testament? Why did they select only one hundred and thirty-four places, including verses which reveal the existence of two JHVHs?

¹⁰²⁷ Rev 4:2

¹⁰²⁸ Rev 6:15-17

¹⁰²⁹ Rev 7:10 (corrected translation)

¹⁰³⁰ Mat 10:20

¹⁰³¹ John 15:26 (corrected translation)

The motive behind this alteration of selected references to JHVH by the levitical guardians of the Old Testament is highly questionable....In analysing the one hundred and thirty-four places where the name JHVH was altered, [a] reason for changing the Hebrew text becomes obvious: the Levites could not accept the scriptural revelation that one of the two JHVHs would become the Messiah and would replace their existing priesthood. In their rejection of God's plan, they modified passages in the Psalms which referred to both JHVHs and which prophesied that one of these JHVHs would become the Messiah and the High Priest of the New Covenant. Because the record of this tampering has been preserved, we can know the truth that God has revealed to us in His Word. Codified in the Massorah¹⁰³²—marginal writings in the old manuscripts—is the record of the one hundred and thirty-four alterations made in the original Hebrew text. While these alterations are generally known as the "One Hundred and Thirty-four Emendations of the Sopherim,"¹⁰³³ we will see that it was actually the Massorites who inserted these changes into the text.

When the Hebrew text was printed, only the large type in the columns was regarded, and the small type of the Massorah was left, unheeded, in the manuscripts from which the text was taken. When translators came to the printed Hebrew text, they were necessarily destitute of the information contained in the Massorah; so that the Revisers as well as the Translators of the Authorised Version carried out their work without any idea of the treasures contained in the Massorah; and, therefore, without giving any hint of it to their readers.

Bullinger states, "The Text itself had been fixed before the Massorites were put in charge of it. This had been the work of the Sopherim (from saphar, to count, or number). Their work, under Ezra and Nehemiah was to set the Text in order after the return from Babylon; and we read of it in Nehemiah.¹⁰³⁴ The men of the 'Great Synagogue' completed the work."¹⁰³⁵

The newly compiled text was placed in the hands of the Massorites for preservation and duplication.... The faithful preservation of God's Sacred Word by the levitical Massorites did not last long, however. Shortly

¹⁰³² *The Companion Bible*, Appendix 30:

'The Massorah is not contained in the margins of any one manuscript. No manuscript contains the whole, or even the same part. It is spread over many manuscripts, and Dr. C. D. Ginsburg has been the first and only scholar who has set himself to collect and collate the whole, copying it from every available manuscript in the libraries of many countries. He has published it in three large folio volumes, and only a small number of copies has been printed. These are obtainable only by the original subscribers (they are now available once more, this time on a general circulation basis).'

Epstein, Isidore, *Judaism*, pp.183,184:

'The Masoretes of Palestine and Babylon differed in their systems of vocalisation, as well as in the consonantal text they preserved.

In Palestine itself divergent textual readings were transmitted by the rival schools of Ben Asher and Ben Naphtali, which flourished in Tiberias from the second half of the 8th-century until the middle of the 10th. Ben Asher and Ben Naphtali each wrote a Codex of the Bible, embodying the traditions of their respective schools. In the end, Ben Asher's Palestine Massorah prevailed, not only over the Babylonian, but also over that of his rival, and his Codex became recognised as the standard or Masoretic text of the Hebrew Bible.'

¹⁰³³ Hebrew: Tiqquney Sopherim.

¹⁰³⁴ Neh 8:8,9; cp. Ezra 7:6,11

¹⁰³⁵ *The Companion Bible*, Appendix 30

after the time of Ezra and Nehemiah, the levitical priesthood fell into a state of corruption. It was during this period in Jewish history¹⁰³⁶ that changes were introduced into the Old Testament text....

In the book of Psalms, the Massorites altered several such passages. These passages reveal the existence of two divine Beings and show that both divine Beings were named JHVH. In all but one of these passages, the name Adonay was substituted for JHVH in one or more verses. Originally, all of these verses added to the evidence that there were two JHVHs and that these JHVHs would one day establish a Father / Son relationship.

In spite of the alterations in these passages in the Psalms, the truth of Scripture has been preserved. Evidence of the existence of the two JHVHs can be found in Psalms.¹⁰³⁷

Generally

Hereunder are analyses of the texts recited above,¹⁰³⁸ together with references in the New Testament which confirm two JHVHs, the covenant names of the divine beings of the dyadic Godhead. In addition, there are some other texts in the Old Testament, but not in Psalms, which are adduced in support of two JHWHs.

Psalm 110

Historically, the Jews have regarded this Psalm as speaking of the Messiah,¹⁰³⁹ but many now deny this, or prefer to ascribe it to any one of the following:

1. David himself, through composing a song to be sung to his honour after his death by the Levites in the Temple; or
2. Saul; or,
3. Abraham.

There are difficulties with any such ascription, not least of which is how any of the three could possibly be '*a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek*'.¹⁰⁴⁰ All three are long dead and buried, and David, for example, was not even allowed to build the Temple because he had had blood on his hands.

¹⁰³⁶ which lasted for many centuries.

¹⁰³⁷ Franklin, Carl D., *The Two Jehovahs of the Psalms* (Jehovah typed as JHVH; added comment and clarification in square brackets); Psalms chpts. 2, 16, 22, 45, 89, 90, 110, 118.

¹⁰³⁸ admittedly rather difficult to read with any flow, given the format adopted by Franklin.

¹⁰³⁹ cf. Midrashim Tehillim, Bereshith Rabba, etc.

¹⁰⁴⁰ Psa 110:4

'So reverting to the Jewish historical perception, that it is a reference to the Messiah, Verse one reads: *'The Lord (JHVH) said unto my Lord (Messiah), Sit thou (Messiah) at My (JHVH) right hand, until I (JHVH) make Thine (Messiah) enemies Thy (Messiah) footstool.'*¹⁰⁴¹

*'While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, Saying, What think ye of Christ? (the Messiah) whose son is he? They say unto him, The son of David. He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool? If David then call him Lord, how is he his son? And no man was able to answer him a word, neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions.'*¹⁰⁴²

It is obvious from the above that the Pharisees of the time considered the Psalm to be a messianic reference, and not a reference to David, or Saul, or Abraham.

*'And Jesus answered and said, while he taught in the temple, How say the scribes that Christ [the Messiah] is the son of David? For David himself said by the Holy Spirit, The Lord said to my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool. David therefore calleth him Lord; and whence is he then his son? And the common people heard him gladly.'*¹⁰⁴³

*'And he said unto them, How say they that Christ is David's son? And David himself said in the book of Psalms, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, Till I make thine enemies thy footstool. David therefore calleth him Lord (the Greek word used is Kurios—and this is also used where the Hebrew of the Old Testament has JHVH, and emendation as JHVH), how is he then his son?'*¹⁰⁴⁴

*'This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we are all witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thy foes thy footstool. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.'*¹⁰⁴⁵

And lest any aberrant view come from Gnostics,¹⁰⁴⁶ that it was a created angel, or that Jesus Christ was a created angel, or that the Word was a created angel, the words of Paul prove salutary: *'But to which of*

¹⁰⁴¹ Psa 110:1

¹⁰⁴² Mat 22:41-46

¹⁰⁴³ Mark 12:35-37

¹⁰⁴⁴ Luke 20:41-44

¹⁰⁴⁵ Acts 2:32-36 (sublinear emphasis added); Franklin, Carl D., *The Two Jehovahs of the Psalms* (Jehovah typed as JHVH; added comment and clarification in square brackets).

¹⁰⁴⁶ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of John*, Vol.1, pp.13,14 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'The beliefs of the Gnostics impinged on their ideas of Jesus.

(a) Some of the Gnostics held that Jesus was one of the emanations which had proceeded from God. They held that He was not in any real sense divine; that He was only a kind of demi-god who was more or less distant from the real God; that He was simply one of a chain of lesser beings between God and the world.

(b) Some of the Gnostics held that Jesus had no real body. A body is matter and God could not touch matter; therefore Jesus was a kind of phantom without real flesh and blood. They held, for instance, that when He stepped in the ground

the angels saith he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool? Are they not ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?'.¹⁰⁴⁷

Now continuing similarly, '*The Lord (JHVH) shall send the rod of Thy (Messiah) strength out of Zion: rule Thou (Messiah) in the midst of Thine (Messiah) enemies. Thy (Messiah) people shall be willing in the day of Thy (Messiah) power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: Thou (Messiah) hast the dew of Thy (Messiah) youth. The Lord (JHVH) hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou (Messiah) art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.*'¹⁰⁴⁸ Note that quoted in Hebrews, '*So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, today have I begotten thee. As he saith also in another place, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek,*'¹⁰⁴⁹ and, '*And it is yet far more evident: for that after the similitude of Melchisedec there ariseth another priest, Who is made not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life. For he testifieth, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.*'¹⁰⁵⁰ An everlasting priest; an eternal priest.

In Psalm 110, the original JHVH was changed to Adonay by the levitical Massorites. It should read, '*The Lord (JHVH—referring to the Messiah) at Thy (the first JHVH's) right hand shall strike through kings in the day of His (JHVH—the Messiah) wrath. He (JHVH—the Messiah) shall judge among the heathen, He (JHVH—the Messiah) shall fill the places with dead bodies; He (JHVH—the Messiah) shall wound the heads over many countries. He (JHVH—the Messiah) shall drink of the brook in the way: therefore shall He (JHVH—the Messiah) lift up the head.*'¹⁰⁵¹

The fifth verse in the original Hebrew text clearly shows two JHVHs! This key verse in Psalm 110 identifies the Adon in the first verse as the second JHVH. The context reveals that this JHVH / Adon sitting at the right hand of the first JHVH is the Messiah.

He left no footprint, for His body had neither weight nor substance. They could never have said: "*The Word became flesh*" (John 1:14)....This particular [and damnable] heresy is called Docetism. Docetism comes from the Greek word dokein which means to seem; and the heresy is so called because it held that Jesus only seemed to be a man.

Some Gnostics held a variation of that heresy. They held that Jesus was a man in whom the Spirit of God came at His baptism; that the Spirit remained with Him throughout His life until the end; but since the Spirit of God could never suffer and die, it left Him before He was crucified. They gave Jesus's cry on the cross as: "*My power, my power, why hast thou forsaken me?*" And in their books they told of people talking on the Mount of Olives to a form which looked exactly like Jesus while the man Jesus died on the cross.

So then, the Gnostic heresies issued in one of two beliefs. They believed either that Jesus was not really divine but simply one of a series of emanations from God, or that He was not in any sense human but a kind of phantom in the shape of a man. The Gnostic beliefs at one and the same time destroyed the real Godhead and the real manhood of Jesus.'

¹⁰⁴⁷ Heb 1:13,14

¹⁰⁴⁸ Psal 110:2-4

¹⁰⁴⁹ Heb 5:5,6

¹⁰⁵⁰ Heb 7:15-17

¹⁰⁵¹ Psal 110:5-7; Christ bowed His head at the crucifixion, John 19:30c, and He lifted it up at His resurrection, and at His ascension.

The recorded words of Jesus Christ attest to this very fact. Matthew's record of Christ's words shows that David correctly named the divine Being sitting at the right hand of JHVH as another JHVH: *'While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, Saying, What think ye of Christ? (the Messiah) whose son is he? They say unto him, The son of David. He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him Lord (Greek: Kurios, equivalent to Hebrew: JHVH), saying, The Lord (Greek: Kurios, or JHVH the Father) said unto my Lord (Greek: Kurios, or JHVH the Son / Messiah), Sit thou on my right hand, till I (the Father) make thine enemies thy footstool? If David then call him Lord (Greek: Kurios, or JHVH), how is he (the Messiah) his son? And no man was able to answer him a word, neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions.'*¹⁰⁵²

The same is seen in Mark, *'And Jesus answered and said, while he taught in the temple, How say the scribes that Christ (the Messiah) is the son of David? For David himself said by the Holy Spirit, The Lord (Greek: Kurios, JHVH the Father) said to my Lord (Greek: Kurios, JHVH the Son / Messiah), Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool. David therefore calleth him Lord (Greek: Kurios, or JHVH); and whence is he then his son? And the common people heard him gladly.'*¹⁰⁵³ And again it is recorded in Luke.¹⁰⁵⁴

In the second chapter of Acts, Peter testifies that the JHVH on the left in Psa 110:1 is both Theos (verse 32) and Kurios (verse 34), and that the JHVH on the right is both Kurios (verses 34,35) and Christos (verse 35). Peter boldly declares that it is Theos, the Father, Who has exalted Jesus and made Him Christos. *'This Jesus hath God (Greek: Theos, the Father) raised up, whereof we are all witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God (Greek: Theos, the Father) exalted, and having received of the Father (Greek: Pater, referring to Theos) the promise of the Holy Spirit (the Spirit of Theos, the Father), he hath shed forth this (the Holy Spirit of the Father), which ye now see and hear (the outward manifestation of same). For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he (David) saith himself, The Lord (Greek: Kurios, the Father) said unto my (David's) Lord (Greek: Kurios, the Son), Sit thou (the Son) on my right hand, until I (the Father) make thy foes thy footstool. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God (Greek: Theos, the Father) hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord (Greek: Kurios) and Christ (Greek: Christos).'*¹⁰⁵⁵

Peter's words show very clearly that the JHVH / Adon of Psalm 110 Who is sitting at the right hand of JHVH is not king David. David is in his grave, and it is Jesus Christ, JHVH of the Old Testament, and Kurios / Christos of the New, Who has been raised and now sits exalted at the right hand of JHVH the Father.

¹⁰⁵² Mat 22:41-46

¹⁰⁵³ Mark 12:35-37

¹⁰⁵⁴ Luke 20:41-44

¹⁰⁵⁵ Acts 2:32-36

Paul's quotes show the same: *'For unto which of the angels (Greek: aggelos) said He (the Father) at any time, Thou art My Son (Greek: Huios), this day have I begotten thee?'*¹⁰⁵⁶ *'I will be to him a Father, and He shall be to me a Son (Greek: Huios).'*¹⁰⁵⁷ *'But unto the Son (Greek: Huios) He (the Father) saith, Thy Throne, O God (Greek: Theos, the Son), is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is a sceptre of thy kingdom. Thou (the Son) hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God (Greek: Theos, the Father), even Thy God (Greek: Theos, the Father), hath anointed Thee (the Son) with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows.'*¹⁰⁵⁸ *'And Thou, Lord (Greek: Kurios, the JHVH of the Old Testament who became the Son), in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth,'*¹⁰⁵⁹ *and the heavens are the work of Thine hands: they shall perish; but Thou (the Son) remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shall thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but Thou (the Son) art the same, and Thy years shall not fail.'*¹⁰⁶⁰ Paul's purpose in quoting Old Testament Scriptures was to confound those who would deny that Jesus Christ is God and that He has existed from the beginning—a fully divine Being. In another epistle, Paul specifically named Christ as the Rock of the Old Testament.¹⁰⁶¹

Perhaps the most horrifying aspect in all of this, in terms of text-tampering, lies in the possibility of the Massorites or their predecessors having tampered with the text of Psa 110:1. Much play is made by Orthodox Judiasm of the so-called 'second lord.' This is the second use of the word 'lord' in the opening verse of Psalm 110, and is said to come from the Hebrew: adonee, which, in all other uses in the Old Testament, or so they claim, refers to a mortal lord or master, and not to a divine One, i.e., the Lord.

Were the Hebrew word in question Adonay, on the other hand, the Jews would be left defenceless in their claim: for this word always refers to God, and to no one else. Now an interesting thing about these words is this:

1. In the original, the word, without vowels as is the way in Hebrew, is adny. Both adonee and Adonay were written, in the original, as adny. They share the same consonants;
2. When the text was handed down to the Massorites for safe keeping, there were no real vowels, and no 'vowel points.' It was solely comprised of consonants, with merely a few used to indicate certain vowel sounds;
3. The Massorites added the vowel points long after the received text had been committed to their care, so it is possible that it was they who differentiated, by the use of vowel points, between adonee and Adonay. [This is

¹⁰⁵⁶ quoted from Psa 2:7

¹⁰⁵⁷ quoted from II Sam 7:14

¹⁰⁵⁸ quoted from Psa 45:6,7

¹⁰⁵⁹ confirmed in John 1:1-3

¹⁰⁶⁰ quoted from Psa 102:25-27

¹⁰⁶¹ I Cor 10:4

not to claim that it was of a certainty that the Massorites did this, for they may well have received it in corrupted form from their predecessors];

4. However, it should be borne in mind that these were the self-same Massorites who text-tampered to remove, in their view, any suggestion of two JHVHs, by altering JHVH to Adonay one hundred and thirty-four times;

5. Now in all of the Bible, the most telling verse concerning two JHVHs, and the one most often referred to in the New Testament by Jesus Christ and the apostles, is Psa 110:1;

6. For the Massorites and the Jews who sought to deny Christ, this would have had to have been altered, and altered to render a different, or, at the very least, confusing or ambiguous meaning which would serve to deflect from the true meaning;

7. The vowel points provided the answer. The text itself, in terms of the original letters in the word adny, i.e., without vowel points, remained unaltered, and so did not need any annotation or reference in the Massorah margin notes of the ancient manuscripts. [This would tend to suggest an earlier tampering, although a later tampering could also be argued];

8. But the vowel points, or, more specifically, a single vowel point, differentiates in the Masoretic text between Adonay and adonee;

9. Adonai, in Hebrew, is adny: aleph, dalet, nun, yod, with the vowel point 'quamets' under nun;

10. Adonee, in Hebrew, is adny: aleph, dalet, nun, yod, with the vowel point 'hireq' under nun;

11. One 'tiny' alteration, but with so much vested in it. With a 'quamets' under nun, the second Lord is deity, and deity of an absolute certainty, but with an 'hireq' under nun, the second 'lord' can be claimed by detractors of Jesus Christ to be human, ascribed to whoever, and used to ridicule and deride the New Testament references, and true Judæo-Christian belief;

12. But the detractors could still be correct, could they not? And the Masoretic vowel pointed text as it now stands certainly does read adonee.

Against this, corroborating the Adonay reading, are ranged the following:

13. The Septuagint, known by the acronym LXX, a translation into the then popular Greek¹⁰⁶² by Jews in Alexandria, is the most ancient translation of the Old Testament. The Jews made use of it long before the time of Jesus Christ, [certainly in the last two centuries BC, and commencing in the middle of the third-century BC with the Pentateuch], and it is still the official text of the Greek church;

14. The Masoretic text, however, was not finally 'set' by the Massorites until the ninth- and tenth-centuries of the current era, with most of the work being done in the fifth- to seventh-centuries;

15. The critical value of the LXX is quite considerable, for it gives a Greek version, prepared in the main by 'religious' Jews, of the Old Testament. So what does the LXX have to say of the 'second lord' of Psa 110:1?

16. It reads, to kurio mou, 'to my Lord.' Kurio, comes from Kurios, meaning Lord; the same word used in the Greek New Testament to signify the Supreme Authority, the Lord, i.e., deity;

17. In addition to this, of course, are the numerous New Testament references, attributions, and expositions by Jesus Christ and the apostles, all of which render the 'second' Lord reference as being to deity: the Messiah;

18. Plus the inability of the Pharisees to answer Jesus on the matter of why David called the Messiah his Lord;¹⁰⁶³

19. The Jews themselves had long regarded the second reference to 'Lord' as messianic, although they had it in the form of a mortal man. This is why the Pharisees were unable to answer Jesus' question on why David called Him (the Messiah) Lord;

20. In the A.V., adonee, which appears three hundred and thirty-five times, is translated thus: 'lord' one hundred and ninety-seven times; 'Lord' thirty-one times; 'master(s)' one hundred and five times; 'owner' once; and 'sir' once. As brief illustration, a tract in Joshua in the K.J.V. twice translates the root adon / adawn as 'Lord' in 'the ark of the covenant of the Lord of the whole earth.'¹⁰⁶⁴ The Tanakh renders the last phrase, 'Sovereign of all the earth.' 'Lord / Sovereign' signifies deity.

The weight of evidence is overwhelming. It is not, in any way, conjectural emendation—the Massorites or their predecessors text-edited the first verse of the one-hundred-and-tenth Psalm in an attempt to remove the direct deity reference, as the Massorites text-edited much else besides, with a view to removing evidence of the two JHVHs in the Godhead.

¹⁰⁶² Greek: koine dislektos.

¹⁰⁶³ Mat 22:41-46; Mark 12:35-37

¹⁰⁶⁴ Josh 3:11-13

The second 'Lord' of Psa 110:1 is our beloved Lord Jesus Christ, a JHVH.

Psalm 2

'Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord (Hebrew: JHVH), and against His anointed,¹⁰⁶⁵ saying, let us (the kings of the earth) break Their (JHVH and His anointed) cords from us. He (JHVH) that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: The Lord (Hebrew: Adonay, originally JHVH) shall have them in derision. Then shall He speak unto them in His wrath, and vex them in His sore displeasure. Yet have I (JHVH) set my King (the Anointed, or Messiah) upon My (JHVH) holy hill in Zion.'¹⁰⁶⁶

The JHVH in this passage is clearly the divine being who became known as the Father. In verse six this JHVH is speaking of His future King, the Messiah. Verse seven reveals that the promised Messiah would be the Son of this JHVH.

'In verse seven a second divine Being begins to speak, prophesying that He will become the Son of JHVH. It is found that this divine Being, Who will become the Messiah, the future Son, is also called JHVH.

*'I will declare the decree: the Lord (Hebrew: JHVH, the Father of the Messiah) hath said unto Me (the Messiah), Thou art My Son;¹⁰⁶⁷ this day have I (the Father) begotten Thee (the Son). Ask of Me (the Father), and I shall give Thee (the Son) the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession. Thou (the Son) shall break them with a rod of iron; Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.¹⁰⁶⁸ Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord (Hebrew: JHVH, the Son) with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and ye perish from the way, when His wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him (the Son).'*¹⁰⁶⁹

These verses reveal that there were two JHVHs in Old Testament times. When examined in the context in which the name JHVH is used, it is evident that the JHVH in verse seven is the divine Being who would become known as the Father of the Messiah, and that the JHVH of verse eleven is the divine Being who would become the Messiah, His Son. In verses seven through nine, the JHVH who would become the Son is declaring what the first JHVH (who would be known as His Father), had decreed.

¹⁰⁶⁵ quoted in Acts 4:25,26

¹⁰⁶⁶ Psa 2:1-6

¹⁰⁶⁷ quoted in Acts 13:33; Heb 1:5,5:5,6

¹⁰⁶⁸ quoted by the ascended and glorified Christ in Rev 2:26,27

¹⁰⁶⁹ Psa 2:7-12

The decrees of verse nine are quoted by Jesus Christ in Revelation, *'to him will I give power over the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers.'*¹⁰⁷⁰ *even as I received of My Father.'*¹⁰⁷¹

Psalm 16

In the thirteenth chapter of Acts, Paul proclaimed Jesus Christ as the JHVH / Messiah of Psalm 2 and the Holy One of Psalm 16. When examined in the context of the verse in Psalm 16 quoted by Paul, it is evident that the Holy One, or Messiah, is also called JHVH, and that Paul is addressing a second divine Being. As in other passages which reveal two divine Beings, the Massorites altered the name JHVH to read Adonay: this modification appearing in verse two. Psalm 16 is also of note for it shows that the Hebrew El applies to the Word / Messiah, and not merely to God Who would become God the Father.

*'Preserve me, O God (Hebrew: El, the future Messiah): for in Thee do I put my trust. O my soul, thou hast said unto the Lord (Hebrew: JHVH, the future Messiah), Thou art my Lord (Hebrew: Adonay, originally JHVH): my goodness extendeth not to Thee; but to the saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent, in whom is all my delight. Their sorrows shall be multiplied that hasten after another god: their drink offerings of blood will I not offer, nor take up their names into my lips. The Lord (Hebrew: JHVH, the future Messiah), is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup: Thou maintainest my lot. I will bless the Lord (Hebrew: JHVH, the future Messiah), who hath given me counsel: my reins also instruct me in the night season. I have set the Lord (Hebrew: JHVH, the Messiah) always before me: because He (the Messiah) is at my right hand, I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope (prophesying His death).'*¹⁰⁷² At this point David ceases to speak of himself. The Psalm continues in the first person, but now becomes a prophecy of and by the Messiah: *'For Thou (the Father) wilt not leave My (the Messiah) soul (body) in hell (the grave); neither wilt Thou (the Father) suffer Thine Holy One (the Messiah) to see corruption (prophesying his mortal resurrection). Thou (the Father) wilt show Me (the Messiah) the path of life (prophesying His ascension): in Thy (the Father's) presence is fulness of joy; at Thy (the Father's) right hand (where the Messiah sits) there are pleasures for evermore.'*¹⁰⁷³

In Acts chapter 2, Peter confirms this in the following testimony: *'For David speaketh concerning Him [Christ, the subject of the testimony, commencing in verse fourteen], I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for He is on my right hand, that I should not be moved: therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope: because Thou [the Father] wilt not leave My [The Messiah] soul*

¹⁰⁷⁰ the decrees given in Psa 2:9

¹⁰⁷¹ Rev 2:24-27

¹⁰⁷² Psa 16:1-9

¹⁰⁷³ Psa 16:10,11

[body] in hell [the grave], neither wilt Thou [the Father] suffer Thine Holy One [the Messiah] to see corruption ...He [David] seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that His soul [body] was not left in hell [the grave], neither His flesh did see corruption. This Jesus hath God [Greek: Theos, the Father] raised up, whereof we are all witnesses.¹⁰⁷⁴

When quoting David's Psalm 16, verse[s ten and] eleven, Peter made it patently clear that these verses do not refer to David, but to the Messiah. In confirmation of this, Peter also said the following, recorded in Acts, 'Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God hath sworn with an oath to him, that out of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne.'¹⁰⁷⁵ And adding verse thirty-one, as above: 'He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that His soul [body] was not left in hell [the grave], neither His flesh did see corruption.'

Paul confirmed the same, 'And we (Paul and his fellows) declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise that was made unto the fathers, God (Greek: Theos, the Father) hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that He (the Father) hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art My Son, this day have I (the Father) begotten (revived) Thee.'¹⁰⁷⁶ 'And as concerning that He (the Father) raised Him (the Son) up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, He (the Father) said on this wise, I (the Father) will give You (the Son) the sure mercies of David.'¹⁰⁷⁷ Wherefore He (the Father) saith in another psalm,¹⁰⁷⁸ Thou (the Father) shalt not suffer Thine Holy One (the Son) to see corruption.'¹⁰⁷⁹

Paul's inspired words reveal that the Godhead is not immutable. The Godhead changed when one of the JHVHs emptied Himself of His immortality (by divine condescendence), and became incarnate: flesh and blood. When Christ died and was in the grave, there was only one JHVH.

Psalm 22

'My God, My God (Hebrew: El, the divine Being Who was to become the Father), why hast Thou forsaken Me (the future Son)? Why art Thou (the Father) so far from helping Me (the Son), and from the words of My roaring? O My God (Hebrew: Elohim, plural; appropriate when used by David speaking to the Godhead, verse two was not used by the Messiah),¹⁰⁸⁰ I [David]¹⁰⁸¹ cry in the daytime, but Thou hearest not; and in the

¹⁰⁷⁴ Acts 2:25-27,31,32

¹⁰⁷⁵ Acts 2:29,30

¹⁰⁷⁶ Psalms 2:7

¹⁰⁷⁷ Isaiah 55:3

¹⁰⁷⁸ Psalm 16:10

¹⁰⁷⁹ Acts 13:32-35

¹⁰⁸⁰ cf. Hebrew in Mat 27:46c, 'Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' and Aramaic in Mark 15 :34c, 'Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast thou

night season, and am not silent. But Thou [the Son]¹⁰⁸² art holy, O Thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel. Our fathers trusted in Thee: they trusted, and Thou didst deliver them. They cried unto Thee, and were delivered: they trusted in Thee, and were not confounded. But I [David]¹⁰⁸³ am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people. All they that see Me laugh Me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, He [dual meaning, David and the Son]¹⁰⁸⁴ trusted on the Lord (Hebrew: JHVH, referring to the [Son and the Father, respectively])¹⁰⁸⁵ that He would deliver Him ([David and] the Son):¹⁰⁸⁶ let Him ([Son and] the Father)¹⁰⁸⁷ deliver Him ([David and] the Son [respectively]),¹⁰⁸⁸ seeing He (the Son [and the Father])¹⁰⁸⁹ delighted in Him ([David and the Son respectively]).^{1090 1091} In the last verse, the future Son calls the divine Being Who would become the Father by the name JHVH. This same Father JHVH is also called in the passage EI [but not Elohim],¹⁰⁹² thus showing the interchanging of the names of the Godhead. From other tracts led, it is patent that all three names (JHVH, EI, and Elohim) are shared by the divine Beings in the Godhead [the first two being singular, the third plural or composite].

*'But Thou (the Father) art He that took Me (the Son) out of the womb: Thou didst make Me hope when I was upon My mother's breasts. I (the Son) was cast upon Thee (the Father) from the womb: Thou art My God (Hebrew EI) from My mother's belly. Be not far from Me (the Son); for trouble is near; for there is none to help. Many bulls have compassed Me: strong bulls of Bashan have beset Me round. They gaped upon Me with their mouths, as a ravening and a roaring lion. I (the Son) am poured out like water, and all My bones are out of joint: My heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of My bowels. My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and My tongue cleaveth to My jaws; and Thou (the Father) hast brought Me (the Son) into the dust of death. For dogs have compassed Me: the assembly of the wicked have enclosed Me: they pierced My hands and My feet. I may tell all My bones: they look and stare upon Me. They part My garments among them, and cast lots upon My vesture.'*¹⁰⁹³ All four Gospel writers record this prophecy in their accounts of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, thereby noting its fulfilment.

forsaken me?' where Christ's quotes only Psa 22:1; verse 2, et seq., is not quoted. Psa 22:10b 'my God' uses Hebrew: EI, singular, again a use by Christ, q.v. inf.

¹⁰⁸¹ Franklin ascribed this to the Son, but he is in error on this point; Christ never cited this verse, q.v. sup.

¹⁰⁸² therefore this must be to the Son, and not the Father as Franklin has it.

¹⁰⁸³ therefore this must be David, and not the Son as Franklin has it.

¹⁰⁸⁴ dual meaning, not singular as Franklin has it, as it applies to both David and Christ.

¹⁰⁸⁵ dual meaning, not singular as Franklin has it, as it applies to both David and Christ.

¹⁰⁸⁶ dual meaning, not singular as Franklin has it, as it applies to both David and Christ.

¹⁰⁸⁷ dual meaning, not singular as Franklin has it, as it applies to both David and Christ.

¹⁰⁸⁸ dual meaning, not singular as Franklin has it, as it applies to both David and Christ.

¹⁰⁸⁹ dual meaning, not singular as Franklin has it, as it applies to both David and Christ.

¹⁰⁹⁰ and not 'the Father,' as Franklin has it; the meaning continues as dual.

¹⁰⁹¹ Psa 22:1-8

¹⁰⁹² error on the part of Franklin, q.v. sup.

¹⁰⁹³ Psa 22:9-18; cp. Mat 27:35; Mark 15:24; Luke 23:34; John 19:24

'But be not Thou (the Father) far from Me (the Son), O Lord (Hebrew: Adonay, originally JHVH, referring to the Father): O My strength, haste Thee (the Father) to help Me (the Son). Deliver My soul (body) from the sword; my darling from the power of the dog. Save me from the lion's mouth: for Thou (the Father) hast heard Me (the Son) from the horns of the unicorns. I (the Son) will declare Thy Name (the Father) unto My brethren: in the midst of the congregation will I praise Thee.¹⁰⁹⁴ Ye that fear the Lord (Hebrew: JHVH, referring to the Father), praise Him (the Father); all ye the seed of Jacob, glorify Him (the Father); and fear Him (the Father), all ye the seed of Israel. For He (the Father) hath not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted; neither hath He (the Father) hid His face from Him (the Son); but when He (the Son) cried unto Him (the Father), He heard. My praise shall be of Thee (the Father) in the great congregation: I will pay my vows before them that fear Him (the Father).'¹⁰⁹⁵

In the final section of Psalm twenty-two there is found the name JHVH, occurring four times.¹⁰⁹⁶ But in these verses, as the context clearly shows, the name JHVH does not refer to the divine Being....the Father. To the contrary, every occurrence of the name JHVH in this part of Psalm twenty-two is a specific reference to the divine Being Who would become the Son. This truth becomes evident in verse twenty-eight, where this JHVH is revealed as the prophesied Messiah Who will rule all nations.

The final occurrence of the name JHVH in Psalm twenty-two is found in verse thirty in the original Hebrew text. The name JHVH in this verse was altered by the Masoretic Levites to read Adonay. They also made a similar alteration in verse nineteen. The change in verse thirty was their second modification of the name JHVH in Psalm twenty-two. It is interesting to note that in verse nineteen, the name JHVH refers to the divine Being....the Father. In verse thirty, the name JHVH refers to the divine Being Who would become the Son. In the original Hebrew text, these two verses plainly revealed the existence of two JHVHs.

'The meek shall eat and be satisfied: they shall praise the Lord (Hebrew: JHVH, referring to the Son) that seek Him: your heart shall live forever. All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord (Hebrew: JHVH, the Son): and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee (the Son). For the kingdom is the Lord's (Hebrew: JHVH, referring to the Son): and He (the Son) is the Governor among the nations. All they that be fat upon earth shall eat and worship: all they that go down to the dust shall bow before Him (the Son); it shall be accounted to the Lord (Hebrew: Adonay, originally JHVH, referring to the Son) for a generation. They shall come, and shall declare His righteousness unto a people that shall be born, that He (the Son) hath done this.'¹⁰⁹⁷

All four Gospel writers quote Psalm twenty-two as evidence that Jesus Christ was the prophesied Messiah, the JHVH of the Old Testament Who became the Son. The New Testament shows beyond a shadow

¹⁰⁹⁴ quoted in John 20:17

¹⁰⁹⁵ Psa 22:19-25

¹⁰⁹⁶ Psa 22:26-28,30

¹⁰⁹⁷ Psa 22:26-31

of doubt that Jesus Christ had eternally existed as God before He became flesh.¹⁰⁹⁸ David's prophecy¹⁰⁹⁹ concerning the JHVH Who will rule all nations also shows that the resurrected Jesus Christ was restored to His former glory and will return to earth to rule forever as God.

The prophetic prayer of the JHVH / Messiah in Psalm twenty-two is quoted in the New Testament as the last prayer uttered by Jesus before He died, 'My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken me?'¹¹⁰⁰ The Gospel of John indicates that Jesus may have spoken the entire Psalm during His crucifixion.¹¹⁰¹ It is recorded in John¹¹⁰² that Jesus' last words before His death were, 'It is finished.' As the Companion Bible explains, this is the actual meaning and proper translation of the final words of Psalm twenty-two.¹¹⁰³

Psalm 45

Psalm 45 contains a rather brief reference to the Godhead: *'Gird Thy sword upon Thy thigh, O most Mighty, with Thy glory and Thy majesty. And in Thy majesty ride prosperously because of truth and meekness and righteousness; and Thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things. Thine arrows are sharp in the heart of the king's enemies; whereby the people fall under Thee. Thy throne, O God (Hebrew: Elohim, referring to the Father and Son) is for ever and ever: the sceptre of Thy kingdom is a right sceptre. Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore God (Hebrew: Elohim, referring to the Father and Son), Thy [David's]¹¹⁰⁴ God (Hebrew: Elohim, referring to the Father and Son) hath anointed Thee [David]¹¹⁰⁵ with the oil of gladness above*

¹⁰⁹⁸ John 1:1-3

¹⁰⁹⁹ Psa 22:28

¹¹⁰⁰ Mat 27:46; Mark 15:34

¹¹⁰¹ there is no record whatsoever of this, and it runs contrary to the duality of the exposition sup.

¹¹⁰² John 19:30

¹¹⁰³ Hebrew: asah, 'done'; cp. Greek teleo, 'to bring to a close,' spoken by Christ in John 19:30b, 'It is finished.'

Seven sayings made by Christ from the cross are recorded in Scripture: Mat 27:46 (also contained in Mark 15:34); Luke 23:34,43,46; John 19:26-28,30. Placed in likely time sequence, these give:

Luke 23:34, 'Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots,' referring to the soldiers' actions over his raiment.

Luke 23:43, 'And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise,' spoken to the malefactor on the cross at or just before the onset of the supernatural darkness at the sixth hour, cf. v.44.

John 19:26,27, 'When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son! Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home.'

Mat 27:46, 'And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?'

Luke 23:46, 'And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost.'

John 19:28, 'After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst.'

John 19:30, 'When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost,' probably spoken in a soft voice, which only those close to the cross could hear distinctly.

¹¹⁰⁴ and not 'the Son's' as Franklin has it.

¹¹⁰⁵ and not solely 'the Son, the Messiah' as Franklin has it; but there is later duality imported here, for The Messiah is referred to in this and subsequent verses by Paul in Heb 1:8,9, where the words of Psa 45:6,7 are put into the mouth of

Thy fellows. All Thy [David's]¹¹⁰⁶ garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces, whereby they have made Thee [David]¹¹⁰⁷ glad.¹¹⁰⁸

'Thy throne, O God (Hebrew Elohim, referring to [the Father and]¹¹⁰⁹ Son) is for ever and ever' can be addressed to none other than the [Godhead].¹¹¹⁰ No earthly king could possibly claim this promise. The psalmist joyfully proclaims the perpetuity of his King. When perpetuity was promised to the throne of David,¹¹¹¹ it is because that throne is continued in the reign of David's descendant, Jesus Christ. 'Thy God (disregarding [as did Paul in Hebrews]¹¹¹² Hebrew: Elohim, referring to the Father [and Son])¹¹¹³ hath anointed Thee (the Son, the Messiah) with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows' clearly shows the Messiah as Jesus Christ, demonstrating His relationship with the Father].

Psalm 89

Psalm 89 is one of two consecutive Psalms which reveal that the two divine Beings of the Old Testament were each known as JHVH, (and one as JHVH Elohim).¹¹¹⁴ While both divine Beings are spoken of in Psalm 89, only one of them is called JHVH Elohim in this Psalm, and this JHVH is the Word, the Messiah.

the Father: 'But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows'; this has a precedent in Paul's writings, for concerning the 'seed' which he interprets as singular, meaning our Lord, against the plural use in the Old Testament, q.v. Gal 3:16b; cp. Gen 9:9,12:7,13:15,16, where 'seed' is a collective noun, described in v.14 as being as numerous 'as the dust of the earth.' The usage by Paul of the singular has a firm basis in the covenant with Abraham. The 'smoking furnace' was God the Father, and the 'burning lamp' was the Word, who later was to become incarnate as our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. The Targum of Onkelos bolsters this (with added comment and clarification in square brackets): 'He [God the Father] made a covenant between Abraham and His Word.' Paul's distinction of the singular 'seed' in Christ was both well founded, and, contractually, completely accurate. The Abrahamic covenant could have had no higher basis, for it is a covenant between the two Divine Beings called Jehovah, from God the Father to the Word / Jesus Christ. It has a beneficiary: Abraham and his seed, plural, 'as numerous as the stars of heaven.' An alternative, entirely speculative explanation is that Paul used a Greek version of the Old Testament which had the singular usage, which would imply that, perhaps, the Hebrew text had become adulterated at some point.

¹¹⁰⁶ and not 'the Son's' as Franklin has it.

¹¹⁰⁷ and not 'the Son, the Messiah,' as Franklin has it; this verse is not put into the mouth of the Father by Paul in Hebrews chpt. 1.

¹¹⁰⁸ Psal 45:3-8

¹¹⁰⁹ the Hebrew is clearly plural.

¹¹¹⁰ and not solely to the Son, as Franklin has it.

¹¹¹¹ Psal 89:4,36,37; II Sam 7:13-17

¹¹¹² again, this has a precedent in Paul's writings, for concerning the 'seed' which he interprets as singular, meaning our Lord, against the plural use in the Old Testament, q.v. Gal 3:16b; cp. Gen 9:9,12:7,13:15,16, where 'seed' is a collective noun, described in v.14 as being as numerous 'as the dust of the earth.'

¹¹¹³ Hebrew: elohim is plural.

¹¹¹⁴ this is a different construction, where JHVH paired with Elohim means JHVH (singular) of the Gods (plural), and thus is a singular reference to One Divine Being in the plural, dyadic Godhead. A similar arrangement can be seen with the Hebrew: echad, which, inter alia, can refer to 'one of more than one,' q.v. inf.

The Psalm opens with an eulogy (or panegyric) of David: *'I will sing of the mercies of the Lord (Hebrew: JHVH) for ever: with my mouth will I make known Thy faithfulness to all generations. For I have said, Mercy shall be built up forever: Thy faithfulness shalt Thou establish in the very heavens.'*¹¹¹⁵

Then speaks God the Word, *'I have made a covenant with My chosen, I have sworn unto David My servant, thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne to all generations. Selah.'*¹¹¹⁶

The text then reverts to David's words, clearly eulogising the Word / Son, *'All the heavens shall praise Thy wonders, O Lord (Hebrew: JHVH): Thy faithfulness also in the congregation of the saints. For who in the heaven can be compared unto the Lord? (Hebrew: JHVH) Who among the sons of the mighty can be likened unto the Lord? (Hebrew: JHVH) God (Hebrew: El)¹¹¹⁷ is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about Him. O Lord God (Hebrew: JHVH Elohim)¹¹¹⁸ of hosts, who is a strong Lord (Hebrew: Jah) like unto Thee? Or to Thy faithfulness round about Thee?'¹¹¹⁹*

In verse eight,¹¹²⁰ in addition to the name JHVH Elohim, the psalmist uses the name Jah, a shortened form of JHVH. The fact that the psalmist was inspired by the Holy Spirit to use these various divine names shows that the Word does not have 'one sacred name' by which He must be addressed.

David continues his eulogy, *'Thou (the Son) rulest the raging of the sea: when the waves thereof arise, Thou stillest them.'*¹¹²¹ *Thou (the Word / Son) hast broken Rahab in pieces, as one that is slain; Thou (the Word / Son) hast scattered Thine enemies with Thy strong arm. The heavens are Thine, the earth also is Thine: as for the world and the fullness thereof, Thou (the Word) hast created them: Tabor and Hermon shall rejoice in Thy name. Thou (the Word / Son) hast a mighty arm: strong is Thy hand, and high is Thy right hand. Justice and judgment are the habitation of Thy throne (in the Millennium): mercy and truth shall go before Thy (the Son's) face. Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord (Hebrew: JHVH, God the Son, the Messiah), in the light of Thy countenance. In Thy name (the Son's) shall they rejoice all the day: and in Thy righteousness shall they be exalted. For Thou (the Son) art the glory of their strength: and in Thy favour our horn shall be exalted. For the Lord (Hebrew: JHVH, God the Son, the Messiah) is our King ('King of kings, and Lord of lords'¹¹²²).¹¹²³*

The eulogy then reveals the [Son]¹¹²⁴ speaking in vision to the [Father]¹¹²⁵ (for no man hath seen the Father) concerning David, *'Then Thou (the [Son])¹¹²⁶ spakest in vision to Thy Holy One (the [Father]),¹¹²⁷ and*

¹¹¹⁵ Psa 89:1,2

¹¹¹⁶ Psa 89:3,4

¹¹¹⁷ another construction, JHVH El, both parts being singular.

¹¹¹⁸ One God in the plural dyadic Godhead, q.v. sup.

¹¹¹⁹ Psa 89:5-8

¹¹²⁰ Psa 89:8

¹¹²¹ Mat 8:24-27; Mark 4:36-41

¹¹²² Rev 19:16

¹¹²³ Psa 89:9-18

¹¹²⁴ and not the Father as Franklin has it.

saidst, I (the [Son])¹¹²⁸ have laid help upon one (David) that is mighty; I (the [Son])¹¹²⁹ have exalted one (David) chosen out of the people.¹¹³⁰

Here there is record of one divine Being, the [Son],¹¹³¹ speaking to another divine Being, the [Father],¹¹³² concerning David, the chosen ruler of His people. The next section of Psalm 89, while speaking directly of David, is also a prophecy of the reign of the future seed, the Messiah. This dual meaning is evident in, 'I have found David My servant;¹¹³³ with My holy oil have I anointed Him: with whom My hand shall be established: Mine arm also shall strengthen him. The enemy shall not exact upon Him; nor the son of wickedness afflict him. And I will beat down his foes before his face, and plague them that hate him. But My faithfulness and My mercy shall be with him: and in My name shall his horn be exalted. I will set his hand also in the sea, and his right hand in the rivers. He shall cry Unto Me, Thou art my Father (referring to the Father), my God (Hebrew: El, referring to the Son), and the Rock (Hebrew: Zur, referring the Son) of my salvation.'¹¹³⁴ 'Also I will make Him (the Messiah) my firstborn, higher (Hebrew: Elyon, meaning 'Most High,' referring to the Messiah) than the kings of the earth.'¹¹³⁵

Continuing concerning David, 'My mercy will I (the [Father])¹¹³⁶ keep for him for evermore, and My covenant shall stand fast with him. His seed (in the Messiah) also will I make to endure forever, and His throne as the days of heaven. If his children forsake My Law, and walk not in My judgments; if they break My statutes, and keep not My commandments; then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless My lovingkindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer My faithfulness to fail. My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of My lips. Once I have sworn by My holiness that I will not lie unto David. His seed (the Messiah) shall endure forever, and His throne as the sun before Me. It shall be established forever as the moon,¹¹³⁷ and as a faithful witness in heaven. Selah.'¹¹³⁸

Paul identifies the JHVH in verse twenty¹¹³⁹ with [the Father and the] the Word, the Messiah, in Acts, 'The God of this people of Israel (the Word, the Old Testament God) chose our fathers, and exalted the people when they dwelt as strangers in the land of Egypt, and with an high arm brought He (the Word) them out of it.

¹¹²⁵ and not the Son as Franklin has it.

¹¹²⁶ and not the Father as Franklin has it.

¹¹²⁷ and not the Son as Franklin has it.

¹¹²⁸ and not the Father as Franklin has it.

¹¹²⁹ and not the Father as Franklin has it.

¹¹³⁰ Psa 89:19; this could be read as the Son speaking to the Father.

¹¹³¹ and not the Father as Franklin has it.

¹¹³² and not the Son as Franklin has it.

¹¹³³ quoted in Acts 13:22

¹¹³⁴ Psa 89:20-26

¹¹³⁵ Psa 89:27

¹¹³⁶ and not the Son as Franklin has it.

¹¹³⁷ viz., the moon as the sign of God's covenant with David concerning his throne.

¹¹³⁸ Psa 89:28-37

¹¹³⁹ Psa 89:20

*And when He (the Word) had removed him (Saul), He raised up unto them David to be their king; to whom also He gave testimony, and said, I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after Mine own heart, who shall fulfil all My will. Of this man's seed hath God (the Father) according to (His) promise raised unto Israel a saviour, Jesus.'*¹¹⁴⁰

In the final section of Psalm 89, the psalmist addresses JHVH, the Word, the Messiah, pleading with Him to remember His covenant with David. As in other scriptural passages that reveal two JHVHs, the concluding part of Psalm has been modified by the Massorites, this time twice over.

*'But Thou (the Word) hast cast off and abhorred, Thou hast been wroth with Thine anointed (David). Thou hast made void (in David's view) the covenant of Thy servant: Thou hast profaned his crown by casting it to the ground. Thou hast broken down all his hedges; Thou hast brought his strongholds to ruin. All that pass by the way spoil him: he is a reproach to his neighbours. Thou hast set up the right hand of his adversaries; Thou hast made all his enemies to rejoice. Thou hast also turned the edge of his sword, and hast not made him to stand in the battle. Thou hast made his glory to cease, and cast his throne down to the ground. The days of his youth hast Thou shortened: Thou hast covered him with shame. Selah. How long, Lord? (Hebrew: JHVH, the Word) wilt Thou hide Thyself forever? Shall Thy wrath burn like fire? Remember how short my time is: wherefore hast Thou made all men in vain? What man is he that liveth, and shall not see death? Shall he deliver his soul (being) from the hand of the grave? Selah. Lord (Hebrew: Adonay, originally JHVH, referring to the Word, the Messiah), where are Thy former loving kindnesses, which Thou swarest unto David in Thy truth? Remember, Lord, (Hebrew: Adonay, originally JHVH, again referring to the Word, the Messiah), the reproach of Thy servants; how I do bear in my bosom the reproach of all the mighty people; wherewith Thine enemies have reproached, O Lord (Hebrew: JHVH, the Word, the Messiah); wherewith they have reproached Thy footsteps of Thine anointed (David). Blessed be the Lord (Hebrew: JHVH, the Word, the Messiah) for evermore. Amen, and Amen.'*¹¹⁴¹

Paul confirms in Acts that the JHVH above, also referred to in Psalm 89 as JHVH Elohim,¹¹⁴² is the divine Being known as the Word, Who became the Son of the Father, the Messiah.

¹¹⁴⁰ Acts 13:17,22,23; the word '*his*' is an addition of the K.J.V. text, and does not appear in the original Greek. The correct deletion of '*his*' changes the sense of Acts 13:23, and shows the dual attributes in the passage cited above.

¹¹⁴¹ Psalms 89:38-52

¹¹⁴² again where JHVH paired with Elohim means JHVH (singular) of the Gods (plural), and thus is a singular reference to One Divine Being in the plural, dyadic Godhead.

Psalm 90

Psalm 90, a prayer of Moses, is addressed to the JHVH Who would become the Son. In the original Hebrew text, the name JHVH was found three times in this Psalm.¹¹⁴³ The Massorites modified verses one and seventeen to make JHVH read Adonay.¹¹⁴⁴

'Lord (Hebrew: Adonay, originally JHVH), Thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever Thou hast formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, Thou art God (Hebrew: El). Thou turnest man to destruction; and sayest, Return, ye children of men. For a thousand years in Thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past,¹¹⁴⁵ and as a watch in the night.'¹¹⁴⁶

Psalm 118

Without the New Testament, we would not know that two JHVHs are revealed in Psalm 118. When read as a singleton without reference to the New Testament, it appears that it is referring to one JHVH, and this is perhaps why the Massorites did not modify any of the verses in this Psalm.

'O give thanks unto the Lord (Hebrew: JHVH); for He is good: because His mercy endureth for ever. Let Israel now say, that His mercy endureth forever. Let the house of Aaron now say, that His mercy endureth for ever. Let them now that fear the Lord (Hebrew: JHVH) say, that His mercy endureth for ever. I called upon the

¹¹⁴³ in verses 1, 13, and 17.

¹¹⁴⁴ before this modification, verse 17 revealed that the divine Being Who became the Son was known in Old Testament times as JHVH Elohim, also cf. sup. Moses began his prayer by addressing this divine Being both as JHVH and El.

¹¹⁴⁵ quoted in II Peter 3:18

¹¹⁴⁶ Psa 90:1-4; In these verses there is no direct statement to indicate that the JHVH and El is the future Son and Messiah. In the New Testament, however, Peter quotes verse 4 in relation to the Second Coming: II Peter 3:8-9 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets): *'...one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning His promise [to return].'* Peter's interpretation of Moses' prayer identifies the JHVH and El of Psalm 90 as the divine Being Who became Jesus Christ, the Messiah. Psa 90:5-17(with added comment and clarification in square brackets): *'Thou carriest them away as with a flood; they are as a sleep: in the morning they are like grass which groweth up. In the morning it flourisheth, and groweth up; in the evening it is cut down, and withereth. For we are consumed by Thine anger, and by Thy wrath are we troubled. Thou hast set our iniquities before Thee, our secret sins in the light of Thy countenance. For all our days are passed away in Thy wrath: we spend our years as a tale that is told. The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away. Who knoweth the power of Thine anger? Even according to Thy fear, so is Thy wrath. So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom. Return, O Lord [Hebrew: JHVH, the Son, the Messiah], how long? And let it repent Thee concerning Thy servants. O satisfy us early with Thy mercy; that we may rejoice and be glad all our days. Make us glad according to the days wherein Thou hast afflicted us, and the years wherein we have seen evil. Let Thy work appear unto Thy servants, and Thy glory unto their children. And let the beauty of the Lord [Hebrew: Adonay, originally JHVH] our God [Hebrew: Elohim] be upon us: and establish Thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish Thou it.'*

Psalm 90, as originally inspired and written, reveals that the divine Being of Moses' prayer is named JHVH Elohim. The apostle Peter reveals that this JHVH Elohim of Psalm 90 became Jesus Christ, the promised Son and Messiah.

*Lord, and He set me in a large place. The Lord (Hebrew: JHVH) is on my side; I will not fear: what can man do unto me?*¹¹⁴⁷

As noted above, verse six is quoted by the apostle Paul in his epistle to the Hebrews. In this New Testament record, Paul clearly identifies the divine Being Who is both called JHVH and Jah in the opening verse of Psalm 118. Here is Paul's inspired testimony: *'for He (Jesus) hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my Helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.'*¹¹⁴⁸

Paul's inspired words clearly identify the JHVH and Jah of verses five and six as the divine Being Who became the Messiah and Son—Jesus Christ. This truth is made clear in the following verses of Psalm 118, where this JHVH is prophesied to become the Way of salvation:

*'The Lord (Hebrew: JHVH, the Son) taketh my part with them that help me: therefore shall I see my desire upon them that hate me. It is better to trust in the Lord (Hebrew: JHVH, the Son) than to put confidence in man. It is better to trust in the Lord (Hebrew: JHVH, the Son) than to put confidence in princes. All nations compassed me about: but in the name of the Lord (Hebrew: JHVH, the Son) will I destroy them. They compassed me about; yea, they compassed me about: but in the name of the Lord (Hebrew: JHVH, the Son) I will destroy them. They compassed me about like bees; they are quenched as the fire of thorns: for in the name of the Lord (Hebrew: JHVH, the Son) I will destroy them. Thou hast thrust sore at me that I might fall: but the Lord (Hebrew: JHVH, the Son) helped me. The Lord (Hebrew: Jah, the Son) is my strength and song, and is become my salvation. The voice of rejoicing and salvation is in the tabernacles of the righteous: the right hand of the Lord (Hebrew: JHVH, the Son) doeth valiantly. I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord (Hebrew: Jah, the Son). The Lord (Hebrew: Jah, the Son) hath chastened me sore: but He hath not given me over unto death. Open to me the gates of righteousness: I will go into them, and I will praise the Lord (Hebrew: Jah, the Son): this gate of the Lord (Hebrew: JHVH, the Son), into which the righteous shall enter. I will praise Thee: for Thou hast heard me, and art become my salvation.'*¹¹⁴⁹

The concluding verses of Psalm 118 speak of two JHVHs. In this section, the name JHVH refers to the Father. *'The stone which the builders refused is become the headstone of the corner. This is the Lord's (Hebrew: JHVH's, referring to the Father) doing; it is marvellous in our eyes.'*¹¹⁵⁰ *This is the day which the Lord (Hebrew: JHVH, the Father) hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it. Save now, I beseech Thee, O Lord (Hebrew: JHVH, the Father): O Lord (Hebrew: JHVH, the Father), I beseech Thee, send now prosperity. Blessed be He (the Messiah) that cometh in the name of the Lord (Hebrew: JHVH, the Father).'*¹¹⁵¹ *we have blessed You*

¹¹⁴⁷ Psa 118:1-6; quoted in Heb 13:6

¹¹⁴⁸ Heb 13:5,6

¹¹⁴⁹ Psa 118:7-21

¹¹⁵⁰ quoted in Mat 21:42-44; Mark 12:10,11; Luke 20:17; Acts 4:11; I Peter 2:4

¹¹⁵¹ quoted in Mat 21:9,23;39; Mark 11:9; Luke 13:35,19:38, John 12:13

out of the house of the Lord (Hebrew: JHVH, the Father). God (Hebrew: EI) is the Lord (Hebrew: JHVH, the Father), which hath showed us light: bind the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar. Thou art my God (Hebrew: EI [singular]), and I will praise Thee: Thou art my God[s] (Hebrew: Elohim [plural, dyadic]), I will exalt Thee. O give thanks unto the Lord (Hebrew: JHVH, the Father);¹¹⁵² for He is good: for His mercy endureth for ever.'¹¹⁵³

As interpreted in the New Testament, the JHVH in these final verses is the divine Being who became the Father. Here this JHVH is also called by the names EI and Elohim, providing additional scriptural confirmation that the divine names are used interchangeably. The use of the divine names JHVH, Jah, EI, Elohim, and JHVH Elohim in these analysed Psalms shows that these names refer to two divine Beings; one becoming the Son and Messiah, the other becoming the Father. Thus Old and New Testaments affirm that there are two divine Beings Who are God. Nowhere does Scripture reveal that there are more than two.

Contrary to the belief of most mainstream Christians, God is not a Trinity. This deceptive doctrine has been presented as a teaching of Scripture when, in reality, it is contrary to it. The Scriptures reveal the Holy Spirit as the Power of God—not as a divine 'Person' or Being. Those who accept and promote the doctrine of the Trinity are basing their belief on ancient myths and vain philosophies of men....

If we desire to know the true God—to worship Him in spirit and in truth—we must rid our minds of every false idea and every vain reasoning that exalts itself against his Word. We must hold fast to the truth that is revealed in the Scriptures—that both the Father and His Son Jesus Christ are God.¹¹⁵⁴ They are the two JHVHs of the Old Testament and the two Kurios of the New. They are equally Theos, as the apostle Paul testifies. Those who claim otherwise are replacing the truth of Scripture with the vain philosophies of men. These deceptive teachings have for centuries been used by Satan to undermine the faith of Christians. The New Testament contains many warnings to be on guard against such false teachings.

Today, false teachers within the churches of God are rejecting the truth of Scripture and are promoting the 'new understanding' that Jesus was never God and that He never will be God. They claim that no one—spirit or flesh—can ever be glorified as God. They are denying the Christ Who died for them, and Who has been glorified with the glory of the Father,¹¹⁵⁵ and they are denying the very purpose for which He died—to share that glory with many brethren.¹¹⁵⁶

¹¹⁵² may also be read as plural.

¹¹⁵³ Psa 118:22-29

¹¹⁵⁴ In the New Testament, there are straightforward statements of Jesus Christ's deity. By way of example, John 20:28 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets), '*And Thomas answered and said unto Him [Jesus Christ], my Lord [Greek Kurios] and my God [Greek Theos]*,' and Titus 2:10,13 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets), '*...that they may adorn the doctrine of God [Greek Theos] our Saviour in all things. Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearance of the great God [Greek Theos] and our Saviour Jesus Christ [at His Second Coming]*'.

¹¹⁵⁵ John 17:5

¹¹⁵⁶ Heb 2:10-13

These false doctrines which deny the truth of Scripture are not new at all. These same deceptive doctrines were infiltrating the churches of God in the days of the apostle John. John wrote his Gospel to combat these false teachings and to confirm the truth of God. John begins his Gospel by proclaiming the pre-existence of Jesus Christ as 'the Word,' Who was '*with God*' (Greek: Theos) and '*was God*' (Greek: Theos) from the beginning.¹¹⁵⁷ John used the Greek word Theos to name both God and the Word in order to show that the Word was identical in nature to the God with Whom He had eternally existed.

False teachers do not want to accept the truth that the Word was also God. They are willing to acknowledge that Theos means God in the phrase '*with God*,' but they say that it does not mean God in the phrase '*was God*.' They claim that when John wrote that the Word '*was God*,' he meant only that the Word was 'divine.' They define 'divine' as a property or characteristic of God, such as His thoughts and His spoken words. Their definition of the Word of God is identical to the concept of the Logos of Greek philosophy and Gnostic Judaism as taught in the days of the apostles. These false teachers are actually superimposing pagan philosophical concepts upon the Scriptures! When they quote the first verse in John's Gospel, they distort the truth of Scripture by misinterpreting the true meaning of Theos to fit their false philosophical concepts. These are the very teachings that John was writing to combat!...John amplifies this truth in his first epistle by declaring, '*That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the word of life; (for the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and show unto you that eter-nal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) that which we have seen and heard declared we unto you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.*'¹¹⁵⁸

In the book of Revelation, John shows that the eternally living Word Who became Jesus Christ in the flesh has returned to His glorious state. John describes the appearance of this powerful divine Being in detail.¹¹⁵⁹ Remember that this powerful Being Who will rule the nations with a rod of iron is the same divine Being Who is named JHVH in Psalms.¹¹⁶⁰ The Word of the New Testament is the JHVH of the Old Testament Who became Jesus Christ. Both Old and New Testaments proclaim the eternal pre-existence of Jesus Christ as one of the two JHVHs.¹¹⁶¹ From Genesis to Revelation, the Scriptures are filled with testimonies of His eternal

¹¹⁵⁷ John 1:1,2

¹¹⁵⁸ I John 1:1-3

¹¹⁵⁹ Rev 19:13-16

¹¹⁶⁰ e.g., Psa 2:11

¹¹⁶¹ the Masoretic vowel point redaction of the tetragrammaton to Adonai is pointed out by some commentators to be false, being based on the pointing of some other words, such as Hebrew: hovah, ahvah, and ahveh, respectively, '*ruin*,' '*perversity*,' and '*distortion*,' as an intentional slight; also cf. inf. Hebrew: Hashem and putative derivation from Ashima. That the patriarchs knew only the Word is clear from Ex 6:3, '*And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God [Hebrew: E, singular] Almighty, but by my name JEHOVAH was I not known to them.*' The personal and family name, JHVH, was revealed, later, in Deut 6:4, along with the dyadic form of the Godhead. That is why Christ said that He alone reveals the Father in Mat 11:27 and Luke 10:22, and how Judæo-Christians pray direct to the Father.

existence as God. The very structure of the Hebrew and Greek texts give us irrefutable evidence of His co-equality with God. This truth is undeniable when we understand the rules of language and the use of the Hebrew and Greek words.¹¹⁶²

And from earlier in the Old Testament: *'Now therefore fear the Lord, and serve him in sincerity and in truth: and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood [should read: 'river', i.e., the Jordan], and in Egypt; and serve ye the Lord. And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood ['river'], or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord. And the people answered and said, God forbid that we should forsake the Lord, to serve other gods; for the Lord our God, he it is that brought us up and our fathers out of the land of Egypt.'*¹¹⁶³ All references to God are 'Elohim.'

Cast out

'When He was with the disciples, Jesus prophesied that the time would come when His followers would be thrown out of the synagogues—excommunicated, initially under 'Curse,' but latterly in 'Isolation.' Gruber describes the vehemence of this when it happened to the Judæo-Christians, called Minim and Talmidei Yeshua: 'The teaching of the minim "draws, and one may be drawn after them." Even great rabbinic scholars were drawn to it. The teaching of the minim broke through the fence which the Rabbis, led by Akiba, were building around the Torah. The teaching of the minim constituted a major obstacle to the establishment of rabbinic authority as supreme for all Israel.

The Rabbis employed a variety of methods to cut off and isolate the minim. "The Johannine community had apparently been expelled from the synagogue. The term aposynagogos appears three times in John¹¹⁶⁴....it means that members of the Johannine community had been thrown out (apo) of the synagogues (synagogos),"¹¹⁶⁵ all the incidents took place in Judæa.

The Pharisees had been able to expel the Talmidei Yeshua from some synagogues. The Rabbis sought to complete the work.

According to the Talmud, God had wanted the Talmidei Yeshua to be permitted to remain, but the angels had protested. "The descendants of Haman studied Torah in Benai Berak. The Holy One, blessed be He, purposed to lead the descendants of that wicked man too under the wings of the Schechinah, but the

¹¹⁶² Franklin, Carl D., *The Two Jehovahs of the Psalms* (Jehovah typed as JHVH; with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

¹¹⁶³ Josh 24:14-17b (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

¹¹⁶⁴ John 9:22,12:42,16:2

¹¹⁶⁵ Charlesworth, *Reinterpreting John*, p.24

ministering angels protested before Him, 'Sovereign of the Universe! Shalt Thou bring him under the wings of the Shechinah who laid Thy House in ruins, and burnt Thy Temple?'¹¹⁶⁶ The Talmud attributes Christ's miracles to a satanic origin, brands Mary an adultress, and states that He was crucified on the eve of (the Jewish) Passover.¹¹⁶⁷

Yeshua is elsewhere rabbinically identified with Haman.¹¹⁶⁸ Haman never came to Jerusalem. He had nothing to do with the destruction of the Temple. His descendants never studied Torah. Yeshua, on the other hand, came to Jerusalem and prophesied its destruction.¹¹⁶⁹ His disciples studied Torah, and yet were the one major group to be expelled from the synagogue.

The Rabbis formulated a specific curse, called the "Birkat (Blessing of) ha-Minim." It was to be recited daily in every synagogue. The purpose was twofold:

1. To weed out unknown Minim and their sympathisers, through their unwillingness to recite the curse; and,
2. To inculcate a popular hatred of them.

The content of that "blessing" was not known for certain until "...1925AD when the question was settled by the discovery of Genizah¹¹⁷⁰ fragments containing portions of the liturgy according to the ancient Palestinian rite. In these versions, Birkat ha-Minim reads like this: 'May the apostates have no hope, unless they return to Thy Torah, and may the Nazarenes and the Minim disappear in a moment. May they be erased from the book of life, and not be inscribed with the righteous.'...The editor notes that his manuscript contains a marginal note: 'Birkat ha-Minim was introduced after Yeshua ben Pandera, when heretics became numerous.'¹¹⁷¹

In heaven, the angels convinced God to withdraw His mercy and exile the Talmidei Yeshua from His kingdom in Israel [sic]. On earth, the Rabbis enforced that 'decision.'¹¹⁷²

The purpose of some rabbinic traditions is explicitly said to be to separate all those under the authority of the Rabbis from the Minim.¹¹⁷³ To keep the people from reading the books of the Minim, the Rabbis declared that they made a person unclean. But since there are places where the sacred Name of God (azkarot) appeared in these books, the question arose, "Should they be saved from a fire?" "Come and hear: The blank spaces and the books of the Minim may not be saved from a fire, but they must be burnt in their place, they and the Divine Names occurring in them. Now surely it means the blank portions of a scroll of the Law? No: the blank

¹¹⁶⁶ Sanh. 96b

¹¹⁶⁷ Sanh. 43a; Yebamoth 4,3; 49a

¹¹⁶⁸ cf. Haman's plot to destroy the Jews in the book of Esther.

¹¹⁶⁹ Mark 13:2

¹¹⁷⁰ storehouse attached to a synagogue.

¹¹⁷¹ Alon, Gedalia, *The Jews in their Land in the Talmudic Age*, Vol.1, pp.289,290

¹¹⁷² later Maimonides was even to curse Christ in the words, "May his bones be ground to dust."

¹¹⁷³ B.B. 91a

spaces in the books of Minim. Seeing that we may not save the books of Minim themselves, need their blank spaces be stated?—This is its meaning: And the books of Minim are like blank spaces."¹¹⁷⁴....

To the Rabbis, other Jews had to be kept from reading the gospels. It was so important that not only should such books not be saved from a fire, but the Rabbis also decreed that they should be intentionally burned. "R. Ishmael says: The way to deal with the books of the Minim is this: one cuts out the azkarot and burns the rest. R. Akiba says: One burns the whole thing, because it was not written in holiness."¹¹⁷⁵ The Rabbis decreed that even a Torah scroll should be burned if it had been written by a Min. "R. Nahman said: We have it on tradition that a scroll of the Law which has been written by a Min should be burnt, and one written by a heathen should be stored away."¹¹⁷⁶....

The Minim, and all that they touched, were to be strictly and completely avoided. "Slaughter by a Min is idolatry; their bread is Samaritan bread, their wine is wine offered to idols; their fruits are not tithed, their books are books of witchcraft, and their sons are bastards. One does not sell to them or receive from them or take from them or give to them. One does not teach their sons trades, and does not obtain healing from them, either healing of property or healing of lives."¹¹⁷⁷

The Talmidei Yeshua were to be hated, and treated as defiling outcasts who had no place in this world, and no share in the world to come.¹¹⁷⁸ Their books were to be burned. Their businesses were to be boycotted. They were to be publicly ostracised. It was legal to throw them into a pit to die. Their children were not to be taught.

In the rabbinic references, the Minim are accused of immorality, magic, and enchantment, and of seducing Israel to follow other gods. The Minim were not teachable, submissive, or repentant, and had to be dealt with accordingly. The Rabbis are not reticent to present themselves as violent attackers of the Minim. They considered such action to be a defence of the faith....The Minim were considered idolaters, blasphemers, and wizards, who should all be put to death. Under Roman rule, however, the Rabbis themselves did not have the authority to do that....[but] during the Bar Kokhba revolt, when they could not fight under the messianic banner, the Talmidei Yeshua were taken before the Sanhedrin as traitors and deserters, and put to death."¹¹⁷⁹

¹¹⁷⁴ Shab. 116a; Soncino n15

Footnoted: Herford, V., *Christianity in the Talmud*, p.155:

'Gilyon translates the gospels, though observing that here it is understood as blanks.'

¹¹⁷⁵ Naso Sec. 16

¹¹⁷⁶ Git 45b

¹¹⁷⁷ Footnote: Herford, V., *Christianity in the Talmud*, p.389:

'This is not a halachah, an authoritative legal decision, but it represents a consensus of opinion amounting almost to a law.'

¹¹⁷⁸ Footnote: R.H. 17a is more explicit: 'But as for the Minim,...these will go down to Gehinnom and be punished there for all generations.'

¹¹⁷⁹ Gruber, Daniel, *Rabbi Akiba's Messiah: The Origins of Rabbinic Authority*, pp.155-158,184

Notzrim

The city of Nazareth is known in Hebrew as Natzeret. Natzrat is a possessive form of that name.¹¹⁸⁰ The word Nazir is not related since it is derived from a different root meaning 'monk'.¹¹⁸¹ The word 'Nazareth' has a three letters root, N.Tz.R. It has a double meaning: 'Branch' – mainly in the hereditary meaning of the word – and also 'Guard.' Natzeret is a feminine noun related to netzer – a 'branch.' The term is used usually for hereditary topics, thus Isa 11:1 has an obvious and deeply embedded prophetic meaning: '*And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots.*' 'Branch' appears as netzer in the original, and not as the more botanical term anaf. The text goes on to describe a Man of God, very much fitting of Jesus Christ. The family of Jesus was from Nazareth and thus the text is interpreted as prophetic, with the word netzer used as a way of referring to Him.

Making a possessive noun in Hebrew is relatively straightforward by simply adding an 'i' at the end of the noun. However, a small contraction of the vowels and a fix of the last vowel into a "i" occur in this instance leading to natzrati, meaning 'of Nazareth.' This may seem trivial, but it is of great significance. Seldom is Jesus referred to, in Hebrew, as being 'of Nazareth'; instead another term is kept for Him and His followers. The word for 'Christians' in Hebrew is notzrim. It is widely used even by the most traditional of rabbis. This noun is conjugated from the noun notzer and not from natzrat. Notzer has the same root, but its other meaning is used. It makes reference not to the prophetic place, but to the prophetic role: not to Nazareth the place, but to the 'Keeper' who is also related to a hereditary branch, in this case descended from king David. In Hebrew, therefore, a Christian, a follower of Jesus Christ, is a 'keeper,' a keeper of the true and original faith.

Questions about Godhead

The fundamental reason for all of this persecution was the position of Christ a descendant of David, as the Son of God, forming part of the Godhead. There was also the question of the death, resurrection, and ascension to heaven, and, indeed, the question of the inclusion of the Gentiles, but the basic Jewish objection concerned their view of the monotheistic God. This they claimed to be self-evident in the Shema,¹¹⁸²—a verbless clause in Hebrew,¹¹⁸³ a construction which in that language denotes exclamation—'*Hear, O Israel: The*

¹¹⁸⁰ used for example in Natzrat Illit, Upper Nazareth, the nearby Jewish settlement.

¹¹⁸¹ Hebrew: nazir, originally meaning 'separated' or 'consecrated,' has transmuted over times to refer solely to a so-called Christian or Bhuddist monk.

¹¹⁸² 'complete' Shema is taken by the Jews to comprise the following:

<u>Shema</u> :	Deut 6:4-9
<u>Vehayah</u> :	Deut 11:13-21
<u>Vaiyomer</u> :	Num 15:37-41.

¹¹⁸³ the meaning of Hebrew words often depends on the context. Classical Hebrew exhibits a remarkably limited vocabulary, some claiming that it contains just over 10,000 words. This compares to 750,000 or more in modern English. It follows that Hebrew words often have multiple meanings, often depending on context.

*Lord our God is one Lord.*¹¹⁸⁴ The word here translated 'one',¹¹⁸⁵ means 'united,' or 'as one,' and even 'first.'¹¹⁸⁶ By way of support, the fifth verse in the Bible,¹¹⁸⁷ in Hebrew, reads, '*and it was evening, and it was morning, the first day, one day,*'¹¹⁸⁸ that is, two elements united in one single day, the first.¹¹⁸⁹ Similarly, it is used of a husband and wife, united,¹¹⁹⁰ and the good and bad years' crops in Egypt.¹¹⁹¹ On occasion, it is also used in the Bible to denote one of a number or group, such as in Numbers, where it refers to one trumpet being blown, it being one of two.¹¹⁹²

Furthermore, the Hebrew word translated 'God' in the Shema is actually and most definitely plural.¹¹⁹³ A literal translation of the verse therefore would give: '*Hear [or Understand], Israel, Jehovah our Gods, Jehovah united.*'¹¹⁹⁴ There is no doubt whatsoever over the fact that there is more than One Divine Being in the singular

When counting in modern Hebrew, the number one is echad; in written biblical Hebrew it is aleph—a very significant alteration in this context—but eleven, for example, is a compound of one plus ten, echad aser, exhibiting its composite quality once again.

¹¹⁸⁴ Hebrew: 'Shema Yisrael Yhwh Eloheynu Yhwh Echad.'

¹¹⁸⁵ Hebrew: echad.

¹¹⁸⁶ but with qualification, cf. echad versus rishon / rishown inf.

¹¹⁸⁷ Gen 1:5

¹¹⁸⁸ Hebrew: 'vaihi erev vaihi boker iom echad.'

¹¹⁸⁹ but with qualification, cf. echad versus rishon / rishown inf.

¹¹⁹⁰ Gen 2:24

¹¹⁹¹ Gen 41:26, '*The seven good kine are seven years; and the seven good ears are seven years; the dream is one.*' The Hebrew word echad is used here, translated 'one,' and means 'united.' In other words, the word and its use are dyadic—'two in one.'

¹¹⁹² Num 10:2-4, '*Make thee two trumpets of silver; of a whole piece shalt thou make them: that thou mayest use them for the calling of the assembly, and for the journeying of the camps. And when they shall blow with them, all the assembly shall assemble themselves to thee at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. And if they blow but with one trumpet, then the princes, which are heads of the thousands of Israel, shall gather themselves unto thee.*' Echad, Numbers 10:4, 'one,' as one of two trumpets, a pair. The Hebrew: echad, therefore, can exhibit plurality at a remove.

An interesting aspect of the above is that one silver trumpet blown called but the princes of Israel, representing, in the end times, the firstborn 'elect.' This parallel is seen in I Thes 4:16,17: '*For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord.*'

Unlike the Hebrew of the Old Testament, the koine Greek of the New Testament does not differentiate trumpet and bugle (ram's horn). The Lev 25:9, Jubilee 'trumpet' is, in fact, a shofar.

As for echad versus rishon / rishown:

Ezra 7:9a (with added comment and clarification in square brackets), '*For upon the first [echad, meaning 'united,' in the sense of the dyadic a night and a morning making one day] day of the first [rishown, 'first' in the sense of time or rank] month.*' The word 'day' does not appear in the original Hebrew.

John 17:11b, '*Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.*'

¹¹⁹³ Hebrew: eloheynu.

¹¹⁹⁴ Deut 6:4 (correct translation); Hebrew: echad, which appears 900 times or so in the Old Testament, means either one (a composite) or one (of an extraneous number) which takes the singular verb form rather than the plural (roughly corresponding to a compound noun usage in English). In addition, it can take a singular adjectival form (which has no direct parallel in English), and a singular pronoun (as in English). A useful, first-pass translation of echad is very often found to be 'united,' for that gives the composite sense in English.

Although generally less recognized, echad can mean one of a group or series at a remove, as in days, or number of trumpets, or lots, or a law and its exceptive case (with the law remaining in unity), or as entries in a single book, and so

Godhead—the Hebrew says so. In Hebrew scrolls, this verse is written with the first and last words in large print for emphasis: the *'united'* aspect of the Godhead is stressed, and Israel is enjoined to *'hear.'* But what has happened in Judaism? Have the Jews listened? Maimonides, in his foundational thirteen articles of the Jewish faith, ignored the word meaning *'united,'*¹¹⁹⁵ and substituted another word meaning an *'absolute singularity.'*¹¹⁹⁶ Judaism has a monotheistic, singular god, but it is a god based not on Holy Scripture, but on a construct of man.

Also referring are, *'I am the Lord and there is none else, there is no God beside me,'*¹¹⁹⁷ *'there is no God else beside me...for I am God and there is none else,'*¹¹⁹⁸ and, *'for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me.'*¹¹⁹⁹ These refer to the exclusive superiority of the only true God. There are no *'competitors'* or *'alternatives'* as the heathen claim. Depending upon context, *'one'* can be cardinal, ordinal, united, or exclusive: quantitative or qualitative. The problem that many find in the Shema,¹²⁰⁰ a verbless clause in the Hebrew, lies in reading a noun for an adjective—*'one'* is a description—and failing to realise that it is qualitative: exclusive, no higher, no other, the first, none like unto, and means *'united.'* The Jewish Tanakh, in translating the verse as, *'Hear, O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord alone,'* and footnoting that there is a translation favoured by others, *'Hear, O Israel! The Lord our God, the Lord is one,'* so structures the translation as to read *'one'* as a noun.

Greek & Jewish minds

The claimed discrepancy (or correspondence, depending on the viewpoint being argued) between the Shema¹²⁰¹ in the Old Testament, and Christ's statement recorded in Mark in the New Testament: *'And Jesus answered him, the first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord. And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy*

on. The concept is that of a composite character or arrangement, endogenous or exogenous, and not of an absolute singleton.

¹¹⁹⁵ Hebrew: echad; Bullinger, *The Companion Bible*, p.247:

'[O]ne. Heb. 'echad = a compound [or composite] unity (Lat. unus), one made up of others: Gen 1:5, one of seven; 2:11, one of four; 2:21,22, one of twenty-four; 2:24, one made up of two; 3:22, one of the [two]; 49:16, one of the twelve; Num 13:23, one of a cluster. So Psa 34:20 etc. [It is not] yahid, which is (Lat. unicus) unique—a single, or only one...'

¹¹⁹⁶ Hebrew: iahid; Maimonides, *Thirteen Principles of Judaism*; When Maimonides referred to the unitarian Judaic god he used the word yachid, which does mean *'one,'* a singleton. Interestingly, the gematria of yachid is 13, the sixth prime number, the number of Satan.

The Hebrew word yachid appears only twelve times in the Old Testament, mainly in the book of Job, where it is used all but once in reference to Job's creator (Job 31:15, a reference to The Word), and also in Gen 22:2,12, where it is translated *'only'* in relation to Isaac, Abraham's *'only'* son, where the intent is to demonstrate the exclusion of Ishmael, Isaac's half-brother. As such, its use is restricted to an indicator of an absolute singleton.

¹¹⁹⁷ Isa 45:5a,b

¹¹⁹⁸ Isa 45:21e,22b

¹¹⁹⁹ Isa 46:9c

¹²⁰⁰ Deut 6:4

¹²⁰¹ Deut 6:4,5

strength: this is the first commandment,¹²⁰² has been cited frequently by Unitarians and ‘Jesus Oneness’ adherents as ‘proof’ that the God of the Bible is Unitarian, a complete and absolute singleton.

The Shema, written in Hebrew, has been analysed and been shown to display a YHWH from the composite unity bound in the Hebrew word echad and the resulting ineluctable plurality of eliheyneu. The same is seen in the very frequent scriptural use of the Hebrew masculine plural elohim, which itself is related to eliheyneu through a common root. Elohim¹²⁰³ is found, for example, in the immediately following verse:¹²⁰⁴ *‘And thou shalt love the Lord thy God’*¹²⁰⁵ *with all thine heart and with all thy soul,*¹²⁰⁶ *and with all thy might.*¹²⁰⁷ The Shema, therefore, does not support the Unitarian or Oneness view.

The usual response of the Unitarian or Oneness proponent to this is either to ignore it completely, or deny any plurality or composite element, or to allegorize it by claiming that it is merely an Hebrew device to reflect the majesty of God. But the fact remains that Christ’s New Testament statement is patently singular: *‘And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, hear, O Israel; the Lord our God is one.’*¹²⁰⁸ The Greek eis, translated ‘is,’ in the concluding phrase, is third person, singular, present indicative. The composite verbless clause of the Hebrew has become a singular and complete sentence in Greek. Why? Is it an emendation, a massive correction, an illumination, a redaction, or what?

The problems of translation from one language to another and conveying the full meaning and content of the Judæo-Christian gospel is addressed by Caird: ‘While the Gospel was being addressed only to Jews and to the God-fearers, whose attendance at the synagogue had made them familiar with the language and thought of the Old Testament, the pattern of the apostolic tradition, whether in Aramaic, [Hebrew], or Greek, was sufficient for missionary needs. But when the Gentile mission began, the traditional presentation of the Gospel had to be modified to suit new conditions.¹²⁰⁹ In the first place, there were difficulties of vocabulary. The [verbal] Aramaic Gospel could be translated literally into a form of Greek which was intelligible to the Jew of the Dispersion, even if he were unwilling to accept it; but to the Gentile many of the terms of this translation Greek were

¹²⁰² Mark 12:29,30

¹²⁰³ q.v. inf.; El, Eloah, Elohim.

¹²⁰⁴ Deut 6:5

¹²⁰⁵ Hebrew: elohim, plural, ‘Gods.’

¹²⁰⁶ Hebrew: nephesh, ‘being,’ ‘person,’ or ‘mind’; used widely in meaning in the O.T., including ‘man,’ ‘mind,’ ‘lust,’ and ‘mortality.’ It does not mean immortal. Job 12:10, ‘In whose hand is the soul [Hebrew: nephesh] of every living thing, and the breath [Hebrew: ruwach or ruach, ‘breath,’ ‘wind’ from same root, meaning ‘to blow,’ so denoting breathing] of all mankind.’

¹²⁰⁷ Hebrew: meod, ‘might’ or ‘force.’

¹²⁰⁸ Mark 12:29

¹²⁰⁹ as seen in Paul’s words: I Cor 9:20-23 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets), *‘And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; To them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God [for He did obey God’s Law], but under the law to Christ, [something even greater, by far]) that I might gain them that are without law. To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men that I might by all means save some. And this I do for the gospel’s sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you.’*

either unintelligible or liable to serious misconstruction. The Gospel of the Kingdom, which had been central to Jesus' preaching, could give the impression that the missionaries were putting forward a pretender to the imperial throne (basileus was the official Greek title of the emperor)....The title 'Son of Man,' full of meaning on the lips of Jesus, sounded in its Greek guise as barbarism. Similarly, the title Messiah conveyed nothing to Greek ears, and some who heard the word Christos automatically substituted in their own minds the homonym Chrestos.¹²¹⁰

There could be no one way of dealing with linguistic problems such as these. Some words—resurrection, for example—could not be discarded without irreparable loss....But the title Son of Man fell early into disuse, and Christos almost as quickly ceased to be a title and became a proper name. To take the place of these two titles Hellenistic Christianity found in the apostolic tradition a third title which was full of meaning to the Gentile. The primitive church from the earliest days had worshipped Jesus as Lord, and here was a title which could make an immediate appeal to the religious aspirations of the Græco-oriental world. To the devotees of many a pagan cult the ascription of the title Kyrios to Jesus meant that he was one who claimed their worship and their loyalty, one to whom they might surrender themselves as "slaves," and in His service find their true lives....

The use of the title Kyrios was one of the earliest ways in which the church tried to solve the problem of making contact with the Gentile mind, but it led to a more serious difficulty. In the pagan world there were "gods many and lords many," and there was a danger that in the prevailing religious hospitality Christ should be accepted into the pantheon or even identified with the other "lords" in a new syncretism....

The simplest method was to dismiss pagan religion as idolatry. Paul recalls how the Thessalonians responded to his preaching by turning from idols to serve the living and true God, and Luke records two sermons in which a similar appeal is made....¹²¹¹

Along with this attack on idolatry went an assertion of the unity of God¹²¹²....But pagan religion was not so easily disposed of. The Christian might deny to the pagan gods any real divinity, but it was useless to deny the hold which they exercised over the minds of men. Of the gods many might be gods in name only but their dominion was a real dominion.

The astral deities in particular influenced by their authority vast areas of human life....[but] there were many Gentiles who were looking for an escape from polytheism, and almost all Gentiles had in some measure felt the impact of astrology with its theory that all human life was controlled by the kosmokratores, which directed the orderly motions of the stars and the planets....

¹²¹⁰ ancient pagan name of obscure origin; by the 1st-century AD, itacism had removed all phonetic distinction between eta and iota.

¹²¹¹ I Thes 1:9; Acts 14:15,17:29

¹²¹² I Cor 8:6; I Tim 2:5; Jas 2:19

To those who had been educated in Greek philosophy, a belief in one [united] God presented no [real or insuperable] difficulties, for the whole course of philosophy had been an attempt to discover the unity behind the plurality of nature. But to the philosophic mind theos had come to mean something very different from what it meant to the [strictly montheistic] Jew or to the [Judæo-]Christian. Theos was the rational principle or pattern underlying the manifold phenomena of the sensible world, the universal within the particular. The divine Logos of the Stoic, for example, was but the universal counterpart of the logos or rational faculty which is found in human nature.¹²¹³ Greek thought could accommodate itself to belief in a creation, in which the Creator had left the stamp of his own character on all His works, or to a providential ordering of history according to a changeless decree. But the biblical faith in a Living God, who had done in the history of one people that which He had done in no other place and at no other time, and whose mighty acts had reached their climax in a particular, unique event—that was a denial of all that the Greeks held dear.

Knox¹²¹⁴ has shown in great detail how hard it was for the educated Greek to accept eschatology; but this was only part of a larger difficulty. Eschatology is but one aspect of the biblical conception of history, which in its totality was foreign to the Greek mind....The Greek of the first century still found it incredible that what Jesus did or had done to Him could have any universal significance.

Along with this depreciation of history went a static conception of God.¹²¹⁵ To be perfect God must be changeless, and to be changeless he must never be acted upon by any other agent. He must be active, not passive; he could not suffer. To those who were accustomed to think in this manner the Gospel [and] the cross, which proclaimed that God had been revealed in human suffering, was merely ludicrous.¹²¹⁶ This was particularly true of the Stoics, whose ideal man, emulating the divine attribute of apatheia, remained unaffected by the actions of others.¹²¹⁷ Some concession to this point of view is to be found in the Fourth Gospel, where Jesus suffers by His own volition, so that the cross becomes an Action rather than a Passion.

Quite a different problem confronted the Christian in his preaching of the Resurrection. From the Orphics and the Pythagoreans popular Greek philosophy had inherited a dualism, in which man was regarded as an immortal soul incarcerated in an earthbound body, but destined to escape from the trammels of corporeal existence and to be assimilated to the divine.¹²¹⁸ To such aspirations the Gospel must have sounded pure bathos with its promise that the [firstfruits] believer would [be allotted a place in the kingdom of God on earth, as an

¹²¹³ Plac. I 7. 33; Sen. Ep. lxxv. 24

¹²¹⁴ Knox, W. L., *St. Paul and the Church of the Gentiles*, chpt. 1

¹²¹⁵ cf. Cornford, F. M., *The Laws of Motion in Ancient Thought*.

¹²¹⁶ q.v. Lucian, Peregr. xliii: 'that gibbeted sophist.'

¹²¹⁷ q.v. esp. Plot., Enn. I 2.3:

'Of such a disposition of the soul whereby it thinks and remains unaffected, if someone should say that it was an assimilation to the divine, he would not be wrong.'

¹²¹⁸ Plato, Crat. 400C; Gorg. 439A; Philo, Elbriet. 98; Leg. All. I 106, III, 40ff.; Sen., Ep. lxxv. 16; cii. 23

immortal being], and others, believers or otherwise, would be resurrected [bodily, mortal, at the end of the Millennium of rest, to stand and be judged at the Great White Throne Judgement].'¹²¹⁹

To the Jewish mind of the time, the difficulty is a deal more subtle.¹²²⁰ Given the obvious difficulties in phraseology, perception, and meaning, Christ's statement earlier in Mark gives a clue to what He said and meant.¹²²¹ *'And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is, God.'*¹²²²

The context of the extended passage in Mark chapters eleven and twelve¹²²³ is one variously where the chief priests, scribes, elders, Pharisees, and Herodians questioned Jesus with a view to entrapment, *'to catch*

¹²¹⁹ Caird, G. B., *The Apostolic Age*, pp.95-102 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets).

¹²²⁰ another aspect is found in the Jews' contentions over El / Eloah and Elohim:

Elohim, translated 'God' in the K.J.V., has the common Hebrew plural ending -im, and is taken to be the plural-ended form of El and Eloah. As to its actual plurality, there is considerable division. Orthodox Jews maintain that it is resolutely singular, representing an absolute and indivisible God, a singleton, whereas Judæo-Christians maintain that it is uniplural and, in fact, dyadic. Elohiym, is uniplural, and a family name used in the plural sense very frequently, q.v. inf. The LXX, when translating elohim into Greek, uses the word theos, singular, but that is unsurprising given that the Septuagint was composed beginning in the 3rd.-c BC and completed in 132BC. This extended period is entirely post-Babylonian exile and post-dates the time when the Jews had adopted worship of the Babylonian monolithic deity. As such, it can be discarded as evidence.

It is sometimes claimed by Orthodox Jews that the compound quality found in say, Gen 1:5, *'first day'* and Gen 2:24, *'one flesh'* is taken by the words *'day'* and *'flesh,'* and not by *'first' / 'one,'* which remain singular, but this falls, patently, because the flesh is united in one, and that *'flesh'* was a compound of two beings, in this case, Adam and Eve. The word *'one'* qualifies *'flesh,'* so it must be composite. For it to be otherwise would need Adam, or Eve, to absorb the other, resulting in there being one person whereas beforehand there had been two. And if it were the first day of one, then there would be no others, it would be a singleton, but it was the first day of many, a compound. So this contrary Jewish contention is obviously ridiculous and a futile attempt at dissembling.

It is also contended that certain words in Hebrew, such as chayim, 'life,' panim, 'face' or 'countenance,' and the words for sky and sea have plural form but often take singular verbs, and that this is taken to prove or bolster the plural but singular meaning contention. The point here is that the sky, facial expressions, and the sea change constantly, so there are many forms that they take, so, in each case, what is in the purview is but one of many—a clear indication of the 'plurality at a remove' seen in connection with echad, q.v. sup. For its part, life extends beyond the individual; it is held in common by all living creatures, or those of them in the particular purview, so it is either many or one of many.

Elohim is also used of pagan gods, such as Dagon, Chemosh, Astarte, Milcom, the golden calf (or two calves, if Jeroboam's later two calves were a replication) of the Israelite fall the wilderness, and so on. These are references to the many idols to those gods, even possibly to their sub-sets, known to other peoples by other names—again, an example of plurality at a remove. In Ex 7:1, God makes Moses *'a god to Pharaoh.'* Again, this is plurality at a remove, for the pharaohs had many gods.

Adonai is used in a plural form too, where it refers to one of a number, such as the servant of both Abraham and Isaac (Gen 24:9,10); Joseph being a lord of the land of Egypt (there were others, most notably pharaoh) (Gen 42:30,33); and the king of Egypt, which we now know as being one of a number simultaneously-reigning over various parts of greater Egypt (Gen 40:1).

Gesenius' *Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament*, p.49 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

The plural is used in Hebrew in a singular sense, of one [uniplural] God, constructed with a verb and / or adjective in the singular, as in Gen 1:1,3; II Kings 19:4,16; Psalms 7:10,57:3,78:56, but with a plural verb in certain phrases in which Elohiym may be taken in a plural sense [regarding the two Divine Beings in their individual sense], as in Gen 1:26,3:22-24,20:13,35:7; Ex 22:8,32:4,8; II Sam 7:23; I Kings 19:2; Psalms 58:12. The Godhead is found stated in I John 2:24c:

'continue in the Son, and in the Father.'

¹²²¹ in Mark 12:29

¹²²² Mark 10:18; Christ being in His state of voluntary debasement and humiliation, as a mortal, on earth.

¹²²³ Mark 11:27-12:37

him in his words.¹²²⁴ Put simply, they wanted rid of Him so they needed something fundamental on which to accuse Him. The 'best' question in that regard, by far, came from a scribe, one who would be regarded by the establishment as being expert in the Law. His question revolved around a simple yet subtle point: '*Which is the first commandment of all?*'¹²²⁵ What he wanted was an admission of deity from Jesus. He knew that the prefatory verses to the first of the ten commandments were in the plural voice,¹²²⁶ so that was of little use to his purpose. His best chance lay in the composite unity of the Shema. He would certainly know that it was composite, and not singular as the adherents of Pharaseeism claimed,¹²²⁷ and he knew that Jesus was an honourable and wise man, one who would neither lie nor evade the issue. What he wanted was a simple confession of divinity. What he received, however, was a clever construction founded on the particular circumstances existing at that time, a time not yet ripe. Jesus was incarnate: human and earthbound. He was not in heaven—the only God then in heaven was the Father—and He knew that any admission or claim of divinity would result in His death, as it was to do subsequent upon His statement before Caiaphas, the fateful '*Hereafter ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.*'¹²²⁸

To have exposed the Shema in Greek accurately and fully would have taken several verses to fully expound the composite unity, and in that lay a specific and immediate danger. A Greek statement in bare terms, however, using what might be termed philological approximations, couched in terms of its immediate context, as explained, would serve as an adequate response without need or risk of premature confirmation of divinity. The Greek record of the exchange that we have allows for a dyadic God, for the word '*he*' would then be translated '*themselves.*' That the scribe understood the complexity and context of Christ's response—which must have been in Greek, and certainly not Aramaic or Hebrew, and literally, '*for there is one God, and no other besides he*'¹²²⁹—can be seen from his reply, which Christ described as '*discreet.*'¹²³⁰ There was, in this exchange, therefore, an element of constructive ambiguity: those who wished to read into it a strict monotheism could do so; those who knew the meaning and intent of scripture could take a more complex understanding of a dyadic God-head with one being in a temporary and voluntary state of humiliation, mortal, on earth. Little wonder that '*no man after that durst ask him.*'¹²³¹

¹²²⁴ Mark 12:13b

¹²²⁵ Mark 12:28c

¹²²⁶ Ex 20:1,2

¹²²⁷ incidentally, that is why Pharisees did not and would not ask the question.

¹²²⁸ Mat 26:64b

¹²²⁹ Mark 12:32c

¹²³⁰ Mark 12:34a; Mark 12:29,30 is quasi-Deut 6:4,5, quoted by Christ while in His voluntary state of humiliation, when there was but one Jehovah in heaven. Greek: heis esti, '*is one,*' sup., is third person, singular, present indicative tense. The '*discreet,*' discerning scribe obviously understood the context.

¹²³¹ Mark 12:34d; the concluding '*any question*' does not appear in the Greek.

Judæo-Christian mind

The God of the Old Testament is the Word, Who, on emptying Himself of immortality, became incarnate in Jesus Christ. *'Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else. I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear,'*¹²³² is mirrored in, *'That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.'*¹²³³

In the normal Judæo-Christian reading of this, the meaning taken is one of 'compound-' or 'composite-unity,' and God, The Eternal, having one family name, and God, The Eternal, being the first or highest.¹²³⁴ From this it is evident that there is absolutely nothing here which conflicts with the Judæo-Christian God the Father and God the Son, united in a single Godhead—a dyadic term, two treated as one, in this case in nature, will, and attributes, as a 'compound-' or 'composite-unity.'

For the Judæo-Christian, the composite unity comes out very clearly in Mark: *'And one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that he had answered them well, asked him, Which is the first commandment of all? And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these. And the scribe said unto him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one God; and there is none other but he: And to love him with all the heart and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices. And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, he said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God. And no man after that durst ask him any question.'*¹²³⁵ Again, in John, Christ says: *'I and my Father are one.'*¹²³⁶ Hen, or heis, or mia may be cardinal, ordinal, exclusive, or composite: 'one in essence,' denoting spiritual unity and accord. God, 'uniplural,' comprises the Father and the Word / Son. Compare this with the Saviour's prayer for His disciples: *'that they all may be one, even as we are one,'*¹²³⁷ and *'That they all may be one,'*¹²³⁸ where He collectively refers to His Father, Himself, and His people as 'one.' The last would have afforded the most

¹²³² Isa 45:22,23

¹²³³ Philp 2:10,11

¹²³⁴ cp. Gen 1:26,27; Psa 2:7,16:1-9,22:1-8,89:1-8,90:1-4,110:1-7,118:1-6

¹²³⁵ Mark 12:28-34 (sublinear emphasis added); the scribe had understood and grasped the true nature of the Godhead and the nature and position of Jesus Christ, that is why he was told, *'Thou art not far from the kingdom of God.'*

¹²³⁶ John 10:30; Greek: hen, plural, 'one.'

¹²³⁷ John 17:21; ; Greek: hies, 'one.'

¹²³⁸ John 17:15-23; Greek: hies, 'one.'

admirable opportunity for the Saviour to include, by specific reference, the Holy Spirit in a Trinity—if there were such a thing—but, of course, there isn't: there are only two divine beings in the Godhead.¹²³⁹

After the exchange with the scribe, Christ asked this: *'While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, Saying, What think ye of Christ? Whose son is he? They say unto him, The son of David. He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool? If David then call him Lord, how is he his son? And no man was able to answer him a word, neither durst any man from that day ask him any more questions,'*¹²⁴⁰ a reference to the one hundred and tenth Psalm,¹²⁴¹ patently evidencing the divinity of the Messiah. Earlier, Christ had asked the same question of His disciples,¹²⁴² but they got the answer right! And King David obviously knew, as author of that psalm.

Some may continue in insisting that there is a verse affording 'proof' that there is but one in the Godhead: *'before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me.'*¹²⁴³ However, the Hebrew word used here for 'God,'¹²⁴⁴ singular, has as one of its primary meanings, '*almighty*,' or '*mighty*.' With this substituted in the phrase it reads more succinctly: *'before me there was no almighty formed, neither shall there be after me.'*¹²⁴⁵ The God in question, '*thy Saviour*,'¹²⁴⁶ The Word / Christ, is stating that there never has been, nor never will be any salvation through anyone but Himself. It does not mean that there is but one in the Godhead, for that would run completely contrary to Scripture.

Monotheism

But what of those who continue to contend, as do the Jews, and, for that matter, the Muslims, that God is a singular entity: a belief rigorously monotheistic? What is the Judæo-Christian to do about that? How should the Judæo-Christian respond?

'Elohiym' is a plural noun, but is used in a similar way to English in a uniplural or singular sense on occasion to depict the unity of the Father and the Word. The plural name Elohim is formed from EI by adding the noun extender -oh and the plural ending -im. Although it is plural, Elohim is found with both singular and plural verbs in the Hebrew text. When the plural noun Elohim is used as the name of the true God, it is usually

¹²³⁹ John 17:21, '*That they may all be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they may also be one in us that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.*' No mention of a third divine being as part of the '*one*.'

¹²⁴⁰ Mark 12:35-37; Mat 22:41-46

¹²⁴¹ Psa 110:1

¹²⁴² Mat 16:15

¹²⁴³ Isa 43:10c

¹²⁴⁴ Hebrew: EI

¹²⁴⁵ Isa 43:10c (amended); Tanakh renders this passage: '*Before Me no god was formed, and after Me none shall exist.*' The word '*god*' is produced without a capital letter, indicating a pagan god, one of no import.

¹²⁴⁶ Isa 43:11b

found with a singular verb, but is also found with plural agreement. This use of both singular and plural verbs with the plural noun Elohim may be compared to the verb agreement of collective nouns in English. Collective nouns are defined in the New Webster's Dictionary as expressing under the singular form a plurality of individual objects or persons, which as subjects may take their verbs in either the singular or the plural, according to whether they are used to express more prominently the idea of unity or plurality. The meaning of the plural noun Elohim remains unaltered, irrespective of whether it is used with a singular or plural verb. The notion that the Godhead comprises one divine Being because the Hebrew word Elohim sometimes takes a singular verb is completely unfounded. In Hebrew, as in English and Greek, nouns which express plurality do not become singular in meaning when they are used with singular verbs. It is contrary to the rules of language to claim that the use of a singular verb changes the meaning of the plural noun Elohim.¹²⁴⁷

The Hebrew text refers to two JHVHs individually as EI and together as Elohim. The book of Genesis contains three passages that clearly refer to a plural of Beings.¹²⁴⁸ In each passage the plural pronoun 'us' is used in reference to God. The names of God that appear in these passages are, in Hebrew, JHVH or Elohim, or a combination of the two. The Hebrew grammarian Green, a respected authority on the Hebrew text, has something to say on the pronouns 'us' and 'our' in, 'And God said, let us make man in our image, after our likeness:'¹²⁴⁹ '[The use of the] first per[son] plural....is not to be explained as a royal style of speech, nor as associating the angels with God, for they took no part in man's creation, nor a plural of majesty which has no application to the [Hebrew] verbs, but as one of those indications of the plurality....in the Divine Beings which are repeatedly met with in the Old Testament.'¹²⁵⁰

Concerning the surprisingly oft-postulated 'speaking to an assembly of angels' myth, it should be born in mind that the first verse of Genesis records the very beginning of God's creation, a point where there were no angels.

Genesis refers to the Creator as 'Lord God',¹²⁵¹ translated from the combination of Hebrew words JHVH and Elohim. In all, the Old Testament contains nine hundred and fifteen occurrences of this name of God, and, as Elohim is plural, JHVH Elohim is also plural, as will be established later, beyond any shadow of doubt.¹²⁵² This compound term is comprised of two nouns. Hebrew, as does English, divides all nouns into two categories: common and proper. Common nouns refer to a general group or class, while proper nouns refer to a particular

¹²⁴⁷ the first three verses of Psalms 14 and 53 are near identical. *Psa 14:2*, reads, 'The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men,' and *Psa 53:2*, 'God looked down from heaven upon the children of men.' In Psalm 14, 'The Lord' is from JHVH, and in Psalm 53 'God' is from Elohim (plural). Taking these two verses together, Jehovah can be seen as a plural entity.

¹²⁴⁸ Gen 1:26,27,3:22-24,11:6,7

¹²⁴⁹ Gen 1:26a

¹²⁵⁰ Green, William Scott, *Hebrew Chrestomathy*, p.84 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

¹²⁵¹ Gen 3:22a

¹²⁵² But note that JHVH can also be used in a singular sense, as one of the two JHVHs of the Elohim, q.v. sup.

person or a particular thing. JHVH is a proper noun identifying the true God, and nine hundred and fifteen times in the Old Testament this proper noun is combined with a second noun, Elohim.

The fact that JHVH is used as a proper noun establishes grammatical guidelines for interpreting the meaning of the name Elohim. In Hebrew, all proper nouns are subject to grammatical rules that place specific limitations on their usage. One major restriction of Hebrew grammar is that proper nouns cannot be followed by nouns or noun phrases in the genitive case [and known as genitive modifiers], which shows possession. Accordingly, when JHVH is used as a proper noun, it cannot be used with a modifier such as 'our JHVH,' or 'JHVH of angelic hosts.'¹²⁵³

Since Elohim is used with the proper noun JHVH in Genesis,¹²⁵⁴ it is contrary to the rules of Hebrew grammar to interpret Elohim as a genitive modifier. In other words, the meaning of Elohim in that verse¹²⁵⁵ cannot be 'of the Angelic Hosts.' This interpretation is prohibited by the rules of Hebrew grammar. According to the rules of Hebrew grammar and syntax, as a proper noun, JHVH can only be followed by a noun or noun phrase that either qualifies JHVH or is in apposition to it (i.e., a noun or noun phrase that refers exclusively to JHVH). Therefore when the proper noun JHVH is used with Elohim, both nouns must be interpreted as referring to the Godhead. It is contrary to the Hebrew text to interpret Elohim as referring to an angelic host.¹²⁵⁶ In the verse in Genesis and every passage that uses the combined name JHVH Elohim, both JHVH and Elohim must be grammatically interpreted as names that identify the Godhead, and names shared by both members of the Godhead!

Some attempt to subvert this grammatical structure by adducing the phrase '*Lord of hosts*,' JHVH Sabaoth, claiming that the '*hosts*' are angels. The term sabaoth, however, is first linked with JHVH in the book of Joshua, when the armies of Israel were preparing to enter the Promised Land at the command of God. It does not appear in Scripture before then. In this reference, sabaoth is used to designate the '*host*,' or army, of JHVH in Joshua, '*And He said, Nay, but as Captain (Prince) of the host (sabaoth) of the Lord (JHVH, referring to God the Father) am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto Him, What saith My Lord unto His servant? And the Captain of the Lord's host said unto Joshua, loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy. And Joshua did so.*'¹²⁵⁷

Joshua was given the same command that Moses received when the Lord (JHVH) appeared to him at the burning bush. Joshua's record of this event reveals that the Captain of the Lord's host was the God of Israel Himself. It was the Lord Himself Who issued the commands for the armies of Israel. In Samuel, David called

¹²⁵³ Oxlee, Rev. John, *Work of the Rev. John Oxlee*, p.69, and Obermann, J., *The Divine Name of Yhwh in the Light of Recent Discoveries*, Journal of Bible Literature, LXVIII (1949), p.305

¹²⁵⁴ Gen 3:22

¹²⁵⁵ Gen 3:22

¹²⁵⁶ or to anything similar, such as the Jewish hypothesised mythical beings called sephiroth, or Laws, or whatever.

¹²⁵⁷ Josh 5:14,15

Him '(T)he Lord of hosts (JHVH Sabaoth), the God (Elohim) of the armies of Israel.'¹²⁵⁸ [In this instance it is wholly plural, reflecting the words of David to Goliath the Philistine, and should read, '(T)he Lords of hosts (JHVH Sabaoth), the Gods (Elohim) of the armies of Israel'].

The name Sabaoth does not identify God as the all-powerful ruler of an angelic host¹²⁵⁹ but as the Supreme leader of the armies of Israel. Zodhiates¹²⁶⁰ states that the Hebrew term Sabaoth 'depicts God as the mightiest Warrior or all-powerful king of Israel.' This definition is supported by David's reference to the Lord of hosts as '*the God of the armies of Israel*,' and by Isaiah's prophecy, '*the Lord of hosts (JHVH Sabaoth) musters the host of the battle*,'¹²⁶¹ and by other references to the Lord of hosts as the King of Israel.¹²⁶²

The scriptural evidence makes it clear that JHVH Sabaoth, or '*the Lord of hosts*,' is not referring to the God of an angelic host, but to the God of the armies of Israel. A proper translation of the phrase JHVH Sabaoth would be JHVH, Sustainer (or Maintainer) of the armies (of Israel).¹²⁶³ This translation interprets Sabaoth in a manner that is consistent with the rules of Hebrew grammar. Obermann attests that it is contrary to the rules of Hebrew syntax to interpret JHVH Sabaoth as 'YHWH of Hosts.' To translate Sabaoth as the prepositional phrase 'of Hosts' makes Sabaoth a genitive modifier. As stated above, since JHVH is used as a proper noun, the rules of Hebrew grammar prohibit its being followed by a genitive modifier'JHVH is never subjected to external determination, hence is nowhere followed by a genitive, and there is no thinkable reason why an exception should have been allowed in this case and in this case alone.'¹²⁶⁴

There is no evidence in the Hebrew text to support the interpretation of JHVH Sabaoth as a Single Supreme Being who rules a celestial host of Elohim, or as an adopted and elevated angel from a ruling council of angels. Both Old and New Testament passages reveal that Christ was the begotten Son of God.¹²⁶⁵

(Paul puts the whole issue beyond doubt in Hebrews, '*For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son. And again, when he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him...But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies*

¹²⁵⁸ I Sam 17:45

¹²⁵⁹ Jewish angelology—all but indistinguishable from the Zoroastrian belief in Ferouers—identifies the 1st angel as Metatron, i.e., Mithra of the Perso-Babylonians / Zoroastrians.

¹²⁶⁰ Zodhiates, *The Hebrew / Greek Key Study Bible*, pp.1,652

¹²⁶¹ Isa 13:4d

¹²⁶² Isa 6:5,44:6; Jer 46:18,48:15,51:57

¹²⁶³ Obermann, J., *The Divine Name Yhwh in Light of Recent Discoveries*, Journal of Biblical Literature, LXVIII (1949), p.310

¹²⁶⁴ Obermann, J., *The Divine Name Yhwh in Light of Recent Discoveries*, Journal of Biblical Literature, LXVIII (1949), p.310

¹²⁶⁵ Psa 2:7; John 1:14; Acts 13:33; from Hebrew: yalad, '*to bear young, to beget*,' and Greek: monogenes, '*only-begotten, only-born, or sole*.'

thy footstool? Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?').^{1266 1267}

The 'Shema,' in the Tanakh, reads, '*Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one.*' This is the definitive statement on the rabbinical concept of monotheism. The significance of this strict form of monotheism cannot be overemphasised; it is the key that helps explain the Jews' rejection of Jesus Christ and the basis of Judæo-Christian theology.¹²⁶⁸

There is much more of note in this, ably brought out by Franklin. Tobias quotes Albright,¹²⁶⁹ one of the foremost biblical scholars of the twentieth-century, concerning Moses' lack of strict monotheistic belief (as rabbinical Judaism views monotheism):¹²⁷⁰ 'If by "monotheist" is meant a thinker with views specifically like those of Philo Judæus, or of Rabbi Akiba, or...St. Augustine...or St. Thomas...or Calvin...Moses was not one.'

Tobias,¹²⁷¹ exposes the (potential) weakness in the monotheistic Jewish interpretation of the Shema in the following words: 'It must also be noted that that familiar passage, the Shema, is weak support for a monotheistic argument since the sentence is open to varying interpretations (see the RSV's marginal readings).¹²⁷² There is no verb in the verse in Hebrew.'

As Tobias points out, the verb 'is' in the English translation of the Shema does not appear in the Hebrew text. The Hebrew wording in this verse is known as a verbless clause. Verbless clauses require a complex grammatical analysis in order to properly interpret their meaning.

Andersen, a noted scholar, is the leading authority in interpreting Hebrew verbless clauses. In his detailed analysis of the verbless clause in Deuteronomy, Anderson shows the flaws in the translations that scholars have offered by pointing out the grammatical rules that contradict these interpretations.¹²⁷³

After showing that the Shema and similar translations violate the rules for interpreting verbless clauses, Andersen explains how the correct application of the rules leads to an acceptable interpretation of the disputed words....

¹²⁶⁶ Heb 1:5,6,13,14

¹²⁶⁷ Franklin, Carl. D., *The Two Jehovahs of the Pentateuch* (heavily paraphrased).

¹²⁶⁸ Lord, Charles Eliphalet, *Evidences of Natural and Revealed Theology*; Barclay, William, *The Gospel of John*, Vol.1, pp.56,57:

'Theology has always made a distinction between natural theology and revealed theology. Revealed theology deals with the truths that came to us directly from God in the words of the prophets, the pages of His book, and supremely in Jesus Christ. Natural theology deals with the truths that man could discover by the exercise of his own mind and intellect on the world in which he lives.'

¹²⁶⁹ Albright, W. F.

¹²⁷⁰ *Monotheism in Isaiah 40-55: A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary in Candidacy for the Degree of Doctor of Theology Division of Biblical Studies*, p.33

¹²⁷¹ *Monotheism in Isaiah 40-55: A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary in Candidacy for the Degree of Doctor of Theology Division of Biblical Studies*, p.34

¹²⁷² q.v. sup. for correct translation of Deut 6:4.

¹²⁷³ Andersen, Francis I., *The Hebrew Verbless Clause in the Pentateuch: Journal of Biblical Literature Monograph Series XIV*, p.47

As the foremost authority in the interpretation of verbless clauses, Andersen comes to the conclusion that there exists an implied question in Deuteronomy,¹²⁷⁴ based on the first commandment: *'Thou shalt have no other gods (elohim) before me.'*¹²⁷⁵ The implied question is: If we shall have no other gods (elohim) beside You, Who then is our God Elohim? The Shema answers this implied question with the proper construction: *'Our one God (Elohim) is JHVH JHVH.'* The meaning of the Shema is then completed with the only conclusion that can be properly drawn: He (JHVH) is our only God (Elohim). Thus we have come full circle back to the original commandment, *'Thou shalt have no other gods (elohim) before me.'* (Moses here revealed the plural nature of the Godhead to the children of Israel: *'Jehovah our Gods, Jehovah united'*).

In other words, the Hebrew text is emphatically stating that Israel's only God is YHWH. [This is why, when Christ replied to the scribes' question on the first or most important commandment,¹²⁷⁶ He did not recite the first commandment of the ten, but the Shema, for it is the Shema that gives the full underlying meaning and the full and true identity of the Godhead].

This emphasis is clearly expressed in Andersen's interpretation, which places the two occurrences of YHWH together in repetitive apposition. Repetitive apposition serves to emphasise the name.¹²⁷⁷

It was YHWH Who had delivered the children of Israel from their bondage in Egypt and had covenanted with them at Sinai. It was YHWH Who had led Israel through the wilderness and had brought them to the land of Canaan. Now, as the children of Israel were preparing to enter the Promised Land, Moses was proclaiming the name of the God Who had led their fathers out of Egypt. They were to worship YHWH, and Him only: *'Hear, O Israel: Our one (united) God (Elohim) (is) YHWH YHWH.'*¹²⁷⁸

This double use of the name YHWH is not unique in the Pentateuch. YHWH is also used in repetitive apposition in a significant passage in the book of Exodus. This passage describes the appearance of the God of Israel to Moses on Mount Sinai when the words of the covenant were being delivered. Notice the name by which Israel's God reveals (the name of the Father): *'And the Lord (YHWH) passed by before him (Moses), and proclaimed, The Lord, The Lord (YHWH, YHWH) God (El), merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth.'*¹²⁷⁹

The name by which the God of Israel revealed (the Father) to Moses is stated more literally in The Schocken Bible: *'And YHWH passed before his face and called out: YHWH YHWH God, showing mercy, showing favour, long-suffering in anger, abundant in loyalty and faithfulness.'*¹²⁸⁰ (in honouring the undertaking to do

¹²⁷⁴ Deut 6:4

¹²⁷⁵ Ex 20:3

¹²⁷⁶ Mark 12:28-34

¹²⁷⁷ Waltke, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, p.233

¹²⁷⁸ Deut 6:4

¹²⁷⁹ Ex 34:6

¹²⁸⁰ Ex 34:6

so. Here the Lord, JHVH, was '*proclaiming* (and revealing) *the name of the Lord* (the Father, for, until then, Moses did not know it) *before thee* (Moses)'¹²⁸¹.

Forty years later, Moses proclaimed this name to the children of Israel, (and the Godhead relationship) as recorded in the Shema and translated by Andersen. Since Moses was recounting the events that had taken place at Mount Sinai, it is fitting that he would identify and emphasise the Godhead revealed when God appeared on the mount (literally: JHVH, JHVH).

The double use of YHWH, identified by the Being Who spoke to Moses—the God of Israel—emphasises the standing of the Father. It was not an angel but God Himself Who appeared to Moses on the mount. Moses called Him the Rock of Israel.¹²⁸² The New Testament reveals that this Rock was the YHWH Who became Jesus Christ.¹²⁸³ He was the YHWH Who showed Himself to Moses on Mount Sinai.¹²⁸⁴

Speaking of the Father, Jesus said, '*No man hath seen God at any time.*'¹²⁸⁵ The words '*hath seen*' are translated from the Greek verb which specifically refers to bodily sight with the eyes.¹²⁸⁶ As Moses saw YHWH with his own eyes on Mount Sinai, the YHWH Who appeared to Moses was not the YHWH Who became the Father. The YHWH Who showed Moses His glory and proclaimed His name as YHWH, YHWH, the Elohim of Israel, was the future Christ! This YHWH was with the Father from the beginning.¹²⁸⁷ Thus the New Testament confirms the existence of two YHWHs in Old Testament times!

Judaism rejects the truth that is revealed in the New Testament and insists that the Scriptures reveal only one YHWH. Basing their belief on a faulty monotheistic interpretation of the verbless clause, the followers of Judaism refuse to acknowledge the existence of the two YHWHs of the Old Testament. The apostle Peter, in quoting a prophecy in Isaiah, shows that Jesus Christ, Who became '*a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence*' to the Jews, was '*the Lord (YHWH) of hosts*' of the Old Testament!¹²⁸⁸ Isaiah warned that those who refused to acknowledge Him as their God would '*stumble, and fall, and be broken, and be snared, and be taken.*'¹²⁸⁹ That is the end result of following monotheistic Judaism!

It is a mistake to base our understanding of the Godhead on a monotheistic interpretation of the verbless clause in Deuteronomy that opposes the clear truth of Scripture. Both the Old Testament and the New reveal that the two YHWHs Who became the Father and the Son have always existed. Jesus said, '*the scripture cannot be broken.*'¹²⁹⁰ Those who reject the revealed truth of Scripture will themselves be broken. In these

¹²⁸¹ Ex 33:19

¹²⁸² Deut 32:4

¹²⁸³ I Cor 10:4

¹²⁸⁴ Ex 33:18-23

¹²⁸⁵ John 1:18

¹²⁸⁶ Greek: horaō; *The Companion Bible*, Ap. 133.8

¹²⁸⁷ John 1:1; Heb 1:2,10

¹²⁸⁸ I Peter 2:8; Isa 8:13-15

¹²⁸⁹ Isa 8:15

¹²⁹⁰ John 10:35b

times of great deception, Christians need to take heed to Isaiah's warning and guard themselves from the snare of monotheistic Judaism!

Judaism's Shema foundation

The monotheistic Jewish interpretation of Deuteronomy, known as the Shema, is the foundation on which Judaism was built.¹²⁹¹

'The most prominent and most characteristic feature of the entire Synagogal literature, the one which centralised and consolidated it for all time, is the solemn scriptural verse which became the creed and the rallying cry of the Jew all over the world: *'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is One.'* This Deuteronomic, forming as it were the keynote of the entire teaching of Judaism, embodies both the fundamental belief and the historic mission of Israel (sic)'¹²⁹²

The most fundamental belief and teaching of Judaism, as expressed in the Shema, is the absolute and indivisible unity of the One God. Rabbi Kohler writes: 'The first of the three cardinal principles, as fixed by the Synagogue, is the absolute Unity of God (strict monotheism). Throughout the entire history and literature of (Hasidic) Judaism there runs but one leading thought: God is One (in number)...nor does any being share in His divine nature (denying the divinity of the ascended Jesus Christ). There is no multiplicity or division in Him, whether as of powers and persons, or attributes. He is above the world which is His creation (that is, He is transcendent)...This pure monotheism, proclaimed by the Law and the Prophets, the Psalmists and the sages, the Talmud, the liturgy, and the philosophers of the various generations, constitutes the unique faith of the Jew voiced by him in the Synagogue every morning and evening, from the cradle to the grave, as his creed.'¹²⁹³

Contrary to popular belief, the Jews have not always held this monotheistic view of God. The children of Judah and other Israelites down to the time of King David understood that the Godhead, or Elohim, was composed of two divine Beings Who were both named JHVH. This truth was revealed to them in the Pentateuch and was preserved in the Psalms of David and other psalmists.

Later, the influence of pagan religions in the nations around them drew the people of Israel and Judah away from the scriptural revelation of the (two JHVHs). Eventually, the original teaching of the Scripture was replaced by a strict monotheistic belief in a singular God.

'The real origin as well as the purpose of the Shema recital must be sought elsewhere (other than the Great Synagogue founded by Ezra and Nehemiah). Evidently the name given it by the ancient teachers (Hasid-

¹²⁹¹ attested by Rabbi Dr. Kohler (Chief Rabbi of Temple Beth-El in New York, succeeding Rabbi Eindhorn in 1879AD, a founder of the Jewish Encyclopedia, and elected President of Hebrew Union College in 1903AD).

¹²⁹² Kohler, Rabbi Dr., *The Origins of the Synagogue and the Church*, p.53

¹²⁹³ Kohler, Rabbi Dr., *The Origins of the Synagogue and the Church*, pp.138,139

im), 'The Acceptance of the Yoke of God's Sovereignty',¹²⁹⁴ clearly states that its object was to be the declaration of Israel's fundamental belief in God's unity (strict monotheism) in opposition to the polytheism of the pagan world. But then we must ask ourselves, At what period in Jewish history was such a declaration deemed particularly necessary?¹²⁹⁵

Rabbi Kohler traces the history of the Shema to the time of the Babylonian and Persian empires. At that time, the worshipping of the gods of the heathen, even in the Temple at Jerusalem, and, in particular, the sun-god,¹²⁹⁶ had resulted in the exile of the Jews in Babylon. In Babylon, these Jews came under even stronger influence from the pagans, many of whom worshipped Mithra, the Messiah of the Magi.

'The great change that took place in Judaism during and after the Babylonian Exile, owing to its contact with Babylonia and Persia, was one that has affected the entire religious thinking of the world...This Persian system was adopted by the Jewish leaders of thought, the Hasidim, and the Messiah (secretly known as the sun-god Mithra) became for them the World-Saviour who would combat and finally annihilate Satan 'the wicked one.' Thus the entire Messianic hope of Israel underwent a change, while at the same time the Jewish philosophy of angelology and demonology was formed under Perso-Babylonian influence.'¹²⁹⁷

After the Great Synagogue of Ezra and Nehemiah was disbanded, the secret worship begun by the Hasidim in Babylon and Persia began to come to the fore. The fall of the Jerusalem Temple to the Syrians¹²⁹⁸ and the resulting decline of Levitical influence left the Hasidim as the controlling religious and political force in Judah. The Hasidim (later known as the Pharisees) began to spread their Mithraic practices among the Jews under the label 'Judaism.' The common people were told that these Mithraic practices were scriptural in origin and were an essential part of the worship of the God of Israel.

One of the most obvious of these Mithraic practices was the offering of prayers to the sun. In describing the worship of the Essenes, Kohler reveals that this Jewish sect followed the Mithraic practice of praying to the rising sun, and ended their prayers by reciting the Shema: 'We have first of all Josephus' description of the Essene practice: "Before the rising of the sun they speak of no profane matters, but send up towards it certain prayers that have come down to them from their forefathers, as if they were praying for its rising." This was identified already by Rappaport in his biography of Kalir with the practices of the Watikim, 'the Strongminded,' the preservers of ancient traditions, of whom we are told that they started their prayers at dawn and managed to conclude them with the recital of the Shema at the time of the radiation of the sun...Similarly are the Therapeutes, an Egyptian branch of the Essenes, described by Philo as "praying twice a day, at dawn and in the evening...standing up with their faces and their whole bodies turned towards the dawn...and lifting their

¹²⁹⁴ Hebrew: Kabbalat Ol Malkut Shamayim.

¹²⁹⁵ Kohler, Rabbi Dr., *The Origins of the Synagogue and the Church*, pp.53,55

¹²⁹⁶ cf. Ezekiel chpt. 8

¹²⁹⁷ Kohler, Rabbi Dr., *The Origins of the Synagogue and the Church*, pp.43-45

¹²⁹⁸ in 167BC

hands towards heaven when they see the sun rise, praying for a happy day and for the light of truth and penetrating wisdom.¹²⁹⁹

Here we have a direct allusion even to the two Benedictions preceding the Shema, the one thanking for the light of day, the other for the light of the Torah. 'They lift up to heaven their purified hands, rising early from their bed in the morning, having their hands cleansed with water.'¹³⁰⁰

Evidently, the class of Hasidim, spoken of under various names (including Watikim), assembled in the open field where they could watch the sun rise from daybreak on and, beginning with their benedictions, they greeted the sun, as it appeared in full radiance over the hills, with uplifted hands, while solemnly reciting the Shema.¹³⁰¹

Here is clear evidence that the Hasidim were using misrepresentations of the Scriptures to justify their sun worship and make it appear that they were worshipping the true God of heaven. The most significant of these scriptural misrepresentations was the Shema—the monotheistic translation of Deuteronomy's verbless clause.¹³⁰² Rabbi Kohler links the Jewish recital of the Shema at sunrise and sunset directly to the worship of Mithra. Notice his admission.

'It is easy to see that (the Shema), being meant to be a demonstrative proclamation of the Unity (strict monotheism) and the Uniqueness of Israel's God, in opposition to the Zoroastrian dualism (the rabbinical justification for the recital of the Shema), the practice originated neither in the Temple nor in the Synagogue, but in the open under the free heaven (at sunrise) and before the very eyes of the surrounding Mazdean priests (of Ahura Mazda). In all likelihood, the Mazdean worshippers themselves gave the impulse to the Jewish practice, as we learn from the Avesta that every morning they hailed the rising sun, the god Mithra, with the sacred prayer, Asheu Vohu, and likewise the setting sun with the same prayer. What a strong incentive that must have been for the pious Jews (as the Hasidim were known) to adopt the same impressive ceremony in honour of their One and Holy God (their secret 'God of heaven'), the Maker of the sun, and at the same time to find in the Deuteronomic words (as they taught uninitiated Jews): '*And thou shalt speak of them...when thou liest down and when thou risest up*,' the very Shema recital prescribed twice a day!' (cp. '*And thou shalt love the Lord (Jehovah) thy God (Hebrew: Elohim, plural, 'Gods') with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up*'.¹³⁰³ It should be noted that the instruction does not refer to worship at the rising and setting of the sun, but it was deemed by the Hasidim to do so).

¹²⁹⁹ Kohler, Rabbi Dr., *The Origins of the Synagogue and the Church*, p.56

¹³⁰⁰ *Sibyllines*, Book 3, p.519f.

¹³⁰¹ Kohler, Rabbi Dr., *The Origins of the Synagogue and the Church*, pp.56,57

¹³⁰² Deut 6:4

¹³⁰³ Deut 6:5-7; Kohler, Rabbi Dr., *The Origins of the Synagogue and the Church*, pp.56,57 (sublinear emphasis added)

Only those Jews who had been initiated into the "deep mysteries of the world" knew that Mithra was the object of this worship (the same [class of] Jews who were initiated into the mysteries of the Kabbalah). In these mysteries, Mithra is not separate from Ahura Mazda: "The supreme god Ahura Mazda also has one Eye (the sun)....The theory that Mithra was originally a title of the supreme heavens god...putting the sun out of (his) court...is the only one that answers all requirements."¹³⁰⁴

As O'Neill shows, the worship of Mithra was monotheistic in nature. Mithra was viewed as the image of the "One God." Cumont writes, "...in the Chaldean speculation propagated by the Mithraists...the growing tendency was to see in the brilliant star (the sun) that illuminated the universe the only God, or at least the sensible (visible) image of the only God, and to establish in the heavens a monotheism in imitation of the monarchy that ruled on earth...The gods were ultimately reducible to a single Being considered under different aspects, and that the multiple names by which they were worshipped were equivalent of that of Helios (the Sun)."¹³⁰⁵

While professing to worship the true God, the Hasidim were reciting the Shema in honour of the "One" sun-god! The recital of the Shema as the creed of Judaism did not originate with Moses! Nor did it begin with Ezra and Nehemiah, nor with the Great Synagogue. The recital of the Shema arose from monotheistic sun-worship! That is how the Shema became the creed of modern Judaism!....(Around) the same time that the Hasidim were bringing their secret worship of Mithra into Judaism, the priests at the Temple in Jerusalem were beginning to introduce the name Adonai, or "Lord," as a substitute for the name YHWH. Until this time, the priests had followed the scriptural command to bless the people in the name of YHWH.¹³⁰⁶

Kohler describes the substitution of the name Adonai by the priests: 'In post-exilic times, the use of the name YHWH was more and more restricted and finally altogether withdrawn from common use...The priests, when pronouncing the Name in their blessing, did it in a whisper—'swallowed it up.' For the people at large the name Adonai (or Adonay), 'the Lord,' was introduced as a substitute both in the reading and the translation of the Scripture, as is shown by the Septuagint (the Greek translation, also known as the LXX) and the Targum (the Aramaic translation). And while this substitution guarded the Name from profane (common) use, it formed at the same time the highest triumph of Jewish monotheism, inasmuch as it proved the most powerful means of rendering the biblical God for all readers of the Bible the God and Lord of the world. For as long as YHWH, as the name was erroneously (in Rabbi Kohler's view) read (by the priests)—was viewed as the proper Name of Israel's God, there adhered to Him a more or less tribal character, but as soon as He is spoken of as the Lord (Adonai), He has ceased to be merely the God of one nation and has become the universal God.'¹³⁰⁷

¹³⁰⁴ O'Neill, *The Night of the Gods*, quoted by Hall, *The Secret Teachings of All Ages*, XXIV (with added comment and clarification in square brackets).

¹³⁰⁵ Cumont, *The Mysteries of Mithra*, p.187

¹³⁰⁶ I Chron 29:10,20; II Chron 20:26; Neh 8:6

¹³⁰⁷ Kohler, Rabbi Dr., *The Origins of the Synagogue and the Church*, pp.50,51

Kohler justifies the substitution of Adonai by claiming that the name YHWH identified God only as the national God of Israel. While it is true that YHWH was the covenant name by which God revealed Himself to Israel, and the name by which He commanded Israel to worship Him, this divine Name did not limit God to a "tribal" or "national" Deity! The Old Testament clearly reveals YHWH as the God of the whole earth. Moses declared this truth to Pharaoh in Egypt, *'that thou mayest know how that the earth is the Lord's.'*¹³⁰⁸ That YHWH was worshipped as God over all is emphatically proclaimed in Psalms, *'That men may know that thou, whose name alone is JeHoVaH, art the most high over all the earth.'*¹³⁰⁹ Isaiah spoke of a time when all nations would acknowledge YHWH as their Saviour.¹³¹⁰

In the Babylonian Empire, Mithra was worshipped by the name Tammuz and was called Adon or Adonis, meaning 'Lord.'

'This son (the false-messiah), thus worshipped in his mother's arms, was looked upon as invested with all the attributes, and called by almost all the names of the promised Messiah. As Christ, in the Hebrew of the Old Testament, was called Adonai, The Lord, so Tammuz was called Adon (Lord) or Adonis. Under the name of Mithras, he was worshipped as the "Mediator." As Mediator and head of the covenant of grace, he was styled Baal-berith, Lord of the covenant.'¹³¹¹ This must be compared to God's Covenant of Grace, a covenant made for all eternity,¹³¹² for the salvation of sinners, between the Father and the Son.¹³¹³

This connection of Mithraic worship with the name Adon, or 'Lord,' is most significant in considering the substitution of the name Adonai for YHWH in (the reading of) the Hebrew text. (The actual textual modifications appeared later).

The historical context of this change to Adonai strongly indicates that it was as a result of the adoption of Mithraic worship by the early founders of (what was to become) Judaism....

Although the name YHWH was not removed from the Hebrew text in Deuteronomy, the common people were required to pronounce it as Adonai when they recited the Shema. To this day, the Jews in the Synagogue substitute the name Adonai for YHWH each time they recite the Shema ('Shema Yisrael. Adonai Eloheynu. Adonai Echad').

It is a fact of Jewish history that the recital of the Shema in the Synagogue originated with the Hasidim, who used this monotheistic interpretation of Scripture to support their secret worship of the sun-god Mithras as their 'Lord' and 'Messiah.' These early founders of Judaism taught the common people to use the Shema in their prayers at sunrise and sunset each day. The Shema, which is now the acknowledged creed of Judaism, was a

¹³⁰⁸ Ex 9:29d

¹³⁰⁹ Psa 83:18

¹³¹⁰ Isa 45:21-23

¹³¹¹ Hislop, Alexander, *The Two Babylons*, p.70; Baal, the Canaanite storm god.

¹³¹² Prov 8:23; Heb 13:20

¹³¹³ Psa 89:3; Isa 53:10; Eph 1:3-6

prayer to the monotheistic sun-god of the Hasidim! In view of the historical facts, it is evident that the 'one Lord' of Hasidic Jewish monotheism is not YHWH!

The shocking sight reported in Ezekiel brings the above into perspective, and gives God's judgement on the Jew's practice of worshipping the sun-god: *'Then said he unto me, Hast thou seen this, O son of man? Turn thee yet again, and thou shalt see greater abominations than these. And he brought me into the inner court (where only Jews were allowed) of the Lord's house, and, behold, at the door of the temple of the Lord, between the porch and the altar, were about five and twenty men (priests), with their backs toward the temple of the Lord, and their faces toward the east; and they worshipped the sun toward the east. Then he said unto me, Hast thou seen this, O son of man? Is it a light thing to the house of Judah that they commit the abominations which they commit here? For they have filled the land with violence, and have returned to provoke me to anger: and, lo, they put the branch to their nose. Therefore will I also deal in fury: mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity: and thought they cry in mine ears with a loud voice, yet will I not hear them.'*¹³¹⁴

Paul notes the problem which the children of Israel, including the Jews, have to this day in their reading of the Old Testament, and proffers the solution, *'But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the old testament: which veil is done away in Christ. But even unto this day, when Moses is read (and this includes the Jews' reading of the Shema in Deuteronomy), the veil is upon their heart. Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord (Jesus Christ), the veil shall be taken away.'*¹³¹⁵

God the Father, God the Son, & the family of God

From all of this, and by comparison with John, *'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made,'*¹³¹⁶ it is clear that the Godhead contains two persons, God the Father, and God the Word, as can be seen quite distinctly. *'In the beginning,'* the opening statement in the gospel of John, is a repetition of the opening statement of the Bible in Genesis.¹³¹⁷ The Word has always been in existence. This unique name for Christ only occurs four times in the New Testament as a proper name; and each time it is used by John the apostle. *'...(A)nd the Word was with God,'* from the Greek pros ton theon, can also be rendered *'face to face with God.'* Two important thoughts emerge from this last statement. First, the Word is a distinct person. Second, the Word was enjoying face to face fellowship with another distinct person, God the Father. *'...(A)nd the Word was God,'* lest any think that the Word as a distinct person is anything less than God. In order to underline this, in the original Greek, it literally reads *'...and God was the Word,'* with the

¹³¹⁴ Ezek 8:15-18

¹³¹⁵ II Cor 3:14-16

¹³¹⁶ John 1:1-3

¹³¹⁷ Gen 1:1

subject and predicate being reversed to underscore the deity of the Word. *'The same was in the beginning with God,'* indicates that God the Father and God the Word have always existed.

Having established the eternal nature of the Word, John carefully describes His involvement in creation, as the very Creator, *'All things were made by him,'* and, to reinforce the all encompassing nature of the statement, John adds, *'...and without him was not any thing made that was made.'* This last phrase has been adequately rendered by Hendriksen, *'and apart from him not a single thing that exists came into being.'*¹³¹⁸

This *'Word was with God.'* The original Greek Logos, translated as *'Word,'* and Theos, translated as *'God,'* have the meanings of Speaker / Spokesman / Communicator and that of Supreme Divinity respectively.¹³¹⁹ Inserting these meanings in the text of John, it reveals that *'In the beginning was the Spokesman, and this Spokesman was with the Supreme and Most High Deity. And the Spokesman was Deity* (but not the Most High Deity in the Godhead¹³²⁰). *The same Spokesman was in the beginning with the Supreme and Most High Deity.'*¹³²¹ Admittedly, this is a rather awkward rendition, and in no way compares with the inspired original, but it suffices for the purposes of differentiating the two persons in the Godhead. And it is that very Spokesman who, as seen from the following verse, created all.¹³²² Now, *'And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness,'*¹³²³ clearly shows the plural form. Man was created after the likeness of a plural *'us'* and a plural *'our.'* God the Father spoke, and God the Word created.¹³²⁴

In the past, and as mentioned previously, some have contended erroneously that a singular God spoke thus to His own Laws, or to His angels, or to some other hypothesised mythical beings or other, such as sephiroth, so implying that these angels or others were part of the creating process, but nowhere in the Bible does it state that either angels or others either create or have ever created.

The Bible does state, however, that angels, as part of everything, have been created, *'And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ,'*¹³²⁵ and, again, *'All things were made by him [The Word—Jesus Christ]; and without him was not any thing made that was made,'*¹³²⁶ and, finally, *'For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or*

¹³¹⁸ Hendrikson, W., *The Gospel of St. John*, p.71

¹³¹⁹ *Strong's Concordance* #3056 and #2316

¹³²⁰ Gen 14:18-20

¹³²¹ John 1:1,2

¹³²² John 1:3

¹³²³ Gen 1:26

¹³²⁴ Franklin, Carl. D., *The Two Jehovahs of the Pentateuch* (in parts heavily paraphrased, with corrections, some minor, some not, and added comment and clarification, as necessary).

¹³²⁵ Eph 3:9

¹³²⁶ John 1:3

powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.'¹³²⁷

Yet another indication of the nature of the Godhead can be garnered from, *'Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion: for, lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the Lord. And many nations shall be joined to the Lord in that day, and shall be my people: and I will dwell in the midst of thee, and thou shalt know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me unto thee.'*¹³²⁸ Even the Pharisees were told by Christ of the composition of the Godhead, as John testifies: *'And yet if I judge, my judgment is true: for I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me.'*¹³²⁹ Again, in Proverbs, there is found a reference to the duality of the Godhead, with clear mention of the divine Creator and His Son: *'Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? who hath gathered the wind in his fists? who hath bound the waters in a garment? who hath established all the ends of the earth? what is his name, and what is his son's name, if thou canst tell?'*¹³³⁰

It is abundantly evident, moreover, that there must be a family of God. The Lamb marries his Bride, the church, as recorded in the wedding supper in chapter nineteen of Revelation. The guests, spirit beings comprising of the firstfruits, are admitted to membership of this God Family. Afterwards, multitudes are admitted to the Family after passing through the Great Tribulation and having repented, been baptised, and living, insofar as possible under those circumstances, a proper Judæo-Christian life, and then dying and being resurrected at the end of the Millennium, together with those others who are granted eternal life in the Great White Throne Judgement.

The Family is further referred to in Isaiah, *'For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government will be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.'*¹³³¹ This is still in the future. Christ will be the Father both of the election, changing them into the immortal firstfruits of His creatures, and ultimately those who follow them into the kingdom of God. This is confirmed again in James, *'Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures,'*¹³³² and Galatians, *'But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all.'*¹³³³

The final marriage, as pictured in Revelation chapter twenty-one, is between Christ and the new Jerusalem, given in condensed form: *'And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the*

¹³²⁷ Col 1:16,17

¹³²⁸ Zech 2:10,11

¹³²⁹ John 8:16

¹³³⁰ Prov 30:4

¹³³¹ Isa 9:6 (sublinear emphasis added)

¹³³² James 1:18 (sublinear emphasis added)

¹³³³ Gal 4:26 (sublinear emphasis added)

bride, the Lamb's wife. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God.¹³³⁴ Just as our earthly carnal marriage is a type, so, to an extent, is the marriage of the election to the Lamb, as the ultimate Family will not be completed until God the Father comes to reside with all the spirit family in the new Jerusalem here on earth, *'Having the glory of God: And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.'*¹³³⁵ This final 'marriage' unites God the Father, God the Son, the election, and all who are raised in the Spirit as part of the kingdom of God, and members of the family of God.¹³³⁶

During his life on earth, Jesus was accused of many things. It is evident that from, *'Then answered the Jews, and said unto him, Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil?'*¹³³⁷ the local reaction to the gospel was almost totally hostile. The fact that only about one hundred and twenty people gathered on Pentecost¹³³⁸ and received the gift of the Holy Spirit shows how limited was the initial reception. For Christ to be accused of being a blasphemer by the Jewish religious authorities of the day was nothing extraordinary. At best, most of the people who both heard and saw Jesus Christ were apathetic, and many were downright hostile, even to the point of seeking to kill Him. They would accuse Him of anything, so long as it met their end.

And so addressing now the remaining major Jewish point of contention, the question of the status of Jesus Christ, Isaiah states: *'and shall call his name Immanuel.'*¹³³⁹ This was stated as having been fulfilled in Jesus: *'Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of by the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.'*¹³⁴⁰

A second aspect to this lies in the actions of the wise men¹³⁴¹ who followed the star^{1342 1343} and came to the house (not to the stable¹³⁴⁴—the wise men came to Jesus later than the shepherds) where the baby Jesus

¹³³⁴ Rev 21:2;9,10

¹³³⁵ Rev 21:11,22

¹³³⁶ that does not mean that the elect, etc. are to become God! There are only two who are 'God': God the Father and God the Son. The elect and others are to be crowned angels, of varying designations, q.v. sup. and 'Ranking of Angels.'

¹³³⁷ John 8:48, Samaritan: ancient meaning or ancient slur?

Barclay, William, *The Gospel of John*, Vol.2, pp.31,32 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'But it is just possible that the word Samaritan is really a corruption of something else. To begin with, we note that Jesus replied to the charge that He was mad, but did not reply to the charge that He was a Samaritan (John 8:48-50). That makes us wonder if we have the charge of the Jews rightly stated. In the original [spoken] Aramaic the word for Samaritan would be Shomeroni. Shomeron was also a title for the prince of the devils, otherwise called Ashmedai and Sammael and Satan. In point of fact, the Koran, the Mohammedan bible, actually says that the Jews were seduced into idolatry by Shomeron, the prince of the devils. So the word Shomeroni could quite well mean 'a child of the devil.' It is very likely that what the Jews said to Jesus was: "You are a child of the devil; you have a devil; you are mad with the madness of the Evil One."

His answer was that, so far from being a servant of the devil, His one aim was to honour God, while the conduct of the Jews was a continual dishonouring of God. He says, in effect: "It is not I who have a devil; it is you."

¹³³⁸ 30AD; Acts 1:8–2:4; especially Acts 1:15b, *'about an hundred and twenty.'*

¹³³⁹ Isa 7:14c

¹³⁴⁰ Mat 1:22,23 (sublinear emphasis added)

¹³⁴¹ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol. 1, p.31:

was staying. They fell down before Him, and worshipped Him.¹³⁴⁵ The first point to be noted here is that these men are called wise in the Bible: they are not designated as fools. In so doing, they also fell down and worshipped 'he that is born king of the Jews.'¹³⁴⁶ In like manner, it is also recorded in the New Testament that despite the apathy and the outright hatred, a vast number of people at one time or another did worship Him, including a leper, a blind man, and a ruler.

'Later legends have been busy with the wise men. In the early days, eastern tradition said that there were twelve of them. But now the tradition that there were three is almost universal....later legend made them kings. And still later legend gave them names, Caspar, Melchior and Balthasar. Still later legend assigned to each a personal description, and distinguished the gift which each of them gave to Jesus.'

¹³⁴² The 'star,' often referred to as 'the star of Bethlehem,' was an angel. Caird G. B., *The Apostolic Age*, pp.98,99 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets), gives some background into the predominant belief of the time: 'Israel [and most, if not all, of the Near- and Middle-East in ancient times] had been accustomed to regard the heavenly bodies as angelic beings....[A]lmost all Gentiles had felt the impact of astrology with its theory that all human life was controlled by the [Greek:] *kosmokratores*, which directed the orderly motion of the stars and planets.'

¹³⁴³ William Barclay, 'The Gospel of Matthew,' Vol. 1, pp.26,27 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'In the years 5 to 2BC there was an unusual astronomical phenomenon. In those years, on the first day of the Egyptian month Messori, Sirius, the dog-star, rose heliacally, that is at sunrise, and shone with extraordinary brilliance. Now the name Messori means 'the birth of a prince.' and to those ancient astrologers such a star would undoubtedly mean the birth of some great king. [Not that the symbol of Satan—the dog-star—of all heavenly bodies, could possibly presage the coming of Jesus Christ!].

It may seem to us extraordinary that those men should set out from the East to find a king, but the strange thing is that, just about the time Jesus was born, there was in the world a strange feeling of expectation of the coming of a king. Even the Roman historians knew about this. Not so very much later than this Suetonius could write, "There had spread over all the Orient an old and established belief, that it was fated at that time for men coming from Judæa to rule the world" (Suetonius: *Life of Vespasian*, 4:5). Tacitus tells of the same belief that "there was a firm persuasion....that at this very time the East was to grow powerful, and rulers coming from Judæa were to acquire universal empire" (Tacitus: *Histories*, 5:13). The Jews had the belief that "about that time one from their country should become governor of the habitable earth" (Josephus: *Wars of the Jews*, 6:5,4).'

¹³⁴⁴ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol. 1, pp.24,25 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'The picture of the stable and the manger as the birthplace of Jesus is a picture indelibly etched on our minds; but it may well be that that picture is not altogether correct. Justin Martyr....who lived about 150AD, and who came from the district near Bethlehem, tells us that Jesus was born in a cave near the village of Bethlehem (Martyr, Justin: *Dialogue with Trypho*, 78, 304); and it may well be that Justin's information is correct [in, rather than 'near,' surely? And that particular 'cave'? Unlikely, given the buildings and events both beforehand and later, and the fact that it was later described as a shrine to the pagan god Adonis / Tammuz, q.v. inf.]. The houses in Bethlehem are built on the slope of the limestone ridge; and it is very common for them to have a cave-like stable hollowed out in the limestone rock below the house itself; and very likely it was in such a cave-stable that Jesus was born.

To this day such a cave is shown in Bethlehem as the birthplace of Jesus, and above it the Church of the Nativity has been built. For very long that cave has been shown as the birthplace of Jesus. It was so in the days of the Roman Emperor, Hadrian, for Hadrian, in a deliberate attempt to desecrate the place, erected a shrine to the heathen god Adonis above it. When the Roman Empire became Christian [nominally], early in the fourth century, the first Christian emperor [so-called], Constantine, built a great church there, and that church, much altered and often restored, still stands.'

¹³⁴⁵ Mat 2:11

¹³⁴⁶ Mat 2:2c

Christ was God in the likeness of man: *'Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it no robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men.'*¹³⁴⁷

The Old Testament has tracts showing the existence of God the Father and God the Son, for example: *'I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.'*¹³⁴⁸

Despite all of this most overwhelming evidence, even in some quarters of so-called Christian belief it has become fashionable to regard Christ as not being God incarnate. In other words, the Word,¹³⁴⁹ God the Spokesman, or Logos, or Dabar, became a mortal man without any deity, then died, was resurrected, and became the Son of God. To a proper Christian, the Judæo-Christian, this is wholesale apostasy, in that it denies the deity of Christ. The penalty for this is that if we deny Him, He will deny us before his Father, and our place in the kingdom of God will be forfeited: a very serious matter indeed. Lewis addressed it thus: 'I am trying here to prevent anyone saying the really foolish thing that people often say about Him: "I'm ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don't accept His claim to be God." That is the one thing we must not say. A man who is merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic—on a level with the man who says he is a poached egg—or else he would be the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God: or else a madman or something worse. You can shut Him up as a fool, you can spit at Him and kill Him as a demon; or you can fall at His feet and call Him Lord and God. But let none of us come with any patronising nonsense about His being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to.'¹³⁵⁰

Another illustration of the sophistry of the mind of man lies in the claim that the Word was not immortal for all time past, but was a creation of God the Father. In this view, the Word was a 'super angel,' merely one selected from a 'divine council' of angels. Those wishing to borrow the Judaic view of monotheism and then superimpose it on Christianity often adopt this doctrine. But if Christ be an angel, and not the eternal Son of God, we shall judge Him, for Paul states, *'Know ye not that we shall judge angels?'*¹³⁵¹ (imposters—evil angels) and the very notion is refuted in Hebrews, *'But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool?'*¹³⁵² Any form of 'angelic' contention is patently absurd.

¹³⁴⁷ Phlp 2:5-7

¹³⁴⁸ Dan 7:13,14

¹³⁴⁹ John 1:1-4

¹³⁵⁰ Lewis, C. S., *Mere Christianity*

¹³⁵¹ I Cor 6:3

¹³⁵² Heb 1:13

Despite this, adduced in its support are certain so-called 'proof-texts,' a listing that conveniently remains silent on biblical passages to the contrary. In addition, the 'proof-texts'-bolstered doctrine frequently relies for its skew on the particular wording adopted in the K.J.V. This gives an extremely marked economy in selection, and a mix of erroneous attribution, speculation, and deduction:

K.J.V.

Green's Literal Translation, or commentary

*'Who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house.'*¹³⁵³ This speaks to, *'the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Jesus Christ.'*¹³⁵⁴

Presumably the play is on the word *'appointed,'* but this says nothing of Christ being created. It merely says He was appointed by God.

*'The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old.'*¹³⁵⁵

Perhaps the following verse should have been added, *'I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was.'* The entire of Proverbs chapters 8, 9 and 10 speak of wisdom; not the Messiah. It was wisdom that was set up at the foundation, in the very beginning. *'I wisdom dwell with prudence, and find out knowledge of witty inventions.'*¹³⁵⁶ *'When he prepared the heavens I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth.'*¹³⁵⁷ The creation, of course, was undertaken by the Word, and *'I,'* wisdom, was there. *'I'* cannot apply to the Word.¹³⁵⁸

*'I came forth from the Father and have come into the world; I leave the world again and go to the Father.'*¹³⁵⁹

Again this says nothing of Christ being created, merely saying He was sent by God.

'Jesus saith unto her, touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and

Christ is here affirming the omnipotence of the Father, something He did often.

¹³⁵³ Heb 3:2

¹³⁵⁴ Heb 3:1b

¹³⁵⁵ Prov 8:22

¹³⁵⁶ Prov 8:12

¹³⁵⁷ Prov 8:27

¹³⁵⁸ cf. John 1:1,2

¹³⁵⁹ John 16:28

say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.'¹³⁶⁰

'There is one body and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.'¹³⁶¹

'And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things say the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God.'

¹³⁶²

'Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.'¹³⁶⁴

The 'One Lord' is Christ. The 'One God and Father of all' is God the Father—coalescing or confusing the two leads to the error.

The imputed meaning is that '*the beginning of the creation of God*' refers to the Word. Rather, it indicates that the Word, the Amen, is the beginning of the new creation of God, Head of the creation, or Firstfruit. G.L.T. renders the phrase: '*the Head of the creation of God.*' Paul clarifies the process: '*Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.*'¹³⁶³

This is simply confusion over the identity of the 'Lord' of creation. John states that it was the Word—who became incarnate as Jesus Christ.¹³⁶⁵

All of the passages herein confirming the nature of the Godhead need not be reproduced in tabular format since they can be referred to directly.

Dyad

The Judæo-Christian view, in line with Scripture, is simply this: God with us.¹³⁶⁶ Jesus Christ, the Son of God, was confirmed as such, recorded in Matthew at the time of Jesus' baptism in the Jordan river by John the Baptist, in the following terms, '*And, lo, a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well*

¹³⁶⁰ John 20:17

¹³⁶¹ Eph 4:4-6

¹³⁶² Rev 3:14

¹³⁶³ II Cor 5:17

¹³⁶⁴ Rev 4:11

¹³⁶⁵ cf. John 1:1,2

¹³⁶⁶ Mat 1:23c

*pleased.*¹³⁶⁷ In fact, Christ became the Son of God only upon being born of the flesh. Up until that point, he was called the Word. This is why, when referring to Melchisedek, Paul in Hebrews uses the phrase, *'like unto the Son of God.'* He was *'like unto the Son,'* but he was not yet the Son, as He had not yet been born of the flesh when Melchisedek met Abram¹³⁶⁸ returning after the slaughter of the kings. It was also a vision that Paul was describing.

The actual baptism of Christ, by immersion in water, in the Jordan, by John the Baptist, reflected and accorded with the ceremony of immersion in water of the Temple priests at their induction. This was necessary, as Christ was a priest after the order of Melchisedec,¹³⁶⁹ as a precursor to His earthly ministry.

The fundamental reason why the Minim were ejected from the synagogues by the Jews was over the question of the status of Jesus Christ. To worship Him, and praise Him, and revere Him, and to regard Him as God, was simply unacceptable to the monotheistic Pharisees of the time. There could be no accommodation in Judaism for Judæo-Christianity, for it struck at the core of monotheism, exposing its weakness and apostasy. The godly life of the early Christian contrasted vividly with that of the hypocritical Pharisees, and their practices and outgoing concern for others¹³⁷⁰ bore witness against Pharisaic self-satisfaction and arrogance, and the complete control over the people that they so desperately coveted. Truly it could be said of them: *'The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider. A sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters: they have forgotten the Lord, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they have gone away backward.'*¹³⁷¹ As if they were some sort of mamzer,¹³⁷² the Christians were ejected, not merely to the tenth generation, but forever. Obscene?—Yes!—especially to the Judæo-Christian, for the Christian belief is that the restriction on the illegitimate, applicable to historical Israel in the Old Testament era for the purposes of maintaining the purity of the stock, does not prevent the illegitimate from entering into the current congregation of the Lord, namely, the church.

¹³⁶⁷ Mat 3:17

¹³⁶⁸ later, Abraham.

¹³⁶⁹ Psa 110:4

¹³⁷⁰ that the early Church did not hold *'everything in common'* can be seen from Acts 2:45,4:34b,35 where *'they began to sell their property and goods and to distribute them to all according to each one's need'*; and *'all who were owners of lands or houses began to sell them and to bring the price of what they had sold and to lay it at the apostles' feet.'* *'Began to'* is in the imperfect tense, as are all the verbs in these two passages, which shows that the sale of property was not a single, concerted action but a continuing process, with a beginning some time after the start of the church era. This was but the partial, early stages of a potentially universal compliance. It should be noted, however, that Moffatt, in his translation of the New Testament, omits the phrase *'and had all things in common,'* considering it a later gloss.

¹³⁷¹ Isa 1:3,4

¹³⁷² Deut 23:2

'Hupostases'

'The word translated 'person' here, 'Who being the brightness of his¹³⁷³ glory, and the express image of his person,'¹³⁷⁴ in the Greek text is hupostases. Early translators reconfigured its meaning to correspond with its later Greek philosophical definition in order to accommodate the conception of the Trinity, which by their time had been established as dogma. However, the Bible itself defines it for us clearly. Every time Paul meant 'person' he used the word prosopon; every time he meant 'an underlying foundation as in ground of confidence' he used hupostases, and that is the only way he used it and the only way it is used in the Bible. Had hupostases been translated here in the same manner as in its other occurrences in Scripture, the meaning would have been so clear that it could never have been used as a proof-text for Trinitarians. What Paul was saying can be made clear and eliminate all possibility of using this Scripture as a Trinitarian proof-text. Let's note there are three more words to consider in this passage: The Greek word translated as 'brightness,'¹³⁷⁵ means "effulgence, light or splendour emitted or issuing from a luminous body—hence, radiating." The word 'glory,'¹³⁷⁶ "comes from the original Greek word meaning "thought or opinion," hence, God's opinion marks the true value of things. In brief, it can mean appearance and reputation....In the Bible it refers to the recognition, honour or renown belonging to a person....In reference to God it indicates His character and all that is excellent in God's Character; all that He is about." The word translated as 'express image'¹³⁷⁷ "originally denoted an engraver or engraving tool (the -ter suffix signifies agency). Later it meant the impression itself, usually something engraved, cut in, or stamped....This impression with its particular features was considered as the exact representation of the object whose image it bore." So, placing the proper meanings into Scripture opens up a whole new significance. We now see Paul's statement: "God....has spoken unto us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, by whom he also made the worlds;¹³⁷⁸ Who (at the time Paul was sitting there writing Jesus had already been made better than the angels, and had by inheritance already obtained a more excellent name; in other words, the resurrected Jesus Christ, a separate Being from God the Father) *being the light that reveals* (light, effulgence as it emits or radiates from a luminous body (a light source) to reveal and make visible what would otherwise not be seen) *all that is excellent in God—His character and reputation; and is the engraver and engraving tool* (as in engraving, carving, stamping, writing) *and the engraving* (being written in our hearts) *the underlying foundation of God's confidence* (Christ is the Plan, and also the assurance, guarantee, proof that God's Plan is being spoken, written and accomplished: the Word now being engraved and sealed in our hearts); *and upholding* (governing) *all things by the word* (command) *of His power* (will), *when He had by Himself*

¹³⁷³ i.e., the Father's.

¹³⁷⁴ Heb 1:3

¹³⁷⁵ Greek: apaugasasma; Zodhiates, Th.D., #541; the only place used in the Bible.

¹³⁷⁶ Greek: doxa, Zodhiates, Th.D., #1391

¹³⁷⁷ Greek: charakter, Zodhiates, Th.D., #5481

¹³⁷⁸ Heb 1:1,2

purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become so much better than the angels, as He had by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they."¹³⁷⁹

Advocate

*"My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for our sins only, but also for the sins of the whole world."*¹³⁸⁰ In the phrase, '*an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous*,'¹³⁸¹ the Greek word translated '*advocate*' is the same that is rendered '*comforter*'¹³⁸² in John. Jesus foretold the coming of the Holy Spirit to the help of His disciples in the words: '*The Comforter, which is the Holy Spirit, whom [better: 'that'] the Father will send in my name.*'¹³⁸³

The Greek parakletos, means, literally, one called or sent to stand beside a man in his time of need. It was the word used to describe the pleader or 'defending counsel' in the Greek courts of law and its application here is very obvious. When the Lord was about to leave His disciples, He promised them that He would not leave them helpless; He would send them a parakletos to stand alongside and be their ever-present help in time of need....The word '*comforter*' in the A.V. does not adequately express the meaning of the term. The Holy Spirit is a guardian, a defender, an instructor, a counsellor, a source of power and a vital force that makes the weak strong and the timorous courageous.¹³⁸⁴ Even the more modern version of '*helper*' does not express all of the meaning; in fact no one English word can possibly define the many-sided work of the Holy Spirit in our lives. Perhaps we will do well to think of all the terms which express the full manifestation of this wonderful power by which we live and by which we will, one day, gain the victory.

Now the use of the same word parakletos in its application to our Lord, Jesus Christ the righteous, has a rather more restricted [and higher] meaning. John is here telling of one aspect only of the Christian life, albeit a most important aspect. He is telling us of the Christian who has stumbled....and has committed sin,¹³⁸⁵ and he says that such a one has a parakletos, an Advocate, with the Father, Who is the Supreme Judge.

Now here the term is used obviously in the strict legal sense that it bore in everyday life in John's time. If any man sins, he has a 'defending counsel' in Jesus, one to stand alongside and plead his cause. The basis of the defence is that the offender has already been justified by faith in Christ and has now sincerely repented and seeks to claim again that justification by a [reinvigoration] of faith [and an increased resolve to avoid sin].

¹³⁷⁹ Lacey, Lon, *Who and What was Jesus—Was He a Man, God, or Both?* footnote #7.

¹³⁸⁰ I John 1:1,2

¹³⁸¹ I John 1:1c

¹³⁸² John 14:26;15:26; Greek: parakletos.

¹³⁸³ John 14:26

¹³⁸⁴ the most difficult form of courage in the world: to be an individual against the crowd.

¹³⁸⁵ unwittingly, or has sinned but immediately repented, q.v. inf.

The Advocate does not take up the case of one who is unrepentant. This whole passage concerns only the church, the believers in Christ Jesus.¹³⁸⁶

Justification and consecration of the believer has placed him in a position where the Father accepts his sincerity of heart and his purity of purpose and intention instead of demanding perfection of conduct. He does not hold against him that error and sin which is attributable to the weakness of the flesh. The Advocate urges the principle enunciated by Paul in Romans [chapter] 7, that sin dwelling in the flesh leads the believer to do those things that of his own will and desire he would not do, and precludes his doing fully the good that he would do. This is evidence of the believer's desire and intention to do good and his capability of doing good when....the hindrance of the weakened human flesh has been [conquered, since the gift of the Holy Spirit gives strength to shun sin]. The Father has already said that He has no pleasure in the death of him that dies [actually, of the wicked], but would that he turn from his wickedness and live. Thus He assents to the rightness of the Advocate's presentation of the matter, and counts the sin that has been committed as those that have already been blotted from the record at the time of justification. So the Advocate stands beside every member of His church, claiming each as one for whom He died and who has accepted that death for himself, and in the power of that acceptance has become one of Christ's own.

The Apostle proceeds in his exposition of this great truth by going on to say, '*and he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.*'¹³⁸⁷ John is not particularly talking about the world in this chapter. He is, in fact, not talking about the world at all. However, lest any should think from his main theme that Jesus is the propitiation only for those who are His now, the members of His church, John hastens to add that he is, in fact, such for the sins of the entire race of mankind. The death of Jesus is equally applicable to all.¹³⁸⁸

This word '*propitiation*' is capable of misunderstanding. The modern meaning of the word is to conciliate an offended or angry person by means of offerings or bribes; to placate. That has arisen from the use of the Greek word used in the early centuries to denote the giving of offerings and sacrifices to pagan gods in order to 'propitiate' them, to turn away their anger, to cause them to look with favour upon their devotees.¹³⁸⁹ From this idea has grown up, quite naturally, that Christ was a propitiation for our sins in that He gave Himself as a blood-sacrifice to an angry God who thereby appeased His wrath and turned to look with favour and graciousness upon the former objects of His displeasure. Now that might be all right with pagan gods but it is certainly quite out of accord with the known character of our God. Medieval theology made much of this idea in its conception of the doctrine of Atonement, and much of it has survived into our day. But the [bare] appeasement of Divine

¹³⁸⁶ and keepers of God's Law, and applies to all sin, save wilful sin, q.v.inf.; man is saved by Grace, justified by Faith, and rewarded according to his works.

¹³⁸⁷ I John 1:2

¹³⁸⁸ subject to their repentance, and baptism into the church.

¹³⁸⁹ Greek: hilasmos.

wrath by the offering of a blood-sacrifice has nothing in common either with justice or morality, and the Divine Plan is solidly founded on both. It was a farseeing man of God who declared, long before these times of John, *'thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it; thou delightest not in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.'*¹³⁹⁰ So that particular [narrow] meaning of propitiation for which [some] are indebted to the pagan worship of Rome and Greece is one that we must definitely reject, [despite] its long age.¹³⁹¹

The Lord Jesus gave His humanity as a 'corresponding price' wherewith to redeem man out of the bondage of sin and death, and make fallen man His own....Paul's picture in Timothy¹³⁹² is taken from the Roman custom of manumission, the system by which slaves could be freed. The ransom money for the slave was paid into the [pagan] temple treasury and from thence to the owner of the slave, who, in this manner, by means of a kind of legal fiction, sold the slave to the god. The slave thus regained his freedom by becoming the property of the god.¹³⁹³ So, says Paul, *'Christ died, and rose, and revived, that he might be the Lord both of the dead and the living.'* The price He paid in the giving of His human life was the price whereby Adam, and all his posterity condemned in him, are redeemed from the power of sin and become subjects of Christ.

A much more accurate understanding is ours if we keep to Bible usage and compare the equivalent meaning of the word in the Old Testament. The act of *'making reconciliation'* upon the Brasen Altar¹³⁹⁴ or of sprinkling the blood of the sin-offering *'to reconcile'* in the Most Holy,¹³⁹⁵ or to *'make an atonement for sin,'*¹³⁹⁶ is denoted by a Hebrew word.¹³⁹⁷ Now the word means, primarily, *'to cover,'* and its derivative words are used in the sense of covering over the ark of Noah with pitch¹³⁹⁸ or of obliterating the writing on written documents. From this comes the thought of atonement being a covering of the sin so that it is no longer seen or recognised by God. The place in the Most Holy where the High Priest sprinkled the blood of the sacrifice was called the *'place of covering'*¹³⁹⁹ for this reason (translated *'mercy seat'* in Exodus and Leviticus in the A.V.). When the translators of the Septuagint, the Greek version of the Old Testament, came to this word¹⁴⁰⁰ they used the Greek: hilasmos and its allied words as its equivalent and so convey the same meaning. This is why the *'mercy*

¹³⁹⁰ Psa 51:16,17

¹³⁹¹ the pagan version was merely a ritual, a substitution for sin without any idea of repentance and resolve not to commit sin in the future. Accordingly, there was no betterment in it.

¹³⁹² I Tim 2:5,6

¹³⁹³ the slave now freeman, upon formal application to the courts, could gain Roman citizenship after he had attained the age of thirty, or even before that age if he were to wed a Roman citizen and have one or more offspring; no slave who had been scourged publically for infraction/s of the law could become a Roman citizen.

¹³⁹⁴ Lev 8:15

¹³⁹⁵ Lev 6:30

¹³⁹⁶ Lev 16:6

¹³⁹⁷ Hebrew: kaphar.

¹³⁹⁸ Gen 6:14

¹³⁹⁹ Hebrew: kaphoroth.

¹⁴⁰⁰ Hebrew: kaphar.

seal' of Exodus is called the '*propitiatory*'¹⁴⁰¹ in [the New Testament in] Hebrews.¹⁴⁰² The real thought behind the word propitiation as used in the New Testament is that of a covering for sin and a means of reconciliation with God and not that of a bribe intended to allay Divine wrath. This makes John's words clearer and connects the two verses together. If any man sin, we have an Advocate, one to stand beside us to help us before the Father—and that Advocate is the One who both covers that sin and is the means of reconciliation of the sinner with God.¹⁴⁰³

Tetragrammaton

Concerning the Tetragrammaton & Jewish redaction, text tampering, and misattribution: 'Adonai is a title for God which is used in the book of Amos with considerable frequency. It sometimes retains its original meaning of '*my Lord*.'¹⁴⁰⁴ The LXX renders Kurios, exactly as it represents the Hebrew YHWH¹⁴⁰⁵....The expression is well suited to Amos' conception of his God as (a) Lord or Master of nations,¹⁴⁰⁶ and not of Israel only, and (b) the Ruler over nature.¹⁴⁰⁷

1. There are three occurrences of the title standing alone;¹⁴⁰⁸ and,
2. Frequently the word Adonai is prefixed to the sacred name YHWH: LXX kurios Kurios, 'the Lord God.' There are altogether twenty such passages in the Masoretic Text of the book of Amos. In at least seven, however,¹⁴⁰⁹

¹⁴⁰¹ Greek: hilasterion.

¹⁴⁰² Heb 9:5

¹⁴⁰³ *Bible Study Monthly*, Vol. 84, No.6, pp.226-228 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

¹⁴⁰⁴ e.g. Amos 3:7,8,7:2; Amos wrote about three decades before Isaiah, about thirteen before Jeremiah, and about fifteen before Ezekiel.

¹⁴⁰⁵ *Karaite-korner*:

'Likely pronounced 'Yehovah' with emphasis on 'vah'....cannot help but suspect that the origin of hashem is the pagan ashema, one of the original gods worshipped by the Samaritans, mentioned in II Kings 17:30. Ashima: 'guiltiness: I will make desolate,' a god of Hamath.'

Barclay, William, *The Gospel of John*, Vol.1, pp.62,63 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'Hebrew thought and language had a way of using *the name* which is strange to us. By that expression, Jewish thought did not so much mean the name by which a person was called as his nature insofar as it was revealed and known. For instance, in Psa 9:10, the Psalmist says: "*Those who know thy name put their trust in thee.*" Clearly that does not mean that those who know that God is called [YHWH] will trust Him; it means that those who know God's character, God's nature, who know what God is like, will be ready and willing to trust in Him for everything. [Which makes the Jewish predilection for calling their religion's god 'HaShem,' 'The Name,' doubly strange. Interestingly, the proper name Hashem, but in a slightly elided form, literally means 'wealthy' or 'enriched']. In the ancient world, knowledge of a person's name was believed to give one power over that person. Knowledge of the character and attributes of pagan "gods" was thought to enable the worshipers to manipulate or influence the deities in a more effective way than they could have if the deity's name remained unknown.'

¹⁴⁰⁶ Amos 1:8,9:1

¹⁴⁰⁷ Amos 8:9,11

¹⁴⁰⁸ viz., in Amos 7:7,8,9:1 (Footnote: In the Masoretic Text of v.16, Adonai makes an impressive addition to a description of God, but the word is absent from the LXX).

¹⁴⁰⁹ viz., Amos 1:8,4:2,6:8,7:4a,b,5,6

the Hebrew text used by LXX contained only one Divine Name, either Adonai¹⁴¹⁰ or, most likely, YHWH; Adonai being added into the text as a gloss upon the Tetragrammaton. The combination Adonai YHWH became frequent in later prophetic writings, more especially in Jeremiah, Isaiah, and (particularly) in Ezekiel.^{1411 1412}

*"Hear ye, and testify in the house of Jacob, saith the Lord God, the God of hosts"*¹⁴¹³ is a telling verse. The second part of the verse¹⁴¹⁴ actually reads: *'saith the Lord (Adonai, a redaction of the original YHWH) God (YHWH), the God ('Gods,' plural, elohim) of hosts.'* Here the Jews' [text] tampering lies exposed. Since elohim, 'Gods,' is plural, the original Hebrew could not have been Adonai immediately followed by YHWH, for the translation of the redacted phrase, 'Lord God,' is singular. The only construction that sensibly works is the plural YHWH YHWH, so that must be the original. The same 'double name' is seen in Exodus, in the Hebrew form Hayah, Hayah, where it is translated: 'I AM THAT I AM': *'And God ('Gods,' elohim) [plural] said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM [or, properly: 'We are who we are']"*¹⁴¹⁵ The construction of a double YHWH / Hayah indicates the dyadic Godhead.^{1416 1417}

*"The Lord God hath sworn by himself, saith the Lord, the God of hosts."*¹⁴¹⁸ *'The Lord God.'* LXX Kurios (i.e. omitting 'Adonai'). *'[H]ath sworn by himself.'* The exact form of oath 'by himself' occurs again only in Jeremiah¹⁴¹⁹ (Masoretic Text, but not the LXX). *'[S]aith the Lord, the God of hosts'....* Hebrew neum, literally, 'it is an oracle of.'....It is absent from the LXX of the present verse and verse fourteen. Correcting for the plurality of Gods, and taking the comments concerning the LXX, gives: *'YHWHs have sworn by themselves, it is an oracle of the YHWHs of the hosts.'*^{1420 1421}

¹⁴¹⁰ or Kurios, as in Amos 6:8a.

¹⁴¹¹ Cripps, Richard S., *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Amos*, Excursus 1, p.333 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets).

¹⁴¹² Ezekiel, as Moffatt points out, is highly fragmented.

¹⁴¹³ Amos 3:13

¹⁴¹⁴ Amos 3:13b

¹⁴¹⁵ Ex 3:14; Y-HWH, literally means 'He exists' and, in the causative sense, 'He causes to exist.'

¹⁴¹⁶ Franklin, Carl D., *The Two Jehovahs of the Psalms* (Jehovah typed as JHVH; added comment and clarification in square brackets)

¹⁴¹⁷ between three- and four hundred Jewish redactions to the text of the Old Testament have been recorded (about a third of them substitutions of YHWH by Adonai, with some to disguise the dyadic nature of the Godhead, and one crucial misattribution to disguise the key to the sacred calendar), but I feel that there are many more to come. It will verge on a wholesale reworking of Scripture to get back to somewhere near to the original, such has been the degree of tampering, manipulation, misattribution, fragmentation, and loss.

¹⁴¹⁸ Amos 6:8a

¹⁴¹⁹ Jer 51:14

¹⁴²⁰ Cripps, Richard S., *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Amos*, pp.209,210 and footnote

¹⁴²¹ Bible is soon to be reproduced in a 'new' or 'renewed' language, q.v. inf., such is the debased nature of Hebrew, and, for that matter, koine Greek, English, and so on. This may be inferred from Isa 62:2; I Cor 13:1; Rev 3:12,14;3:5,19:12, et al. It will be God's holy language, unadulterated by the intrusion of pagan phraseology, philosophy, philological transmutation, misattribution, and the like.

Chapter 37

'Playing God'

The early science of medicine was identified with the worship of Satan who usurped the place, dignity, and power of Christ, for they called the pagan god Æsculapius, 'The Preserver and Saviour.'

Hippocratic oath

The Hippocratic oath to this present day¹⁴²² actually rehearses and maintains the following pagan oath: 'I swear by Apollo the physician, by Æsculapius, Hygeia, and Panacea, and I take to witness all the gods, all the goddesses, to keep according to my ability and my judgement the following Oath: To consider dear to me as my parents him who taught me this art; to live in common with him and if necessary to share my goods with him; to look upon his children as my own brothers, to teach them this art if they so desire without fee or written promise; to impart to my sons and the sons of the master who taught me and the disciples who have enrolled themselves and have agreed to the rules of the profession, but to these alone, the precepts and the instruction. I will prescribe regimen for the good of my patients according to my ability and my judgement and never do harm to anyone. To please no one will I prescribe a deadly drug, nor give advice which may cause his death. Nor will I give a woman a pessary to procure abortion. But I will preserve the purity of my life and my art. I will not cut for stone, even for patients in whom the disease is manifest; I will leave this operation to be performed by practitioners. In

¹⁴²² cf. inf. for present-day variants.

every house where I come I will enter only for the good of my patients, keeping myself far from all intentional ill-doing and all seduction, and especially from the pleasures of love with women or with men, be they free or slaves. All that may come to my knowledge in the exercise of my profession or outside of my profession or in daily commerce with men, which ought not to be spread abroad, I will keep secret and will never reveal. If I keep this oath faithfully, may I enjoy my life and practice my art, respected by all men in all times; but if I swerve from it or violate it, may the reverse be my lot.'

Æsculapius

In Greek mythology, Æsculapius,¹⁴²³ son of Apollo, was a Greek healer who became a Greek demigod, and was a famous physician. His mother, the nymph Coronis, a princess of Thessaly, died when he was an infant. Æsculapius was the most important among the Greek gods and heroes who were associated with health and curing disease. Apollo is said to have entrusted the child's education to the Centaur Chiron, who taught Æsculapius the arts of healing.

Æsculapius, when grown, became so skilled in surgery and the use of medicinal plants that it is said he could even restore the dead to life. Hades, ruler of the dead, became alarmed at this and complained to Zeus, who, fearing that he might render all men immortal, killed Æsculapius with a thunderbolt. Thus he became one of the few gods ever said to have died.

A deified mortal, Æsculapius, or in the Greek, Asklepios, was not worshipped as a god until post-Homeric times. Homer refers to him only as a skilful physician, and it was Apollo who was regarded as the god of healing until that role was taken over by his son.¹⁴²⁴

After he became an object of worship, his followers organised a guild of physicians called the Asclapiads. Many temples of this cult were built, and served like the health resorts of modern times. There, patients were treated with mineral spring baths, massage, inunction, and similar types of treatment. Worshipping serpents¹⁴²⁵ and handling serpents were also to the fore.

Hislop describes the form of worship accorded Æsculapius: 'Among the lords many, and the gods many, worshipped in the imperial city [Rome], the two grand objects of worship were the "Eternal Fire," kept perpetually burning in the temple of Vesta, and the Epidaurian snake. In Pagan Rome, this fire-worship and serpent-worship were sometimes separate, sometimes conjoined; but both occupied a pre-eminent place in Roman esteem....The Epidaurian snake, that the Romans worshipped along with the fire, was looked on as the divine representation of Æsculapius, whom that sacred snake represented, the child of the Sun....To symbolise this relationship, the head of the image of Æsculapius was generally circled with rays. The "golden beams"

¹⁴²³ often referred to as the god of medicine or healing.

¹⁴²⁴ beginning in the 5th-century BC.

¹⁴²⁵ Ophiolatry.

around the head of Æsculapius were intended to mark the same, to point him out as the child of the Sun, or the sun incarnate. Æsculapius, whom that sacred snake represented, was, evidently, just another name for the great Babylonian god....The mythical birth of Æsculapius was just the same as that of Bacchus. His mother was consumed by lightning, and the infant was rescued from the lightning that consumed her, as Bacchus was snatched from the flames that burnt up his mother [Lempriere].'¹⁴²⁶

Among the children of Æsculapius, whose wife was Epione, the best known are his daughters Hygeia¹⁴²⁷ and Panacea.¹⁴²⁸ These assisted in the various temples and fed the sacred snakes. Æsculapius also had two sons, Machaon and Podalirius, who were the first military surgeons and were skilled in extracting weapons, binding wounds, and applying soothing drugs.

Æsculapius was generally depicted as a bearded man wearing a robe that leaves his breasts uncovered. His attribute was a staff with a snake coiled about it. The staff used today as a symbol of the medical profession is actually the winged caduceus of Hermes, but even this is somewhat appropriate, as Hermes was the god of commerce, and medicine has been much involved in commercial gain down through the ages. Hermes, incidentally, was also the god of thieves, which might also have some bearing.

In its mythological correct form, however, the modern winged staff, or caduceus, showing twin snakes around a single slim staff, or wand of Hermes,¹⁴²⁹ was a symbol of heralds and, as noted, commerce, and is not the traditional symbol of medicine. Despite this, it is found today in various styles in medical, veterinary, chiropractic and dental symbols. The correct symbol, the staff of Æsculapius, has one serpent, rather than two. In this form, that of a single snake coiled around a staff, it symbolises the serpent allegedly guarding the tree of life in the garden of Eden. Æsculapius was worshipped as the god of medicine and was portrayed with the Olympian attitude of Zeus recognizable by his prime attribute, the snake; a symbol of rejuvenescence, based, it appears, on the fact that the snake changes its skin with regularity.

The main cult of Æsculapius was established in the fourth-century BC with sanctuaries at Athens, Epidauros, Tricea, and Kos, the birthplace of Hippocrates. Later, a temple was built in Rome¹⁴³⁰ on an island of the Tiber¹⁴³¹ for which the cult statue was carved by the Greek sculptor Alkamenes. The island was shaped like a ship, with an obelisk¹⁴³² for the mast. Later, Pergamum in Asia Little¹⁴³³ became the seat of this pagan worship.

¹⁴²⁶ Hislop, Alexander, *The Two Babylons*, pp.235-237, & footnote (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

¹⁴²⁷ Health.

¹⁴²⁸ all-healing.

¹⁴²⁹ staff of Hermes, or Mercury, in Greek and Roman mythology respectively.

¹⁴³⁰ 293BC

¹⁴³¹ Isola Tiberina.

¹⁴³² Obelisk, Greek, obeliskos, diminutive of obelos, spit, nail, pointed pillar; Caldean, o-bel-isk, 'shaft of bel.'

¹⁴³³ Asia Minor.

Hippocrates¹⁴³⁴ declared that only the study and observation of nature and of man would point the way to the truth. In his quest for knowledge, he developed a moral code and a quasi-religion of medical service which have survived remarkably intact to this day.

Many a medical institution, both ancient and modern, wittingly or not, has dedicated itself through the Hippocratic oath, or by some other means, to the service of Satan. Even their crests and emblems brazenly sport a depiction of Æsculapius in serpent form wreathed around a dead tree or staff.¹⁴³⁵ Sometimes these go further, depicting the very pictorial form of Æsculapius, while others depict the snake actually wreathed around the pagan symbol of the cross. Hislop further describes this pagan demi-god: 'Æsculapius means 'the instructing snake,' but also, by another interpretation, 'the strength-restorer,' or the healing god. Macrobius, giving an account of the mystic doctrine of the ancients, says that Æsculapius was that beneficent influence of the sun which pervaded the souls of men.¹⁴³⁶ Now the serpent was the symbol of the enlightening sun.

'The splendid and glorious Teitan,' [a] title commonly given to the sun, was the name given at Rome to the Epidaurian snake, worshipped under the name of Æsculapius, that is, the 'man instructing serpent.' Here then, in Rome, was Teitan, or Satan, identified with 'the serpent that taught mankind,' that opened their eyes (when, of course, they were blind), and gave them the 'knowledge of good and evil.'

Now the great god,¹⁴³⁷ [Nimrod], cut off in the midst of his power and glory, was symbolised as a huge tree, stripped of all its branches, and cut down almost to the ground. But the great serpent, the symbol of the life restoring Æsculapius, twists itself around the dead stock, and lo, at its side sprouts a young tree—a tree of an entirely different kind, that is destined never to be cut down by a hostile power—even the palm tree, the well-known symbol of victory.

The Babylonian king pretended to be a representative of Nimrod or Phaethon; [but] the prophet.... informs him, that, as certainly as the god in whom he gloried had been cast down from his high estate,¹⁴³⁸ so certainly should he. In the classic story, Phaethon is said to have been consumed with lightning (and.... Æsculapius also died the same death); but the lightning is a mere metaphor for the wrath of God.

In Pergamos, especially, where pre-eminently '*Satan's seat was*,' the sun divinity, as is well known, was worshipped under the form of a serpent and under the name of Æsculapius, 'the man instructing serpent.' According to the fundamental doctrine of the Mysteries, as brought from Pergamos to Rome, the sun was the one and only god; and of that only god, Tammuz or Janus, in his character as the Son, or the woman's seed, was just an incarnation.¹⁴³⁹

¹⁴³⁴ b.470BC

¹⁴³⁵ cp. British Medical Association logo.

¹⁴³⁶ *Sat.* lib. I. cap. 23

¹⁴³⁷ viz., Nimrod.

¹⁴³⁸ viz., Satan.

¹⁴³⁹ Hislop, Alexander, *The Two Babylons*, pp.98,234,278,279 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

Here, then, is patent correlation and correspondence between the 'healing god,' the roots and origins of medical practice and profession, sun worship, oath swearing and allegiance to pagan gods, and the 'instructor of good and evil,' none other than Satan.

Pagan spoor

Modern medical science has developed and refined many overtly pagan traits and practices. By way of limited illustration:

Euthanasia

Euthanasia is legal in Holland,¹⁴⁴⁰ having been condoned 'unofficially' for almost thirty years, with very few physicians ever having been prosecuted for engaging in what is termed 'mercy killings.' Court rulings have established guidelines for doctors prepared to help patients wishing to die. The law now guarantees immunity from prosecution if doctor-assisted suicide¹⁴⁴¹ guidelines have been properly observed.

The Act is tantamount to the state issuing the medical profession with another licence to kill. It already has one for abortion, covering the beginning of life, now it would appear that it might get one for the end. All of them to be sacrificed to the pagan god of healing: Satan.¹⁴⁴²

'What is the Christian attitude to euthanasia? Euthanasia is the doctrine which believes that, when a person's life has become intolerable, when it may be argued that life is worse than death, then that life may be legitimately taken away. According to this belief, a person who is suffering from some incurable and agonizing disease might be killed, kindly and humanely and presumably with his own consent, if he is still able to give

¹⁴⁴⁰ legalized on 1 April, 2002; 'All Fools' Day,' an occult high day occurring 13 weeks after New Year's Day.

¹⁴⁴¹ Barclay, William, *The Plain Man's Guide to Ethics*, pp.77,78:

'Thomas Aquinas forbade suicide on three grounds (Aquinas, Thomas, *Summa Theologica*, 2.2.64,65). First, it is unnatural. Second, as Plato had already said, it is a crime against the community. Third, it is a usurpation of the prerogative of God, who alone has the right to bring life to an end. Kant condemned suicide on the grounds that it is an insult to humanity as embodied in oneself.

When we sum this up, certain things emerge.

(i) We may well say that suicide always occurs when a man is of unsound mind....

(ii) The fault in suicide is twofold. It involves a running away from life, and it involves....the usurpation of that which belongs to God alone. In that act man tries to escape from life by taking the times and seasons of life into his own hands.

(iii) If there is one place where condemnation should be silent, and where sympathy should be paramount, and where self-condemnation should be in the heart, it is here. The man who commits suicide does so because he finds life intolerable and it may be, and often is, the case that that is so because no-one helped to make it tolerable for him.... For the Christian, the taking of one's own life is forbidden.'

¹⁴⁴² a belief in reincarnation has often a great effect on the view held of the ethics and desirability of abortion and euthanasia. If the belief is that by killing the unborn or the elderly, one is simply releasing a spirit or soul from an unwanted or decaying body, a form of physical prison, in order that it might reincarnate into another that is better, then neither of these is murder, so far as the deluded believer is concerned.

consent. Or, this belief might argue, a child born deformed and obviously quite unable ever to live in the real sense might never be allowed to grow up. Or, it might be held, a child mentally and incurably deficient might be deprived of life before life ever really begins. There are, however, good practical reasons for regarding euthanasia with the greatest hesitation.

1. There is the very real difficulty of defining the area in which euthanasia might be practiced. Just when does a person reach the stage when it would be better for him to have his life ended? How is the word incurable to be defined? Is it not the case that many diseases which were once incurable are curable now, and what guarantee is there that a disease which is incurable at the present moment may not become curable within the lifetime of the person who has it? It would be a task to baffle human skill to decide at just what stage of human suffering or human abnormality a person becomes a fit subject for euthanasia. A law demands a certain amount of precision in it; a law requires a certain number of uniform and applicable tests; and this is an area in which it would be impossible to achieve this precision or to devise those tests;

2. Even given the tests, who would make the decision as to the ending of a person's life? Would the relatives have the say? Would the person's own doctor decide? Would there be some special panel or commission which would investigate each case and then decide? What part of the decision would the person himself have? Perhaps in some ideal republic or in some Utopia in which the state is all-powerful and in which the individual has no rights at all this would be workable, but in any normal conditions the responsibility for decision would present intolerable problems;

3. Even given that the tests could be devised, and that the decision could be taken, who would be responsible for the carrying out of the decision?....and,

4. Any such scheme would without any doubt lend itself to enormous abuse. Once allowed the right to take life under any circumstances, the circumstances may at any time be fabricated or unduly extended. The way would be open for the extermination of the aged and the infirm, or even of a whole class of unwanted citizens, as happened in Hitler's Germany. The operation of the scheme would involve and require such complicated safeguards and such unceasing vigilance that it would become impossible.

Apart from any of these practical difficulties, there still remains the deep-seated conviction that it is basically wrong to give anyone the power of life and death.¹⁴⁴³

¹⁴⁴³ Barclay, William, *The Plain Man's Guide to Ethics*, pp.71,72

Abortion

Abortion usually involves either of the following 'techniques':

1. Vacuum curettage, or suction aspiration, involves the insertion of a powerful suction tube with a sharp cutting edge into the womb through the dilated cervix. The suction dismembers the body of the developing baby and tears the placenta from the wall of the uterus, sucking blood, amniotic fluid, placental tissue, and foetal parts into a collection bottle; or,
2. Dilation and evacuation, used to abort unborn children as old as twenty-four weeks, is similar to the above. The difference is that forceps with sharp metal jaws are used to grasp parts of the developing baby, which are then twisted and torn away. This continues until the child's entire body is removed from the womb. Because the baby's skull has often hardened to bone by this time, the skull must sometimes be compressed or crushed to facilitate removal.

The remains are then burnt in an incinerator. In addition, there is the murderous 'technique' known as 'partial-birth abortion,' too horrific even to begin to describe here.¹⁴⁴⁴ There is also a pill capable of inducing abortion chemically. The abortion rate¹⁴⁴⁵ in the U.S.A. is running at over one-and-a-half million per annum. For every one thousand live births, there are three hundred and fifty abortions. Since the US Supreme Court 'legalised' unrestricted abortion,¹⁴⁴⁶ the total number of abortions performed 'in the land of the free' is over fifty million. The British abortion percentage—twenty percent of all possible live births—is roughly similar to the USA's. In addition, until a recent E.U.-driven amendment to the constitution of the Republic permitting abortion, Britain provided abortion services for women from the Republic of Ireland where so-called legal abortion had been extremely difficult to procure. The continuing campaign to widen abortion services around the globe clamours for recognition of 'women's reproductive rights,' with women actively campaigning for the 'right' to kill their unborn. There are even calls in some quarters for post-birth abortion.

This evil practice, killing the unborn child and then throwing its remains into a furnace, is nothing other than the act of worshipping Baal, or Moloch, the fire god.¹⁴⁴⁷ Satanists regard abortion as the highest level of human sacrifice to the Devil because it denies the maximum natural life term to the victim, snuffing out life at the

¹⁴⁴⁴ Lynch, Michael, *The British Empire*, p.36:

'The modern age is baffled and repelled by the readiness with which civilized and informed people in a past age were prepared to tolerate and justify slavery. But it aids historical perspective to remember that the defence they gave rested on a set of basic assertions—slaves were not fully human; they did not really feel pain in its fullest sense; they could not adequately survive on their own—that are essentially the same arguments as are used to justify legal abortion in modern advanced societies.'

¹⁴⁴⁵ in 1998AD

¹⁴⁴⁶ 1973AD

¹⁴⁴⁷ Baal, the Canaanite storm god.

earliest possible opportunity, when it is at its most vulnerable. Abortion, therefore, is nothing more than 'legalised,' institutionalised murder. It is so contrary to the will of God that no one involved in that vile trade will escape *'the lake of fire'*—for trade it is. In the perverted world of medicine, money is demanded for the conduct of ritual murder, and a highly-lucrative secondary market exists for recycled cells and tissues.

Heart & other transplants

Body-part transplants, sometimes involving animal-derived or animal-sourced products, are becoming more common. Discussions over the 'ethics' of implanting pig hearts in the human body have been taking place in many quarters. The bio-technology industry, forever devising more complex 'plug-and-play' products for the human body, now perceives head transplants, involving unavoidable paraplegic 'side effects,' as technically possible, and, in some instances, 'ethically supportable.' There are now calls for all cadavers—cadaver defined as a living body with heart pumping but with no discernible sentient brain activity—to become the property of the state in order to facilitate the wholesale plunder of body parts for the medical transplant industry.¹⁴⁴⁸

In Great Britain, with its much-vaunted but creaking National Health Service, committees of medical and ethical experts routinely sit in judgement over which patient will receive a transplant or other complex operation, and which will not. In their mind they may sit in judgement over who will live, and who will die. The worth of lives is weighed in the balance, just as in the pagan Egyptian rites of passage into the 'afterlife.'

In the United States of America, the same decisions are usually made by the market; the ability to pay being the deciding factor.

Ethical & moral confusion

Ethics committees, experts, and advisers make a very good living out of the completely wide-open field of pontification on the ethical acceptability of medical operations, procedures, levels of care, and such like. But many pontificators and pundits do not even begin to perceive the fundamental difference between ethics and morals. Those sufficiently muddled as to confuse ethics with morals in this way should study McRoberts: 'The contemporary confusion of the concepts of ethics and morals has resulted in the rapid degeneration of our culture. A distinction must be made between these two concepts.'

¹⁴⁴⁸ it has been estimated that the market value of a fully-recycled human 'heart-pumping' cadaver, in terms of re-usable body parts, is of the order of £400,000 / €480,000 / \$640,000; the 'value' of metals and various elements in the human body is estimated to be under £10 / €12 / \$16, in 2008AD prices.

Ethics¹⁴⁴⁹ is a normative science. As a normative science, ethics is concerned with the standards (norms) employed to evaluate the value system of a culture. This means that ethics is concerned with the way things "ought" to be within a given culture.

Morality is a descriptive science [or art] and therefore is concerned with describing behaviour within a given culture. Moral actions describe what people actually do and therefore "isness" rather than "oughtness" is intrinsic to the nature of morals....[as is much moral obliquity too].

Hence, ethics is not concerned with what we do, as are morals, but rather ethics is concerned with what we ought to do.

The confusion of these concepts (ethics and morals) has resulted in like-minded people determining what is right and wrong within our society. Issues of right and wrong or even what is normal are therefore determined on the basis of what people enjoy doing rather than what they ought to be doing....[thus reducing all to collective whim and fancy].

When the normal (relating to morals) becomes the normative (relating to ethics), then the present "isness" (the way things are) of a culture determines what "ought" to be. This is in contradiction to the biblical ethic that determines the legitimacy of "isness" by what is ultimately right as founded upon the character of the transcendent God. A nation such as America, entrapped in this confusing dilemma, wallows in the filthy mire of its own moral depravity, claiming with relativistic blindness that evil is good and good is evil.¹⁴⁵⁰

Combined, the entire medical industry—including its myriad lobbyists, advisers, researchers and suppliers—bows in homage to its pagan roots, and seeks to 'play God.' Unfortunately for them, there is only one united God, the provider of our Judæo-Christian ethic, and He doesn't / They don't 'play.'

Medicine actually religion

Medical science is not really a science; neither is it an art. It is, in fact, a religion. 'All the ancient writerssaid that medicine was the gift of the gods.'¹⁴⁵¹ 'Almost every nation of antiquity came to refer the origin of medicine to the immediate instruction of the gods.'¹⁴⁵²

Reimann describes the depth of the problem, and identifies the culprit: 'True Christians know that the gods are none other than Satan and his angels.'¹⁴⁵³ They have their stamp on doctors and medicines. The 'Rx'

¹⁴⁴⁹ Greek: eithikos.

¹⁴⁵⁰ McRoberts, Kerry D., *New Age or Old Lie?* p.26 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

¹⁴⁵¹ Cumston, C. G., *The History of Medicine*, p.9

¹⁴⁵² Hamilton, William, *History of Medicine, Surgery and Anatomy*, p.9

¹⁴⁵³ Deut 32:17; Psa 106:34-38; I Cor 10:19,20

on every prescription is the eye of Horus. That same eye is in the pyramid on the back of our dollar bill. And that's real apropos when you realise that drugs provide the greatest profit margin of anything produced.'¹⁴⁵⁴ ¹⁴⁵⁵

A former professor at the University of Padua and then Research Associate in the History of Medicine at Yale observed:¹⁴⁵⁶ 'Hence, [prescriptions] were recorded in writing at an early date, and in all ancient civilisations medical texts are found among the oldest literary documents preserved.'¹⁴⁵⁷

There was one nation that did not have medical texts among its early writings; instead, it had the ten commandments. Early Israelites and early Christians did not go to doctors. They weren't primitive: they were obedient. If doctors were God's servants, then Israel should have been the cradle of medicine; but that is Egypt. The second pharaoh of the First Dynasty, according to Manetho, was Athothis, a physician. Medical schools existed there from the First Dynasty.

Greeks and Romans extolled the antiquity, wisdom, and scientific knowledge of the Egyptians. Homer said: 'Each is a physician with knowledge beyond all men.'¹⁴⁵⁸ Herodotus noted: 'The art of medicine is thus

¹⁴⁵⁴ Reimann, Harold, *Gods or Doctors*, pp.11-13 (paraphrased in part); the eye of Horus, the Egyptian amulet dates back 5,000 years. Horus became the god of healing and his eye the protecting device. This bird-headed god was none other than the Egyptian form of Nimrod reborn, cf. Gen 10:8,9, the founder of this world's society which is in rebellion against God. He was worshipped as the sun-god.

¹⁴⁵⁵ Barclay, William, *Flesh and Spirit*, p.38:

'The evil eye was universally feared (Alciphron, *Letters*, 1:15; Pliny, *Natural History*, 7:16; Plutarch, *Symposiaca*, #7)....It could be guarded against by the use of amulets. Strangely enough, the amulet consisted of a little model of the phallus worn round the neck (turpicula res, Varro calls it; Varro, *Lugna Latina*, 7.37). The same strange safeguarding amulet could be seen in gardens and in hearths (Pliny, *Natural History*, 19.50).'

Cooper, J. C., *An Illustrated Encyclopaedia of Traditional Symbols*, p.20:

'Known as the eye of Horus' or 'utchat eye,' it is associated with both the Egyptian god Horus and his father Osiris.'

Schnoebelen, William J., and Spencer, James R., *Whited Sepulchers*, p.20:

'Called the 'mal ochio' (evil eye), this object is regarded by all Satanists as the symbol of Lucifer.'

Bailey, Alice, and Khul, Diwhal, *Esoteric Astrology - III - Triangles of Energy - Constellations*:

'The eye of Shiva—the all-seeing eye, the eye which directs the will and purpose of deity.'

Pike, Albert, *Morals and Dogma of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry*, pp.15,16 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'The all-seeing eye....to the Egyptians was the emblem of Osiris, the Creator....His [Osiris'] power was symbolised by an eye over a sceptre. The sun was termed by the Greeks the eye of Jupiter, and the eye of the world; and this is the all-seeing eye in our [masonic] lodges.'

Daniel, John, *Scarlet and the Beast: A History of the War Between English and French Freemasonry*, pp.6,7 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'The serpent promised Adam and Eve that their eyes would '*be opened*' if they ate of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil [Gen 3:5, '*For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil*']. The key word in this passage is '*eyes*,' which in Hebrew can be translated '*knowledge*.' Opened can be translated '*broadened*.' What the serpent promised Adam and Eve was that their knowledge would be broadened if they ate of the forbidden fruit.'

The pagan notion of a third or pineal eye, opened or not, implies some form of pre-existent immortality in man; a purely pagan conception clearly seen in Satan's deceptive promise to Eve in the garden of Eden.

In reality, the evil eye / amulet is a pagan identifier. Worn round the neck, it symbolises serfdom to the pagan god of fertility; in other words, one of the assumed aspects of Satan. In pagan Rome, vestal virgins wore their amulets, in the form of crosses, round their necks and wore their names upon their foreheads.

¹⁴⁵⁶ in 1941AD

¹⁴⁵⁷ Castiglioni, Dr. Arturo, *A History of Medicine*, p.21 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

divided: each physician applies himself to one disease only and not more. All places abound in physicians.¹⁴⁵⁹ Medical science had to wait for specialisation to occur again until the latter half of the twentieth-century. While Athothis wrote a book on anatomy and the discussion of the human body, medical science had to wait for anatomy until the sixteenth-century.

Castiglioni shows from a review of the content of the most ancient Ebers Papyrus that the Egyptians knew that the heart was the centre of the blood supply and that vessels were attached to it for every part of the body. This knowledge was lost to medical science until Spencer. The papyrus also contained about one thousand prescriptions, some whose components were not all known in the 1940s. The 'medicines were prescribed in all the forms still in use today.' He said this about the Edwin Smith Papyrus.¹⁴⁶⁰ 'The clinical observations are so accurate and clear that it does not appear possible to the physician who reads these pages that five thousand years have passed.'

'The world stands in awe of ancient Egypt. A college history professor....at Cal. State L.A. told the story of a meeting with Albert Einstein who made a low bow of deep respect when he found out that the professor was from Egypt. God, however, did not think highly of Egypt. He made it a base nation and scattered Egyptians throughout the world.¹⁴⁶¹ He equated Egypt with sin—something [Judæo-Christians] are to come out of.

The medical baton passed to Greece and Hippocrates¹⁴⁶² was called the father of medicine. That title should go to Imhotop who lived several thousand years earlier [sic].¹⁴⁶³ The reason Hippocrates is touted is because he was supposed to have taken medicine out of the hands of the gods. Young doctors have been taking the Hippocratic Oath since that time.'¹⁴⁶⁴

Lasko asks: 'Now instead of the Judæo-Christian covenant with God, is our budding doctor making a covenant with another type of being?'¹⁴⁶⁵ Of course!

'The Hippocratic Oath has been revised,¹⁴⁶⁶ not because doctors swore to pagan gods, but because doctors swore not to perform abortions. After two thousand, five hundred years they were quick to change a time-honoured belief after governments made abortion legal. So now they offer [the choice:] pre-natal care or pre-natal death.¹⁴⁶⁷

Doctors have allowed the holocaust of millions of unborn human beings! And they kill them. And they get paid.

¹⁴⁵⁸ Homer, *The Odyssey*

¹⁴⁵⁹ Herodotus, *The Histories*, Book II

¹⁴⁶⁰ written in BC1700s from an earlier manuscript.

¹⁴⁶¹ Ezek 29:12,15; but scattered only for a period of forty years, cf. Ezek 29:15.

¹⁴⁶² 5th-century BC

¹⁴⁶³ rather, it should go to Satan.

¹⁴⁶⁴ Castiglioni, Dr. Arturo, *A History of Medicine*, p.21 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

¹⁴⁶⁵ Lasko, Dr. Keith, *The Great Billion Dollar Medicine Swindle*

¹⁴⁶⁶ in U.S.A.

¹⁴⁶⁷ politically termed in the U.S.A.: 'a woman's right to choose.'

Manasseh today is the United States of America. We have the most drugs and doctors. We spend the most money. The medical establishment's economy in this country alone is the seventh largest economy in the world. Every sixth American works for it. But the health of our people has not been restored.

Pollack¹⁴⁶⁸ states the fact that the ancients believed their gods of healing also sent disease. Jurgen gave the historical fact: 'From ancient Babylon and Assur to the Mediterranean coast of Phoenicia, and the land of the Philistines, it was common knowledge that the fly possessed a dangerous power to spread sickness.'¹⁴⁶⁹

Ekron was a Philistine city. Baalzebub was Lord of the Flies. His priests were doctors. When Ahaziah fell down through a lattice in his upper chamber, he sent and enquired of doctors instead of to God. The judgement handed down is recorded: *'Is it not because there is not a God in Israel, that ye go to enquire of Baalzebub the god of Ekron? Now therefore thus saith the Lord, thou shalt not come down from that bed on which thou art gone up, but shalt surely die.'*¹⁴⁷⁰ Ahaziah died for his sin. Israel at the time had wandered far from their God. They had forgotten that none but God can forgive sin, and, in consequence, none but God can heal.

The first step that the true church made away from God was to Baalzebub, the medical god. In the New Testament his name in Greek is Beelzebub,¹⁴⁷¹ Lord of Dung,¹⁴⁷² one of Satan's names.¹⁴⁷³ God's healing name is Rapha. Satan's healing name is Beelzebub / Baalzebub.¹⁴⁷⁴

Pervasive drug culture

'We live in a drug-conscious society. We live in a pill-dominated life. People expect to be supplied with a tranquilliser which will pacify them, or a stimulant which will rouse them; and we can even have the bizarre situation of one man at the same time being supplied with a tranquilliser to soothe him, and a stimulant to remove the depression which the tranquilliser caused....But the root trouble about them is that they are fundamentally a deliberate evasion. They seldom cure; all they do is to hide or mask the symptoms under a cloak of synthetic calm. They are basically and fundamentally an attempt to escape from reality—and the trouble is that reality has a way of catching up with us. No drug on earth can permanently tranquillise a man into peace or

¹⁴⁶⁸ Pollack, Kurt, *The Healers*, pp.20,21

¹⁴⁶⁹ Jurgen, Torward, *The Science and Secrets of Early Medicine*, p.140 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

¹⁴⁷⁰ II Kings 1:3,4

¹⁴⁷¹ Cripps, Richard S., *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Amos*, p.125 & footnote:

'It was to *'Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron,'* that Ahaziah, king of Northern Israel, sent, thus provoking Elijah's wrath (II Kings 1:16).

Through a mistake of Jerome in his translation of the New Testament, the name of the Ekronite deity became an appellation for the devil, Beelzebub displacing Beelzebul, even in Greek manuscripts; cf. Mat 10:25, R.V. margin.'

¹⁴⁷² the prince of the devils.

¹⁴⁷³ Mat 12:24

¹⁴⁷⁴ Cripps, Richard S., *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Amos*, pp.125f.

stimulate him into action. Their action is temporary; they leave the man unchanged—and there lies the problem. They are an attempt to solve the problem by running away from it.’¹⁴⁷⁵

Esoteric & alternative medical practice

However, in addition to what might be termed 'the mainstream medical practices of man,' there are others, even more esoteric, some of which are discussed briefly hereunder.

Homeopathy

Homeopaths believe that if a drug produces symptoms similar to a certain disease, then a highly diluted form of the same drug will cure the disease. The greater the dilution, the stronger this curative effect is held to be.¹⁴⁷⁶ Amongst other considerations, great importance is attached to the manner in which these extreme dilutions are shaken during the dilution process.

Scepticism about all of this is widespread, however, largely based on the following considerations:

1. There is no known mechanism by which it can work. Most homeopathic treatments are so diluted that little if any of the original substance remains;
2. The indicator symptoms are highly subjective, as some substances have a wide range of trivial indicators;
3. Independently verifiable clinical testing and vetting is almost completely lacking; and,
4. No convincing explanation has been led as to why trace impurities in the dilutions are not similarly fortified by the dilution mechanism.

Herbalism

Herbalists prescribe herbs with known or claimed medicinal effects. For illustration, foxglove flowers contain the alkaloid digitalin, and willow bark contains aspirin. But much of the core 'folk-lore' surrounding herbal healing is yet to be vetted for efficacy, and so the scope of effective herbalism has not been defined with replicable accuracy.

¹⁴⁷⁵ Barclay, William, *Ethics in a Permissive Society*, p.130

¹⁴⁷⁶ known as the 'law' of Arndt-Schultz.

Reflexology

Reflexology is based on massage of the feet. The basic idea is that parts of the body can be 'mapped' onto certain areas of the feet. There is no known mechanism for this; all that appears to happen is a soothing and relaxing effect from massage.

Iridology

Iridology claims to be able to detect and diagnose ailments of the body by means of studying the iris of the eye. This is little more than an ancient pagan notion, deriving from the idea that the 'light of the eye' constitutes the essence of the life.

Acupuncture

The claim of acupuncture is that it stimulates or unlocks the 'chakra' points, seven energy centres or choke-points in the body, thus allowing the Yin and the Yang once again to flow smoothly throughout the whole body in the mystical way, reinvigorating and healing as they go. This is bunkum.¹⁴⁷⁷

In addition, there is a deal of evidence claimed that acupuncture has an analgesic effect.¹⁴⁷⁸ If true, the mechanism appears to involve, in part, the endogenous opiate system, but the exact mechanism by which endogenous opiates are released by acupunctural skin stimulation is not known. It is possible, however, to achieve this effect without acupuncture, by means of auto-suggestion or external suggestion, so the question appears moot.

Other benefits claimed for this treatment are physiological in nature, apparently through local changes in the activity of the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems, but detail is sketchy, and much more needs to be elucidated. In summary, the suggestion appears to be that while acupuncture might be a means of controlling pain or in the management of pain, it does not and cannot cure the underlying causes of pain.¹⁴⁷⁹

¹⁴⁷⁷ q.v. inf., 'Yin and Yang.'

¹⁴⁷⁸ pain killing.

¹⁴⁷⁹ Baer, Randall N., *Inside the New Age Nightmare*, p.154:

'A classic debate in point is the field of acupuncture. This discipline has met with success in both the holistic health field and even in increasing numbers of M.D. circles. Granted that it has a sufficient success ratio, but its philosophical foundations rest on a Chinese pantheistic system of Eastern mysticism and dragon- and serpent-power. Even if something works in a significant percentage of cases, that doesn't necessarily mean that it is righteous, holy, and true.'

Yin & Yang

The theory behind Yin and Yang,¹⁴⁸⁰ widely held in China and throughout south-east Asia, is that health is founded on a balance between the yin and the yang¹⁴⁸¹ which flow in mystical pathways through the body. Absolutely nothing bearing any semblance to this flow has ever been found.

Aromatherapy

Aromatherapy is a belief that certain essential oils, derived from various flowers, have therapeutic effects. Any effects seem, however, to be psychological rather than physical, leading many to conclude that any beneficial effects are the result of suggestion rather than that of a powerful psychoactive drug.

Crystal healing

Crystal healing is based on the belief that a small quartz crystal will make an individual healthier. The concept usually involves the strange notion of 'tuning the body's natural energy fields to the right vibrational frequencies.' Fundamentally, this is mainly a 'New Age' idea, and while it may sound vaguely scientific to its adherents and devotees, it is completely bereft of any scientific foundation.

Psychic surgery

This is the device of tricking onlookers and patients alike into believing that magical 'surgical' incisions have been made, and defective 'cancerous' tissue removed; all the while the tissue and blood have been 'palm-ed' in the form of pellets or 'magic bullets' consisting of animal tissue and animal blood, with the entire charade used for duping the gullible. No proof of the efficacy of any psychic surgery has ever been obtained, with all attempts at same resulting in proof of the very opposite.¹⁴⁸²

Shamanism

Developed in ancient or pre-historic times, and used by primitive cultures, this early form of psychic healing also involves the use of magic talismans, black magic / voodoo, the ritual slaughter of animals, the use of their 'spirits,' entrails, and other body parts together with herbs and roots in the concoction of 'healing' potions, also used for warding off of evil spirits, and similar mumbo-jumbo.

¹⁴⁸⁰ more correctly known as the Taijitu of Taoism.

¹⁴⁸¹ male and female principles.

¹⁴⁸² a form of delusion very common in the Philippines.

It is described as, 'A form of savage magic or science, by which physical nature was believed to be brought under the control of man....Shamanism rests for its view on the animistic view of nature. Animism teaches that primitive and savage man views the world as pervaded by spiritual forces. Fairies, goblins, ghosts and demons hover about him waking or sleeping; they are the causes of his mishaps, losses and pains. Mountains, woods, forests, rivers, lakes are conceived to possess spirits, and to be living, thinking, willing, passionate beings like himself. In respect to these, man is in a state of helplessness. The Shaman by appropriate words and acts uses his power to shield man and envelop him in a kind of protective armour so that the evil spirits become inactive or inoffensive....Shamanism is closely akin to fetishism, and at times it is difficult to tell whether the practices in vogue among certain peoples should be referred to one or to the other. Both spring from Animism; both are systems of savage magic or science and have certain rites in common....Shamanism is not a religion [sic; it is a religion, a pagan one]. The religious priest beseeches the favour of the gods; the Shaman is believed to be able to compel and command them to do his will.'¹⁴⁸³ No proof of efficacy in any of this has ever been found, of course.

Lourdes (& other 'healing' grottoes)

This centre, in south-west France, has been the site of a Roman Catholic shrine since a 'vision' of the Virgin Mary was seen in a grotto at Lourdes in the mid-nineteenth century¹⁴⁸⁴ by a peasant girl, Marie Bernadette Soubiros, more commonly known as 'saint' Bernadette. The 'vision' instructed her to make known the miraculous healing powers that the Virgin would impart to its waters, the instruction evidently being to: 'Go drink at the fountain, and bathe in the waters.'

Ever since then, countless 'pilgrims' have journeyed to Lourdes seeking the healing of a wide variety of ailments, but very few have ever claimed to have become cured by the experience. In the first century of its existence, about fifty-two cases of 'miraculous' cures were reported and attested by the Roman Catholic Church, and upwards of fifty seemingly unexplainable cures are submitted each year to the Lourdes Medical Bureau for judgement. Standards for the approval of miracles have been raised in the last half century or so, with a concomitant reduction in the number of 'attested miracles.'

The fundamental difficulty with all such shrines of healing lies in the almost minuscule proportion of claimed successes, allied to the lack of proper, external, independent corroboration. The magnitude of numbers attending, linked to the 'law of big numbers,' virtually 'guarantees' at least some level of 'apparent success,' however minuscule.

¹⁴⁸³ *Encyclopedia Americana*, article 'Shamanism' (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)
¹⁴⁸⁴ in 1858AD

Holistic 'New Age' medicine

In the train of the esoteric, 'The subjective science of the New Age is the matrix for the holistic health movement. Holistic medicine "is a novel American phenomenon that seems an odd mix of ancient religious rituals, invocations of nature spirits, and pantheistic philosophy."¹⁴⁸⁵

The holistic model conceives of mind, body and spirit as being one inseparable whole. Health is not just a matter of the body overcoming disease, as with more conventional models, but rather holistic medicine prescribes a balance of "our emotional states of mind, our lifestyles, and the environments in which we live and work. When our body-minds are out of balance, we are literally 'dis-eased,' opening ourselves to pain and other symptoms that are manifestations of a more basic disorder."¹⁴⁸⁶

Patients are encouraged to look beyond physical symptoms to the broader context of illness such as stress, social pressures, family conflicts, dietary habits, seasonal changes, and emotional highs and lows. Pain and disease are then understood in terms of the disharmony of these elements of human experience. The new health paradigm is people-oriented instead of the technological orientation of conventional medicine.

A holistic approach to medicine includes a variety of diagnostic tools and treatments. Some of these are conventional, many are not. The [many and] various psychotechnologies employed in holistic medicine include biofeedback, acupuncture, chiropractic techniques, creative visualisation, meditation, yoga, hypnosis, various schools of massage, rolfing, and other body therapies.

The psychotechnologies of holistic medicine are designed to invoke mystical states of mind. Pelletier¹⁴⁸⁷ openly states that the manipulation of the patient's world view by the practitioner through the use of the various psychotechnologies is a part of the healing process: 'A person entering into meditation has already in some sense committed himself to an accompanying philosophical system. This factor of the individual's attitude as he approaches meditation practice cannot be underestimated in understanding the positive effects of such practice.'¹⁴⁸⁸

In keeping with the New Age world view, the psychotechnologies of holistic medicine aid in inducing a psychological construct that allows the "divine within each person" to be the source of healing....Scores of holistic health centres and clinics are all promoting the message of the holistic health movement in our society: "in finding health, we find ourselves."^{1489 1490}

¹⁴⁸⁵ Fish, Sharon, *Holistic Health and the Nursing Profession*; Baer, Randall N., *Inside the New Age Nightmare*, p.154: 'Holistic health is a broad field. It is also one of the most tricky and subtle conjunctions between a) the wholesome and healthy, and b) being based in New Age philosophy and practice....In this trickily subtle holistic health field, discernment is at a premium.'

¹⁴⁸⁶ Livingston, Dennis, *Balancing Body, Mind, and Spirit*

¹⁴⁸⁷ Assistant Clinical Professor of Psychiatry at the University of California School of Medicine in San Francisco.

¹⁴⁸⁸ Pelletier, Kenneth, *Mind as Healer, Mind as Slayer: A Holistic Approach to Preventing Stress Disorders*, p.195

¹⁴⁸⁹ Ferguson, Marilyn, *The Aquarian Conspiracy*, p.277

Holy water / worship of water as divine element

'And, indeed, Father Newman himself admits, in regard to "holy water" (that is, water impregnated with "salt," and consecrated), and many other things that were, as he says, "the very instruments and appendages of demon-worship"—that they were all of "Pagan" origin, and "sanctified by adoption into the [Roman] church."' ¹⁴⁹¹

Janus was the most ancient of the Roman gods, represented by a double-faced head to signify his knowledge of the present and the future. He was god of the doorway and protector of all entrances. It is thought that the Romish tradition of crossing oneself with holy water from a small finger-dip next the exit door derives, in part, from this pagan belief, as does the Celtic tradition of 'saluting the door.'

'The influence of the Greek Mysteries in corrupting Christian baptism is more plainly seen than that of any other specific department of the pagan cult. These mysteries were the remnant of the oldest religion known to the Greeks. They embodied the worship of the gods of the productive forces in nature, and of the gods of death. The most important centre of this cult was at Eleusis, where the worship was celebrated in the largest temple in Greece. The chief elements in the cult were initiation, sacrifice, and scenic representations of the great facts in the processes of nature and in human life. The main conception in the initiation was that the candidate must be purified before he could approach God. The initiated, being thus purified, were inducted to a divine life and to the hope of a resurrection. The ceremonial began with a proclamation: "Let no one enter whose hands are not clean, and whose tongue is not prudent."

Confession was followed by a kind of baptism. The candidates for initiation bathed in the pure waters of the sea. The manner of bathing, and the number of immersions varied with the degree of guilt which they had confessed. They came from the bath new men. It was a katharsis, a loutron, a "laver of regeneration." ¹⁴⁹²

Certain forms of abstinence were imposed; they had to fast; and when they ate they had to abstain from certain food. After this purification came a soteria, "a great public sacrifice of salvation;" also personal sacrificesMithraicism had a similar form of initiation, a prominent feature of which was a sacred meal, upon a "holy table," of which the initiated took part after they were purified. The societies which practised these mysteries existed on a large scale during the earliest centuries of our era, and had a marked influence upon the earliest Christian communities, and upon the subsequent [Roman] church. Hatch describes these effects: 'It was inevitable when a new group of associations came to exist side by side with a large existing body of associations, from which it was continually detaching members, introducing them into its own midst, with the practices of their

¹⁴⁹⁰ McRoberts, Kerry D., *New Age or Old Lie*, pp.41-43, 'The New Myth and Medicine' (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

¹⁴⁹¹ Hislop, Alexander, *The Two Babylons*, p.138 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

¹⁴⁹² cp. Titus 3:5b, '*Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Spirit.*' Greek: loutron paliggenesia, 'washing of regeneration,' is not a medical or mystical catharsis or purgation, neither was it followed by a sacrificial rite. Indeed, any additional sacrifice beyond Christ's '*once for all*' sacrifice is an abomination: Heb 10:10 (sublinear emphasis added), '*By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.*'

original societies impressed upon their minds, that this new group should tend to assimilate, with the assimilation of their members, some of the elements of these existing groups.

This is what we find to have been in fact the case. It is possible that they made the Christian associations more secret than before. Up to a certain time there is no evidence that Christianity had any secrets. It was preached openly to the world....[I]ts rights were simple and its teaching was public. After a certain time all is changed; mysteries have arisen in the once open and easily accessible faith, and there are doctrines which must not be declared in the hearing of the uninitiated.¹⁴⁹³

The effect of these pagan mysteries upon Christian baptism....will be more clearly seen when we remember how simple a ceremony New Testament baptism was. It followed immediately upon confession of faith in Christ. There was no preparatory ceremony, no ritual, only the simple formula. There was no confusion or controversy concerning the "mode," for submersion alone was known within Christian circles.

When the current of history emerges at and after the middle of the second century, marked changes appear which are so identical with Gnosticism and the Greek mysteries that there can be no question as to their source. Among these changes were the following:

1. The name is changed, and the new terms used come directly from the familiar mysteries. Justin calls it "enlightenment";¹⁴⁹⁴ and,
2. Those who have passed the tests were "sealed,"¹⁴⁹⁵ a term from the mysteries. It was also called "Mysteries,"¹⁴⁹⁶ and many other terms, all of which sprung from the "mysteries of Greek paganism, rather than from the New Testament."

The time of baptism of adults was changed to meet the pagan conception of it as a purifying and saving act. A long preparation was demanded, and, to meet the pagan idea that it removed sins, it was often deferred until near the close of life in order to make the most of both worlds. The initiated in the Greek mysteries were given a password.¹⁴⁹⁷ "So the catechumens had a formula which was only entrusted to them of the last days of their catechumenate, the baptismal formula itself, and the Lord's Prayer." A special rite accompanied the giving of this formula. Otherwise both the Lord's Prayer and the Creed were kept as "mysteries;" the technical name for creed remains to this day as: "symbol."¹⁴⁹⁸

¹⁴⁹³ Hatch, Edwin, *Influence of Greek Ideas and Usages upon the Christian Church*

¹⁴⁹⁴ Greek: photismos, phitixesthai.

¹⁴⁹⁵ Greek: phagis; cp. the 'sealed of God,' Rev 7:3f., Greek: sphragizo, from sphragis.

¹⁴⁹⁶ Greek: musterion.

¹⁴⁹⁷ Greek: sumbolon or sunthema.

¹⁴⁹⁸ Greek: sumbolon.

Hathic quotes a description of baptism in the Roman Catholic Church which shows every essential feature of the Eleusinian mysteries transferred to “Christian baptism” [falsely so-called]. The account is taken from Mabillion. “I will abridge the account which is given of the practice at Rome so late as the ninth century. Preparation went on through the greater part of Lent¹⁴⁹⁹ The candidates were examined and tested; they fasted; they received the secret symbols, the Creed and the Lord’s Prayer. On Easter eve, as the day declined towards afternoon, they assembled in the Church of Saint John Lateran. The rites of exorcism and renunciation were gone through in solemn form, and the rituals survive. The Pope and his priests come forth in their sacred vestments, with lights carried in front of them, which the Pope then blesses; there is a reading of lessons and a singing of psalms. And then, while they chant a litany, there is a procession to the great bath of baptism, and the water is blest.

The baptised come forth from the water, are signed with the cross, and are presented to the Pope one by one, who vests them in a white robe and signs their foreheads again with the cross. They are arranged in a great circle, and each of them carries a light. Then a vast array of lights is kindled; the blaze of them, says a Greek father [sic], makes night continuous with dawn. It is the beginning of a new life. The mass is celebrated—the mystic offering on the cross is represented in figure; but for the newly baptised the chalice is filled, not with wine, but with milk and honey, that they may understand, says an old writer, that they have entered already upon the Promised Land. And there was one more symbolical rite in that early Easter sacrament, the mention of which is often suppressed: a lamb was offered on the altar, and, afterwards, cakes in the shape of a lamb. It was simply the ritual which we have seen already in the mysteries. The purified crowd at Eleusis saw a blaze of light, and in the light were represented in symbol form life and death and resurrection.”

[The use of anointing oil in baptism was borrowed directly from paganism]. ‘The general inference of the large influence of Gnostics on baptism is confirmed by the fact that another element, which certainly came through them, though its source is not certain, and is more likely to have been Oriental than Greek, has maintained a permanent place in most rituals—the element of anointing. There were two customs in this matter, one more characteristic of the east, the other of the West; the anointing with:

1. the oil of exorcism before baptism and after the renunciation of the Devil; and,
2. the oil of thanksgiving, which was used immediately after the baptism, first by the presbyter, and then by the bishop, who then sealed the candidate on the forehead. The very variety of the custom shows how deep and

¹⁴⁹⁹ a pagan custom celebrating the forty years’ of the life of Tammuz, who was killed by a wild boar. This is the same Tammuz for whom women wept, Ezek 8:14. Also, from Egypt, the period was held to represent the forty days of the death and absence of Osiris (resurrection and rebirth) which curiously exposes in a period of fasting through the ‘iris’ or ‘Eye.’

yet natural the action of the Gnostic systems, with their mystical and magical customs of the Gnostic societies or associations, had been on the practices and ceremonies of the [Roman] Church.

The pagan doctrine of exorcism was carried still further, and baptism was corrupted yet more by adding the use of human saliva as a “charm.” This arose from the general use of spittle by the pagans as a talisman against harm and evil influences....

Tertullian wrote a special treatise on the question of baptism, which represented the pagano-Christian creed in fullness and in detail. I transcribe his words in part, and call attention to the similarity and the points of identity between these and the pagan theories already presented. Chapter one of the treatise opens with the words: “Happy is the sacrament of our water, in that, by washing away the sins of our early blindness, we are set free [and admitted] into eternal life!....But we, little fishes, after the example of our (Ichthus) Jesus Christ, are born in water, nor have we safety in any other way than by permanently abiding in [that] water.”

In the succeeding chapters Tertullian goes on to show that water was “chosen as a vehicle of divine operation” because it was the element over which the divine spirit brooded in creation. He says: “Why should water be chosen as a vehicle of divine operation? Its prominence first of all in Creation....” Mindful of his declaration as of a conclusive prescript, we nevertheless [proceed to] treat [the question].

“How foolish and impossible it is to be formed anew by water. In what respect, pray, has this material substance merited an office of so high dignity? The authority, I suppose, of the liquid element has to be examined. This, however, is found in abundance, and that from the very beginning. For [water] is one of those things, which, before all the furnishing of the world, were quiescent with God in a yet unshapen state.....the first thingwhich you have to venerate is the age of the waters, the second, their dignity, in that they were the seat of the Divine Spirit, more pleasing, no doubt, than all the other then existing elements.”

In chapter four, Tertullian teaches that the divine power hovering over the water, in creation, made it “holy” as well as life producing, and that these qualities continue to exist in all water. He says: “Thus the nature of the waters, sanctified by the Holy One, itself conceived withal the power of sanctifying. Let no one say, ‘Why, then, are we, pray, baptised with the very waters which then existed in the beginning?....All waters....in virtue of the pristine privilege of their origin, do, after invocation of God, attain the sacramental power of sanctification; for the Spirit immediately supervenes from the heavens, and rests over the waters, sanctifying them from himself; and being thus sanctified they imbibe at the same time the power of sanctifying.”¹⁵⁰⁰

The use of holy water formed an important part of the pagan system. It was a sort of continuous baptism, a succession of baptismal acts. That is wholly unscriptural, and in every way foreign to Christian baptism. ‘In Popish churches the first thing that we are struck with is a vessel of what is called holy water, into which

¹⁵⁰⁰ Lewis, Abraham Herbert, *Paganism Surviving in Christianity* and Hatch, Edwin, *Influence of Greek Ideas and Usages upon the Christian Church* (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

those who enter dip their fingers, and then mark their foreheads with the sign of the cross. This holy water, there can be no doubt, came from the lustral water of the pagans, as, indeed, learned Catholics allow. This water was also placed at the entrance of the heathen temples, and those who entered were sprinkled with it.¹⁵⁰¹

Middleton also attests the pagan origin of holy water: 'The next thing that will of course strike one's imagination is their use of holy water; for nobody ever goes in or out of a church but is either sprinkled by the priest, who attends for that purpose on solemn days, or else serves himself with it from a vessel, usually of marble, placed just at the door, not unlike to one of our baptismal fonts. Now, this ceremony is so notoriously and directly transmitted to them from paganism that their own writers make not the least scruple to own it. The Jesuit la Cerda, in his notes on a passage of Virgil, where this practice is mentioned, says, 'hence was derived the custom of Holy Church to provide purifying or holy water at the entrance of their churches.' 'Aquaminarium or Amula,' says the learned Montfaucon, 'was a vase of holy water, placed by the Heathen at the entrance of their Temples to sprinkle themselves with.' The same vessel was by the Greeks called perippanterion; two of which, the one of gold, the other of silver, were given by Croesus to the Temple of Apollo at Delphi; and the custom of sprinkling themselves was so necessary a part of all their religious offices, that the method of excommunication seems to have been by prohibiting the offenders the approach and use of the holy water pot. The very composition of this holy water was the same also among the Heathens, as it is now among the Papists, being nothing more than a mixture of salt with common water; and the form of the sprinkling brush, called by the ancients aspersorium or aspergillum (which is much the same with what the priests now make use of), may be seen in bas-reliefs, or ancient coins, wherever the insignia, or emblems of the Pagan priesthood, are described, of which it is generally one.

The magical virtues which [so-called] Christians came to ascribe to holy water are essentially identical with those which the Pagans attributed to it....A catalogue of the uses and virtues of holy water was found in a document in the chapel of St. Carlo Borromeo at Rome.¹⁵⁰²

Similar virtues are still attributed to it by modern Romanists: 'Holy water possesses much usefulness when Christians [so called] sprinkle themselves with it with due reverence and devotion. The Holy Church proposes it as a remedy and assistant in many circumstances, both spiritual and corporeal, but especially in these:

Spiritual usefulness:

1. It drives away devils from places and persons;
2. It affords great assistance against fears and diabolical illusions;

¹⁵⁰¹ Priestly, Dr. Joseph, *History of the Corruption of Christianity*, Vol. 2, p.3

¹⁵⁰² Middleton, Conyers, *The Miscellaneous Works* (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

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3. It cancels venial sins;
 4. It imparts strength to resist temptation and occasions to sin;
 5. It drives away wicked thoughts;
 6. It preserves safely from the passing snares of the devil, both internally and externally;
 7. It obtains the favour and presence of the Holy Ghost by which the soul is consoled, rejoiced, excited to devotion, and disposed to prayer; and,
 8. It prepares the human mind for a better attendance on the divine mysteries, and receiving piously and worthily the most holy sacrament.

Corporeal usefulness:

1. It is a remedy against barrenness, both in woman and in beast;
2. It heals the infirmities both of the mind and of the body; and,
3. It purifies infected air, and drives away plague and contagion.”

Such is this document. It is the only authorised one I have seen respecting holy water; and this extraordinary statement [is]....affixed separately over each of the vessels containing the holy water; and as every member of the congregation must have sprinkled himself with the water as he entered the church, so he must have seen and read these, its uses.’¹⁵⁰³

Holy water was also used to sprinkle animals. This custom continues in the Roman church. The counterpart is found in several pagan customs which are described by Ovid in *Fasti*. Speaking of animals, Seymour says: ‘It was supposed to guard them against evil genii as they ran the race; and a legend is told of the horses of some Christians having outstripped all the horses of the heathen, owing to their being sprinkled with holy water. Such a legend serves as a sanction of primitive Christianity to horse races, quite as well as to the use of holy water. Pagan custom soon became a papal custom, and falling in with the humour of the people, and the patronage of Saint Anthony, who is usually pictured accompanied by a pig, and being conducive to the pecuniary interests of the convent of Saint Anthony, the custom was continued under a new name, and ‘Saint Anthony’s Day’ and the ‘blessing of the horses’ are thus identified.’¹⁵⁰⁴

¹⁵⁰³ Middleton, Conyers, *The Miscellaneous Works* (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

¹⁵⁰⁴ Seymour, Michael Hobart, *A Pilgrimage to Rome*, p.53

The corrupting presence of paganism is shown in the preparation of water for purification and for baptism quite as much as in its use. 'It appears that there are three kinds of holy water, two of which are used for the consecration of churches. Of these two, the first is considered to be inferior, since nothing but salt is used in its preparation—'salt exorcised for the salvation of those that believe.' It serves for sprinkling the building. The other is made up by a mixture of salt, ashes, and wine—all blessed, of course. This appears to be the holier of the two, and is used for the consecration of the altar. The third class of holy water, that which is referred to as being consecrated on 'Holy Saturday,' is used for baptisms during the following year; and also, as I gather, for sprinkling generally. In its preparation—amid many exorcisms of devils and evil spirits, and forms of prayer—the following ceremonies are observed: The priest divides the water in the font with his hand, in the shape of a cross. In exorcising the water he touches it with his hand. In blessing it, he thrice makes over it the sign of the cross. In dividing it, he pours it towards the four quarters of heaven. He breathes thrice into it in the form of a cross. He lets down the great [Easter] candle a little into it, and says, 'This might of the Holy Ghost descend into this fountain—plentitude.'¹⁵⁰⁵ Then he takes the candle from the water and again merges it more deeply, saying the same words as before, but in a higher tone. The third time he plunges it to the bottom, again repeating the formula with a still louder voice. Then blowing¹⁵⁰⁶ thrice into the water in the form of the Greek letter Psi, he says: 'Impregnate with regenerating efficacy the whole substance of this water' and so takes the candle out of the font. Besides these doings, various oils are poured into the water and mixed with the hand; and still more strange, spittle mingled with it, as I have once seen with my own eyes in the grand baptistry at Saint John Lateran in Rome.

The might of the Holy Ghost descend into this fountain, plentitude, and impregnate with regenerating efficacy the whole substance of this water.' Such is the spell. Exorcisms first chase all evil spirits from the water, then incantations and charms—divinings, oils, crossings, breathings, candle plungings, and other things—cause the might of the Holy Ghost to descend and impregnate the water with regenerating efficacy. It is no longer ordinary water, such as that wherein the eunuch or Cornelius and his friends were baptised; but, by the power of its charms, it has become an ecclesiastical compound, and those to whom it is administered are made new creatures and regenerate, not, so far as I understand, because they are brought by faith to Christ, but through the mere application of the fluid impregnated with virtue by an ecclesiastical process. And the only man who can make and apply this 'Elixer of Life,' of eternal life, is the priest.'¹⁵⁰⁷

The sun-worship cultus and water-worship were united from the very beginning. This union was made anterior to Grecian or Roman times, and much of the sacredness of water arose from it. Hislop describes this

¹⁵⁰⁵ Latin: in hanc plentitudinem fontis.

¹⁵⁰⁶ Latin: sufflans.

¹⁵⁰⁷ Brock, Mourant, *Rome, Pagan and Papal*, p.107, quoting from Foy, *Roman Rites* (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

connection in the sanctifying of water: 'In Egypt, as we have seen, Osiris, as identified with Noah, was represented when overcome by his grand enemy, Typhon, or the 'Evil One,' as passing through the waters. The poets represented Semiramis as sharing in his distress, and likewise seeking safety in the same way. We have seen already that under the name of Astarte she was said to have come forth from the wondrous egg that was found floating in the waters of the Euphrates. Now, Manilius tells, in his 'Astronomical Poetics,' what induced her to take refuge in these waters. 'Venus plunged into the Babylonian waters,' says he, 'to shun the fury of the snake-footed Typhon.' When Venus Urania, or Doine, the 'Heavenly Dove,' plunged in deep distress into these waters of Babylon, be it observed what, according to the Chaldean doctrine, this amounted to. It was neither more nor less than saying that the Holy Ghost incarnate [sic], in deep tribulation entered these waters, and that on purpose that these might be fit, not only by the temporary abode of the Messiah in the midst of them, but by the spirit's efficacy thus imported to them, for giving new life and regeneration, by baptism, to the worshippers of the Chaldean Madonna. We have evidence that the purifying virtues of the waters, which, in pagan esteem, had such efficacy in cleansing from guilt and regenerating the soul was derived in part from the passing of the mediatorial god, the sun-god, and god of fire, through these waters during his humiliation and sojourn in the midst of them: and that the Papacy at this day retains the very custom which had sprung up from that persuasion. So far as heathenism is concerned, the following extracts from Potter and Athenæus speak distinctly enough: 'Every person,' says the former, 'who came to the solemn sacrifices [of the Greeks] was purified by water. To which end, at the entrance of the Temples, there was commonly placed a vessel full of holy water.' How did this water get its holiness? This water 'was consecrated,' says Athenæus, 'by putting into it a Burning Torch taken from the Altar.' The burning torch was the express symbol of the god of fire: and by the light of this torch, so indispensable for consecrating the 'holy water,' we may easily see whence came one great part of the purifying virtue of 'the water of the loud resounding sea,' which was held to be so efficacious in purging away the guilt and stain of sin; even from the sun-god having taken refuge in its waters. Now this very same method is used in the Romish church for consecrating the water of baptism. The unsuspecting testimony of Bishop Hay leaves no doubt on this point. 'It,'¹⁵⁰⁸ says he, 'is blessed on the eve of Pentecost, because it is the Holy Ghost who gives to the waters of baptism the power and efficacy of sanctifying our souls, and because the baptism of Christ is with the Holy Ghost and with fire.'¹⁵⁰⁹ In blessing the waters, a Lighted Torch is put into the font.

Here, then, it is manifest that the baptismal regenerating water of Rome is consecrated just as the regenerating and purifying water of the pagans was. Of what avail is it for Bishop Hay to say, with a view of sanctifying superstition and 'making apostasy plausible,' that this is done 'to represent the fire of divine love, which is communicated to the soul by baptism and the light of good example, which all who are baptised ought to give.' This is the fair face put on the matter: but the fact still remains that while the Romish doctrine in regard

¹⁵⁰⁸ viz., the water kept in the baptismal font.

¹⁵⁰⁹ cp. 'baptism of fire' inf. for correct translation.

to baptism is purely pagan, in the ceremonies connected with the papal baptism one of the essential rites of the ancient fire-worshipper is still practiced at this day, as it was practised by the worshippers of Bacchus, the Babylonian Messiah. As Rome keeps up the remembrance of the fire-god passing through the waters and giving virtue to them, so when it speaks of the 'Holy Ghost suffering for us in baptism,' it in like manner commemorates the part which paganism assigned to the Babylonian goddess when she plunged into the waters. The sorrows of Nimrod, or Bacchus, when in the waters, were meritorious sorrows. The sorrows of his wife, in whom the Holy Ghost miraculously dwelt, were the same. The sorrows of the madonna, then, when in these waters, fleeing from Typhon's rage, were the birth-throes by which children were born to God. And thus, even in the Far West, Chalchivitlycue, the Mexican 'goddess of the waters' and 'mother' of all the regenerate, was represented as purging the new born infant from original sin, and bringing it anew into the world.'¹⁵¹⁰

So, in summary:

1. 'The worship of water as a divine element or agent, and hence its use as a protection against evil, and, in baptism, as a means of producing spiritual purity, forms a prominent feature of pagan religions;
2. Pagan water-worship was associated with the higher forms of sun-worship in various ways, and notably with that lower phase, Phallicism, with the obscene rights of which it is yet closely connected in India. In Mexico, the cross was the special symbol of the water-worship cult;
3. In pagan water-worship the sacred fluid was applied in many ways—by immersion, by bathing, by sprinkling; in the latter use the water was sprinkled upon the candidate from a sacred sprinkling-brush, or from the bough of some sacred tree; it was sometimes poured upon the candidate from a cup made from the bark of a sacred tree; threefold immersion appears in some instances. Inspiration was sought from sacred water, by drinking, by bathing, by sitting over it, and by inhaling its vapours;
4. Water for religious purposes was taken from sacred streams, fountains, and wells; or it was made holy by exorcisms and by the use of salt; it was carried to remote points and preserved for a long time. The ancient Druids caught rainwater in receptacles on the hilltops and carried it to their altars through necessary aqueducts;
5. The fundamental errors of the pagan water-worship cult appeared in Western Christianity as early as the middle of the second century; this resulted in the baptism of the sick, baptism of infants, baptism for the dead, the delaying of baptism until the approach of death in order to make the best of both worlds, and the doctrine of penance to atone for sins committed after baptism; all these followed as a 'legitimate' result;

¹⁵¹⁰ Hislop. Alexander, *The Two Babylons*, pp.142f. (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

6. As baptism was the door to church membership, the church was soon filled with “baptised pagans,” who were Christians in name only; by this means New Testament Christianity was rapidly perverted; and,

7. Whoever will seek the ultimate facts must confess that the Christianity of the third and the succeeding centuries was far removed from the New Testament standard.

It is scarcely necessary to add that every form of baptism except submersion was borrowed from paganism; that faith in baptism as producing spiritual purity, and hence as a “saving ordinance,” was borrowed from paganism: the notion that only the baptised can be saved was borrowed from paganism;¹⁵¹¹ the use of oil, of spittle, of the sign of the cross, of lights, of white robes, is a remnant of paganism; baptising for the dead, and delaying baptism until near death, are a part of the pagan residuum; faith in water from the Jordan or elsewhere is paganism. The naming of children at baptism was a direct importation from paganism. Insofar as any of these elements are retained by [the established churches, thus far does paganism dominate].¹⁵¹²

Early church healing

While the early church was clearly and characteristically a healing church, as the centuries developed, especially after the close of the sub-apostolic era—the time of Polycarp and Polycrates, corresponding to the Smyrna era of Revelation—that power waned considerably until, in the seventh-century, Chrysostom tells us that the wonder-working power had quite gone.¹⁵¹³

Christ the Healer

'The most conspicuous statements in the Scriptures about our Heavenly Father are the declarations concerning His love, His mercy, His compassion. There is no note that can be sounded concerning God's character that will so inspire faith as this one....It is not what God can do, but what we know He yearns to do, that inspires faith.

By showing His compassion everywhere in the healing of the sick, Jesus unveiled the compassionate heart of God to the people, and the multitudes came to Him for help. Oh, how insidiously has Satan worked to hide this glorious fact from the people. He has broadcasted the unscriptural, illogical and worn-out statement

¹⁵¹¹ thus denying the opportunity of salvation at the great assize, q.v. sup.

¹⁵¹² Hislop. Alexander, *The Two Babylons*, pp.142f. (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

¹⁵¹³ Chrysostom, *Sermons on II Thessalonians 4*

that the age of miracles is past,¹⁵¹⁴ until he has almost succeeded in eclipsing the compassion of God from the eyes of the world.

It is not faith in God's Power that secures His blessings, but faith in His love and in His will....How much faith does it take to say "the Lord is able"? The Devil knows God is able, and he knows He is willing; but he has kept the people from knowing the latter fact....But even when we can advance from saying "He is able" to saying "He is willing," this is not enough. The word "willing" is too tame to fully express God's merciful attitude toward us. "*He delighteth in mercy.*"¹⁵¹⁵ We have His attitude more fully expressed: "*For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward Him.*"¹⁵¹⁶ This text exhibits our Lord as not only being willing, but eager to pour His blessings in great profusion upon all who make it possible for Him to do so. "*For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro,*" or, in other words, He is ever hunting for opportunities to gratify His benevolent heart, because "*He delighteth in mercy.*"

Jesus emphatically taught and promised that the same mercy and compassion could reach the people through our prayers while He is our High Priest in Heaven. In fact, His departure was to open the way for His compassion to be manifested on a much larger scale. Isaiah prophesied of Him, "*Therefore will he be exalted*

¹⁵¹⁴ the worthless shepherds of this world, particularly those in the apostate Worldwide Church of God, continually peddled this fable in order to hide the inability to heal through the offices of the Holy Spirit. There is but one unpardonable or unforgivable sin: Luke 12:10, '*And whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but unto him that blasphemeth against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven.*' Those who deny Christ, or denigrate Him, or revile Him, or spit upon Him, can be forgiven, for the prayer was '*Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do,*' Luke 23:34. But for those who should know, and who deny the Power of God, or ascribe His Power to the power of Satan, Beelzebub, cf. Mat 12:24-27; committing to Satan, i.e., '*Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof,*' II Tim 3:5, whether it be in healing or in whatever, there is no forgiveness. They stand condemned, and will suffer accordingly. This may appear to some to be the ultimate 'burden of knowledge,' but in reality it is salvation to the wise and righteous. No right-minded Judæo-Christian would even consider denying the Holy Spirit. For such a thing is simply not possible: if the Holy Spirit informs the very being of a person, then, effectively, how can it deny itself? But to the minds of some the insidious denial continues in transmuted form, for it is claimed that healing was only apparent in the first few years of the Apostles' ministry, while all the while failing to read of Paul's healing in Troas, some thirty years after the formation of the church on Pentecost, 30AD, recorded in Acts 20:6-12. Christ's compassion is seen everywhere: Psa 145:8,9, '*The Lord is gracious, and full of compassion; slow to anger, and of great mercy. The Lord is good to all: and his tender mercies are over all his works.*'

Edersheim, Alfred, *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, p.1041:

'Egypt was regarded as the home of magic (Kidd. 49b; Shabb. 75a). In connection with this, it deserves notice that the Talmud ascribes the miracles of Jesus to magic, which He had learned during His stay in Egypt, having taken care, when He left, to insert under His skin its rules and formulas, since every traveller, on quitting the country, was searched, lest he should take to other lands the mysteries of magic (Shabb. 104b).

Were Jesus casting out demons by the help of the prince of demons, the Devil, it could only mean that in the demonic kingdom there was breach and disagreement and schism, for Christ and the Devil were and are in opposition.

Patai reveals the Orthodox Jewish and Muslim versions of the unforgivable sin: Patai, Raphael, *The Arab Mind*, p.138, citing Atiyah, Edward, *An Arab Tells His Story*, p.68:

'I have shown that in biblical Hebrew and Talmudic Jewish societies, fornication (i.e., any kind of illicit sexual activity) "was looked upon as the arch-sin, the sin most hateful to God, the one sin that He can never forgive." This ancient view has been retained completely by the Arabs to this day.'

¹⁵¹⁵ Mic 7:8

¹⁵¹⁶ II Chron 16:9

that he may have mercy." Jesus said, "*It is expedient*¹⁵¹⁷ *for you that I go away.*"¹⁵¹⁸ This could not be true if His going away would withdraw, or even modify, the manifestation of His compassion in healing the sick. Is it not strange that many ministers today exactly reverse Christ's promise that the same and greater works shall be done by teaching that the age of miracles is past. Others do the same by teaching that God wants some of His devout children to remain sick for His glory; and many other traditional and unscriptural ideas.

Every man who teaches that healing is not for all who need it today, as it was in the past, is virtually teaching that Christ's compassion in healing the sick has been entirely withdrawn....

So when God has provided healing, or any other blessing, and sent us His Word, it is our move before He will move again. Our move is to expect what He promises when we pray, which will cause us to act our faith before we see the healing; because the healing comes in the next move, which is God's move.

God never moves out of His turn, but He always moves when it is His turn. When Noah was "*warned of God of things not seen as yet,*" his move was to believe that the flood was coming, and act his faith by building the ship on dry land. So, when God says to "*any sick,*" "*the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up,*" you, like Noah, are informed of God "*of things not seen as of yet,*" and your move is the same as Noah's, which is, to believe and act accordingly. Fallen nature is governed by what it sees, by its senses, but faith is governed by the pure Word of God, and is nothing less than expecting God to do what He promises—treating Him like an honest Being.

By expectation I do not mean hope. One writer has well said, "We hope for what may be possible, but we expect what must be possible....with that expectancy that shuts out doubt or fear of failure, and shows unshakeable confidence."

Faith never waits to see before it believes, because it "*cometh by hearing*" about "*things not seen as yet,*" and "*is the evidence of things not seen.*" All that a man of faith needs is to know that God has spoken. This imparts perfect certainty to [him]. "*Thus saith the Lord*" settles everything. "*It is written*" is all that faith needs.

Faith always blows the ram's horn before, not after, the walls are down. Faith never judges according to the sight of the eyes, because it is the evidence of things not seen but promised. Faith rests on far more solid ground than the evidence of the senses, and that is the Word of God which "*abideth forever.*" Our senses may deceive us, but God's Word never!

Faith looks "*not at the things that are seen.*" There was no flood in sight when Noah built his ark. Stone walls had never before fallen down at the blowing of ram's horns and shouting. They were merely expecting what God promised, and when they acted their faith by blowing the ram's horns while the walls were still up, this was their move. Then, of course, God moved in His turn, and down came the walls!

¹⁵¹⁷ viz., profitable.

¹⁵¹⁸ John 14:12,13

God is so well pleased with the actings of faith that He has listed in detail many cases, as recorded in the eleventh of Hebrews.

"By faith Noah" acted so-and-so. "By faith Jacob" acted so-and-so. "By faith Joseph" acted so-and-so. "By faith Moses" acted so-and-so. "By faith the walls of Jericho fell down." "By faith Abraham" acted so-and-so, when everything seemed contrary to what God had promised. It was by considering the promise of God (and not her barrenness) that Sarah received strength to become a mother when she was past age.

These all acted with nothing but the Word of God as their reason for expecting the thing He had promised.

It is the same with every case of faith in history.

*"Faith means we are confident of what we hope for, convinced of what we do not see."*¹⁵¹⁹ Convinced, of course, because God, Who cannot lie, has spoken. How all-sufficient is this reason for believing! Faith is, therefore, most rational. It is not, as many unthinking persons suppose, believing without evidence, but believing because of the very highest possible evidence, God's Word, which is *"settled in Heaven."*¹⁵²⁰ The Apostle James says, *"I will show you by my actions what faith is."*¹⁵²¹ Faith, therefore, is being so convinced of the absolute truth of the declarations of God which are recorded in the Bible that we act on them. *"Be ye not hearers of the word, but doers also."*

What can be more rational, and what can be more safe and certain?

Faith is to receive the written promise of God as His direct message to us. His promise means the same as if He appeared and said to us, *"I have heard your prayer."* The Word of God is made life to our bodies in exactly the same way as it is made life to our [minds], which is by believing His promise. Now, in Mark, Jesus tells us exactly how to appropriate any of the blessings purchased for us by His death. Having promised all that we need, He says, *"What things soever ye desire when ye pray";* not after you pray twenty years; not after you get well; but while you are sick *"when ye pray," "believe that ye receive them and ye shall have them."*¹⁵²²

The condition of receiving what we ask God for is to believe that He answers our prayers when we pray, and that we *"shall recover"*¹⁵²³ according to His promise.

When God's Word alone is our reason for believing that our prayer is answered, before we see or feel, this is faith! If you will steadfastly *"believe that you receive"*¹⁵²⁴ the answer to your prayer and act your faith, every one of you will be healed, though not always instantly.

¹⁵¹⁹ Heb 11:1; Moffatt translation.

¹⁵²⁰ Psa 119:89

¹⁵²¹ Moffatt translation.

¹⁵²² Mark 11:24

¹⁵²³ Isa 38:21; Mark 16:18

¹⁵²⁴ Mark 11:24c

God always moves after our move, which is the acting out of a *"full assurance,"* produced alone by His promise before we see the answer to our prayer. Since healing is by faith, and *"faith without works is dead,"* it is when we begin to act our faith that God begins to heal.

"Let the needy praise thy name," that is, praise God in advance while you are still in need. *"Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving"* does not mean to get healed and then go from His presence thanking Him, but to come to Him with thanksgiving for healing before being healed. *"Enter His gates with thanksgiving and into His courts with praise."*¹⁵²⁵ We should go away with thanksgiving, but this is not faith.

Faith is what we have before we are healed. *"They shall praise the Lord that seek Him."* *"Thou shalt call thy walls salvation, and thy gates praise."* Without praise we are up against a solid wall with no gate; but when we begin praising, and appropriating, we hang our own gate, and walk through. *"Be glad and rejoice for the Lord will do great things,"*¹⁵²⁶ and accordingly *"they were continually in the Temple praising and blessing God,"*¹⁵²⁷ not after, but before they were filled with the Holy Spirit. It was *"when they lifted up their voice and praised the Lord"* that *"the glory of the Lord filled the House of God."*¹⁵²⁸ *"They believed His words* (not their symptoms, not the "Father of lies") *and sang His praises."*

Instead of your listening to the "Father of lies," make him listen to your praising God for His promise!

Why some do not get healing

Before saying, *"I am the Lord that healeth thee,"* and promising to take away all our sicknesses God first said, *"If thou wilt diligently hearken....and do all."*¹⁵²⁹ This means, to be diligent in the matter of knowing, understanding and practising what God has to say in His word on the subject of healing. We must know what God offers to us before we can expect it from Him. The knowledge of God's will must proceed faith for that will to be done. Multitudes today do not know that the perfect healing of their bodies is the fully revealed will of God in His written Word, the Bible. To know this, is the only sufficient evidence for appropriating faith.¹⁵³⁰

¹⁵²⁵ Psa 100:4

¹⁵²⁶ Joel 2:21

¹⁵²⁷ Luke 24:53

¹⁵²⁸ II Chron 5:13

¹⁵²⁹ Ex 15:26, including *'doing that which is right in his sight....and giving ear to all his commandments.'* This is a key precondition, for without our doing His Will, or undertaking to do so if previously unaware of it, or, rather, wilfully running contrary to His will, He cannot and will not save, q.v. inf.

¹⁵³⁰ it must be borne in mind, however, that God's words, *"If thou wilt diligently hearken....and do all,"* and *"I am the Lord that healeth thee,"* were addressed to the children of Israel, and, through them, the church. The full verse, Ex 15:26 (with added comment and clarification), reads, *'And [the Lord] said, If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am the Lord that healeth thee.'* People outside the church, coming to Christ, or to the apostles, or to the 'elect' for the very first time, and seeking healing, would not have been fulfilling the commandments and the statutes. It is most likely that they had not even heard the Word before, for, if they had,

'Unless those seeking healing can say, when tested, *"It is written,"* and then can quote to the adversary a promise which settles the question of God's will, their faith cannot remain steadfast. Multitudes of sufferers who have prayed for healing for years without success, because of having used in their prayers the faith destroying phrase, *"IF it be thy will,"* have afterwards been healed through the truth of God's Word.'

[The conditional 'if,' when injected into confident faith in God's desire, and willingness, and promise to heal, reduces the whole affair to that of a provisional plea, and negates and denies God's holy word. Is it any wonder that God does not heal in such circumstances? The first move, the move of faith, is entirely absent; and so is the healing. The entire is blocked, by that little 'if.' Matthew puts the matter succinctly, *'And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.'*¹⁵³¹ There is no 'if' contained in this statement].

'Upon a certain occasion only one woman in a great throng touched Jesus with faith for healing. Later on, whole multitudes did so. It is a matter of enlightenment and faith.

After the nine disciples had failed to deliver the epileptic boy mentioned in the Gospels, some theologian of that day—if he were like many of the theologians of these days—might have seized upon that failure and said, "There, now we have proof that it is not always God's will to heal." But the father wanted the boy to be healed, the boy, himself, wanted to be healed, and the disciples, Divinely commissioned to cast our devils and heal the sick, wanted him to be healed; yet under similar circumstances today, someone would say, because of such a failure, "It is not God's will that such an one should be healed." They would make theology out of the failure. But Jesus came down from the mountain and delivered the boy, thus proving it to be God's will to heal even when His accredited representatives have failed to heal. Why not make theology out of this?

When the father of this boy said to Jesus, *"If Thou canst do anything,"* Jesus refused to take the responsibility for any failure. He said, *"If thou canst believe,"* and then the father cried out, *"Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief,"*¹⁵³² and, of course, he received the help asked for and succeeded where the apostles, them-selves, had failed, for Christ delivered the boy.

Are all who have been baptised washed from their sins? No, but those who have faith are: and what water is in the ordinance of Christian baptism, oil is in the ordinance of anointing the sick for healing....

then surely they would have believed, and would have sought healing earlier. What they did have was faith that they would be healed by God. This was all that was necessary for them to be healed, for it was all that they had at that time.

The 'elect' are in a different position, for they have found the faith, and the grace of God, and the means of salvation. This is far more advanced than a 'first contact' supplicant, and it carries with it correspondingly greater accountability, greater responsibility, and the need for greater conformity to the will of God.

This explains why some of the 'elect' fail to secure healing: they have not grown in their faith. Rather, they have remained still, and become stagnant. Worse, some might even have gone backwards, denying the very Holy Spirit through which they would have been healed. For the 'elect,' the church, the full force of Ex 15:26 applies. If the 'elect' are not fulfilling the Lord's words in Ex 15:26, then there is no mechanism of the Holy Spirit whereby they can be healed.

¹⁵³¹ Mat 21:22

¹⁵³² Mark 9:17-27

The healing part of the Gospel is hindered and even made void by the traditions of men. Jesus said to the Jewish teachers of His day, "*Ye have made void the law by your traditions.*"¹⁵³³ In our day most preachers have done worse, for they have made void a part of the Gospel by their traditions.

One tradition is that God is the author of disease and that He wills the sickness of some of His worshippers. It is a mystery to me how anyone can hold this view in the face of the Scriptures and the ministry of Christ, who for three years healed all that were oppressed of the devil, or, at least, all such as came to Him for healing.

Another tradition which is responsible for thousands dying a premature death after years of physical agony is the teaching that we can glorify God more by remaining sick and exhibiting patience than we can by being divinely healed. An honest but unenlightened minister will often kneel at the bedside of one suffering with arthritis or cancer or some other dangerous disease and pray, "Lord, since in Thy loving providence Thou hast seen fit to lay Thine afflicting hand upon our dear sister, give her fortitude and patience to bear this affliction." This he does instead of obeying the plain command to anoint "*any sick*" in the church and to pray "*the prayer of faith*" for their healing;¹⁵³⁴ which method John Wesley says was the only process of healing in the church until it was lost through unbelief.

Anointing in this manner appears to be for the church, rather than for the general populace remaining outside the church, although Mark does mention oil in healings through the apostles sent out by Jesus, "*And they went out, and preached that men should repent. And they cast out many devils, and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them.*"¹⁵³⁵ Here healing involving oil—at a time before the general availability of the Holy Spirit under the current dispensation commenced at Pentecost in 30AD—is linked or bound with the preaching of repentance, a precursor of the baptism and forgiveness of sins resulting in membership of the church.

Now, if it is true, as many are taught, that one can glorify God more by remaining sick than by being healed, then Jesus did not hesitate to rob His Father of all the glory He possibly could by healing everyone that appealed to Him for help during His entire earthly ministry.

The most common and threadbare tradition is the worn-out statement that "the age of miracles has passed." Of all the present-day "traditions of the elders" or ministers, this is the most foolish, illogical and unscriptural of any that I know. The Holy Spirit, in whose age we are now living, is God's only Miracle Worker, the only Administrator of the Father's will; the One [sic—the Holy Spirit is the Power of God, not a person] who healed all the sick multitudes who came to Christ for healing during the days of His flesh. All the miracles

¹⁵³³ Greek: *paradosis*, 'tradition;' vain and worthless traditions of, or from, the Jews are excoriated in the N.T.: Mat 15:2,3,6; Mark 7:3,5,8,13; Col 2:8; I Peter 1:18; only one instance of worthwhile tradition is given in II Thes 3:6, referring to the tradition given off by Paul and the apostles. In mystical Judaism, the Kabbalah literally means 'received tradition.'

¹⁵³⁴ James 5:14

¹⁵³⁵ Mark 6:12,13

wrought until the Day of Pentecost were accomplished by the Spirit, the Miracle Worker, before He [sic] had entered officially for His [sic] own dispensation.

The age in which we live was intended by our Heavenly Father to be the most miraculous of all the dispensations because it is the Miracle Worker's age, the Holy Spirit's dispensation. During this age the great promise is that God will pour out the Holy Spirit upon all flesh....distributed to every man severally as the Holy Spirit will. Jesus declared that the works which He was doing would be continued and that even "*greater works*" would be done [through the power of] the Holy Spirit, the Miracle worker, after [Christ's exaltation].

How absurd and ridiculous for any professed Bible teacher to pick out this, the Miracle Worker's age, as the only age when miracles are not to be done! How absurd for such a one to teach that the Holy Spirit will work miracles in every age but [this one]....which has "better" promises, and "better" everything than any previous age.

Some talk as though the present age is not the Holy Spirit's age. There is but one [freely available] Spirit dispensation, and that one lies between the first and second advents of our Lord.¹⁵³⁶ It is true, we are living in the Laodicean or lukewarm period of the Spirit's dispensation. At the beginning of the age, the church was in her Spirit-filled period, and we are now in the lukewarm period of the same age.

Another tradition is that it is not God's will to heal all....If it is God's will to heal only some of those who need healing, then none have any basis for faith, until they shall have received a special revelation that they are the favoured ones. If God's promises to heal are not for all, then no man can ascertain the will of God for himself from the Bible. Are we to understand from such teachers that we must close our Bibles and get our revelation directly from the Spirit before we can pray for the sick, because the will of God in this matter cannot be ascertained from the Scriptures? This would be virtually to teach that the whole of the Divine activity on the line of healing would have to be governed by direct revelations from the Spirit instead of by the Scriptures.

Still others are hindered from receiving healing by being taught to add to their prayer for healing the faith destroying phrase, "If it be thy will." There is only one case given in the New Testament of one asking for healing in this way. That is the case of the leper, who said, "*If Thou wilt, Thou canst make me whole.*" This man could not have prayed otherwise, because he was not yet informed as to the will of God in the matter. Jesus did not heal this leper until He had added to his faith that Jesus 'could' heal him, the faith that Jesus would heal him. The "*I will*" of Jesus cancelled the "*If*" of the leper. It is impossible for one ever to pray with faith until the "If" has been removed from his prayer. To have real faith is to be "fully persuaded" that God will do what He has promised to do, and no one is ever "fully persuaded" when he adds to his prayer "If it be Thy will." Since God has revealed His will in this matter by His promises, for us to say, "If it be Thy will" when praying for healing is the same as to say, "If it be Thy will to keep Thy promise."

¹⁵³⁶ i.e., the age of Grace.

Another unscriptural premise that has sent thousands of sufferers to premature graves and kept multitudes of others from receiving healing, is the modern teaching that 'Paul's thorn in the flesh' was some kind of physical trouble. The falsity of this position is shown in the following sermon on "Paul's Thorn in the Flesh."

Thorn in flesh

The expression "thorn in the flesh" is not once used in either the Old or New Testament except as an illustration. The figure of the "*thorn in the flesh*" is not in one single instance used in the Bible as a figure of sickness. Every time the phrase is used in the Bible it is specifically stated exactly what the "*thorn in the flesh*" was. For instances, in Numbers,¹⁵³⁷ Moses told the children of Israel, before they entered the land of Canaan,

¹⁵³⁷ Num 33:50-56, *'And the Lord spake unto Moses in the plains of Moab by Jordan, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye are passed over Jordan into the land of Canaan; Then ye shall drive out all the inhabitants of the land from before you, and destroy all their pictures, and destroy all their molten images, and quite pluck down all their high places: And ye shall dispossess the inhabitants of the land, and dwell therein: for I have given you the land to possess it. And ye shall divide the land by lot for an inheritance among your families: and to the more ye shall give the more inheritance, and to the fewer ye shall give the less inheritance: every man's inheritance shall be in the place where his lot falleth; according to the tribes of your father ye shall inherit. But if you will not drive out the inhabitants of the land from before you; then it shall come to pass, that those which ye let remain of them shall be pricks in your eyes, and thorns in your sides, and shall vex you in the land wherein ye dwell. Moreover, it shall come to pass, that I shall do unto you, as I thought to do unto them.'*

This passage refers to the Promised Land, from which the northern kingdom, Israel, was later driven into exile. When they departed, they took with them some of the Canaanites who had continued in their midst. Other Canaanites had fled from their country at the time of the coming of the children of Israel under Joshua, and still more after his death. Many of these Canaanites, along with an element of Phoenicians, appear to have settled in the British Isles, principally in northern Scotland (including in the western isles and on the east coast as far south as Fife) and in western and north-western Ireland. The main concentration was in what is now known as northern Scotland, where they formed the tribes collectively known as Picts.

As for constituting continuing '*thorns in the sides*,' it is interesting to note that despite concentration in north and north-east Scotland (all of the country north of the Forth—Clyde line, with the exception of Argyll), their numbers were greatly reduced in a calamitous battle against the invading Vikings in 839AD. With the loss of King Bridei VI and most of the nobility, it appears that Pictish society collapsed and many left the country in the years immediately following, in the main emigrating to what is now north America, where they constituted a few, but by no means all of the native Indian tribes. Those that remained were absorbed into the rapidly crystallising and soon to be nascent kingdom of Scotland. It is interesting to note that as late as the fourth quarter of the 19th-century, descendants of these people were still living on the isle of Jura, in the inner Hebrides, off the western coast of Scotland. They lived in tepees, as did many of the North American Indians.

Perhaps diminution through warfare, loss of the throne and kingly line, emigration, and residual absorption explains why the Canaanitish element has not proven to be a particularly '*thorny*' problem in Scotland. The same cannot be said of north America, and certainly cannot be countenanced in relation to the troubled island of Ireland.

The north American Indians—much maligned and very shabbily treated by the white immigrants who consistently breached treaty after treaty with them—constitute but a relatively minor problem in the USA today, where, rather than being absorbed into mainstream society, they have become relegated to reservations, mainly living off government welfare handouts. In Canada, there is a diminution of this problem. The major residual problem, however, lies in Ireland.

The Roman Catholic Irish—as distinct from the largely northern Protestant Irish who descend in the main from the Scots and northern English—are, in the main, descendants of the tribe of Dan: Danites. Dan has a very specific place in the tribes of Israel, being the first tribe of the children of Israel to fall into idolatry. The tribe's blessing of Jacob is also revealing. Gen 49:16-17, *'Dan shall judge his people, as one of the tribes of Israel. Dan shall be a serpent by the way, an adder in the path, that biteth the horse heels, so that his rider shall fall backward.'* While part of this can be seen in the

*"If you will not drive out the inhabitants of the land from before you; then it shall come to pass, that those which ye let remain of them shall be pricks in your eyes, and thorns in your sides, and shall vex ye in the land wherein ye dwell."*¹⁵³⁸

Here the Scripture itself plainly tells us that the "pricks" in the eyes and the "thorns" in the sides of the Israelites were the spared inhabitants of Canaan—not eye trouble or sickness. God was only illustrating to show that as a thorn sticking in the flesh is annoying, so the Canaanites, if allowed to remain in the land, would be a constant annoyance to the children of Israel. And so in all the other places in the Bible where this expression is used, the thorns are personalities.

As in each of the other instances the Bible definitely states what the thorn was, so in this particular instance Paul definitely states what his thorn was. He said it was *"The messenger (Greek angelos) of Satan,"* or, as translated by others, *"The angel of the devil," "Satan's angel,"* etc.

The Greek word angelos appears one hundred and eighty-eight times in the Bible. It is translated "angel" one hundred and eighty-one times and "messenger" the other seven times. In every one of the one hundred and eighty-eight times where the word is used in the Bible it means a person, not a thing. Hell was made for *"the devil and his angels,"* and an angel or a messenger is always a person that one person sends to another—never a disease.'

*'And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.'*¹⁵³⁹

Paul not only tells us that his thorn was an angel or messenger of Satan, but he also tells us what that angel came to do, namely, *"to buffet me,"* as when *"the waves buffeted"* the boat, and as when the soldiers *"buffeted"* Christ. Accordingly, Weymouth translates this passage in this way, *"Satan's angels dealing blow after blow."* Since *"buffeting"* means giving repeated blows, if Paul's buffeting was a physical one, it would have had to be a succession of diseases, or the same disease many times repeated, or he could not have termed it buffeting.

papal-blessed and approved Irish revolt during the currency of World War I, covert and internecine warlike traits appear time and time again throughout Irish history, as well as gross idolatry. When a warlike and deeply idolatrous Canaanitish element was introduced (historically found mainly in Connaught, north-west Ulster, and south west Ireland), the resulting mix proved a potentially volatile *'thorn in the side'* for the non-Danite descendants of the children of Israel.

¹⁵³⁸ Num 33:55

¹⁵³⁹ II Cor 12:7-10; v.7c, as others have it, *'Satan's angel.'*

In speaking of this messenger or angel, Rotherham's translation uses the pronoun "he." Weymouth's translation says, "As to this, three times I besought the Lord to rid me of him."¹⁵⁴⁰ These two pronouns, as well as the word "angel" or "messenger," prove that Paul's thorn was, as he himself plainly shows, a Satanic personality—not a disease; the pronoun taking its gender from 'messenger.' Paul could not have used the personal pronouns "he" and "him" when speaking of a disease, because there is no personality to disease. Paul enumerates almost every kind of trouble one can think of as his buffeting, but disease is not on the list.

As a literal word-for-word translation from the Greek, verse seven reads, 'And the superabundance of the revelations that not I be made arrogant, was given to me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan that might he buffet, that not I be made arrogant.'¹⁵⁴¹ Green's Literal Translation renders the same verse, 'And by superabundance of the revelations, that I not be made arrogant, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger¹⁵⁴² of Satan, that he might buffet me, that I not be made haughty.' Again, the 'messenger of Satan' is personalised as 'he.' In Greek the grammatical back-reference of a pronoun in such circumstances¹⁵⁴³ can either be to 'the messenger' or to the 'buffeting.' It is non-specific, but, in context, it is obviously a reference to the 'buffeting,' for Paul states that he had, 'entreated the Lord three times that it [the buffeting] depart from me.'¹⁵⁴⁴ The 'buffeting' is neuter gender; 'the messenger' is not. Some point out that Paul refers to the problem as his 'infirmity' or 'weakness.'¹⁵⁴⁵ The Greek word is astheneia which elsewhere is used for sickness that Christ healed.¹⁵⁴⁶ This same word is used to describe Timothy's 'often infirmities'¹⁵⁴⁷ and the reason Paul preached the Gospel.¹⁵⁴⁸ In Corinthians Paul is speaking of being told by the Lord that 'for My power is perfected in weakness.'¹⁵⁴⁹ Here 'weakness' is contrasted with 'power'—not health. It follows that the correct translation of astheneia in context in verse nine is 'physical weakness against buffeting'¹⁵⁵⁰ by the 'messenger of Satan,' not illness.

Sickness in New Testament

Some contend that the fact that the New Testament records that a limited number of Christians were 'sick' shows that the Lord's promise is conditional. The four instances and texts most often conducted are:

¹⁵⁴⁰ sublinear emphasis added.

¹⁵⁴¹ II Cor 12:7 literal translation.

¹⁵⁴² Greek: angelos.

¹⁵⁴³ here it is the Greek: toutou—neuter gender.

¹⁵⁴⁴ II Cor 12:8

¹⁵⁴⁵ in II Cor 12:9

¹⁵⁴⁶ Luke 5:15 and many other places.

¹⁵⁴⁷ I Tim 5:23

¹⁵⁴⁸ Gal 4:13; Greek: astheneia means 'feebleness,' and, by implication, 'malad,' while the root, asthenes, means 'strengthlessness.'

¹⁵⁴⁹ II Cor 12:9

¹⁵⁵⁰ repeated blows.

Timothy

The advice from Paul was to *'take a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities.'*¹⁵⁵¹ Timothy was ill, but his illness, which appears to have been in oft-recurring bouts, was capable of being remedied by a dietary [or drink] alteration from water to wine. The healing of Timothy's stomach in this case would have been through the body's natural mechanisms, aided by a little wine. It is not known whether Timothy's ailment was of a sufficiently long-standing nature to have been evident before he became a Christian, but there is a suspicion that it was so.

Paul

[These two verses] read in the K.J.V., *'Ye know how through infirmity of the flesh I preached the gospel unto you at the first. And my temptation which was in my flesh ye despised not, nor rejected; but received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus.'*¹⁵⁵² In the first instance, it is necessary to refine out the errors in the K.J.V. translation. The best manuscripts¹⁵⁵³ have *'your temptation'* rather than *'my temptation'* in the opening phrase in Galatians,¹⁵⁵⁴ and *'angel'* should read *'messenger.'*¹⁵⁵⁵ Green's Literal Translation has it: *'But you know that because of weakness of the flesh, I preached the gospel to you before; and you did not despise my temptation in my flesh nor disdained [it], but you received me as an angel [messenger] of God, as Christ Jesus.'* The above bracketed [it] does not appear in the original Greek, and 'messenger' is bracketed after 'angel' merely for consistency in meaning. Many have looked upon the previous verse¹⁵⁵⁶ as referring to illness or sickness, usually prescribed to malaria, epilepsy, or ophthalmia. There is no biblical proof of any of these, however—it is pure speculation, and runs contrary to the healing promise by God. In Paul's first missionary journey, he retraced his steps after preaching in Derbe.¹⁵⁵⁷ Thus he preached twice in most of the cities he visited during his first missionary journey. Taking this on board, the verse can be read as a reference to the limiting or curtailing effect of the messenger of Satan—Paul's undoubted zeal would have led him to journey further, to do as much work for the Lord as possible, but he was prevented by persecutions and the like from the devil that Satan sent to torment him, the *'thorn in the flesh'* discussed above. And so the *'weakness of the flesh'* would be a reference to the battle between a spirit being of the devil and the mortal man in Paul, albeit the latter aided by

¹⁵⁵¹ 1 Tim 5:23; or *'frequent weaknesses.'*

¹⁵⁵² Gal 4:13,14

¹⁵⁵³ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol.2, p.29 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets): *'In the Greek manuscripts of the New Testament in the early and best day, all the words were written completely in capital letters; these manuscripts are called 'uncials'....[so, for example,] in such a manuscript it would not be possible to tell where special capitals are necessary.'*

¹⁵⁵⁴ Gal 4:14

¹⁵⁵⁵ obviously—for Paul was not an angel, but a man.

¹⁵⁵⁶ Gal 4:13

¹⁵⁵⁷ Acts 14:20-25

the Holy Spirit, divine protection. When this is imported into verse fourteen in the K.J.V., the meaning becomes more clear: *'And your temptation which was in my flesh'* means that *'you'* [the brethren in southern Galatia] suffered as a result of my [Paul's] *'temptation....in my flesh'* [person, or body, and related through the word *'flesh'* to the *'thorn in the flesh'*]. In other words, the devil followed Paul, and persecuted him. While this was going on, during Paul's sojourn in Galatia, that same persecution fell on the brethren there, for it would have been impossible to have persecuted Paul and not have the same fall on the others. Despite this, the brethren *'despised [Paul] not, nor rejected him,'* but, rather, *'received him' [Paul]* as a *'messenger of God,'* in the name of *'Jesus Christ.'* *'Where is then the blessedness ye spake of? For I bear you record, that, if [it had been] possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me. Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?'*¹⁵⁵⁸ Verse fifteen is at the core of the 'ophthalmia' contention which is based on the phrase *'ye would have plucked out your own eyes and given them to me.'* But is it this to which Paul is referring....an impossible attempt, confirmed in the words *'if it had been possible,'* at healing his festering eyes? A futile Christian sacrifice, that one or more be blinded in order that one might see? Is this divine healing in action? Or is there some other subject matter? The key lies in to what the plucking out of the eyes refers: *'where is then the blessedness ye spake of.'* What blessedness?....*'for I [Paul] bear you record.'* Here Paul is saying that he bears record of something earlier, something the Galatians had claimed, or said, or written, and it concerns *'blessedness.'* Verse sixteen gives the result: *'Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?'* What truth? *'They zealously affect you, but not well; yea. They would exclude you, that ye might affect them. But it is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing, but not only when I am present with you.'*¹⁵⁵⁹ The K.J.V. *'affect'* and *'affected'* are not found in the original Greek. Green renders the last two verses thus: *'They are zealous for you, but not well; but they only desire to shut you out, that you be zealous for them. But it is good to be zealous always in a good thing and not only in my being present with you.'*¹⁵⁶⁰ The problem with the Galatians was *'Judaising,'* or *'legalising,'* placing adherence to the Law above everything to the detriment of salvation, as seen earlier in Galatians.¹⁵⁶¹ The reference in Galatians chapter four describes the *'reversion,'* *'Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain.'*¹⁵⁶² The speed with which this had been effected amazed Paul, as seen from, *'I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel.'*¹⁵⁶³ Reading this *'reversion'* into Green's Literal Translation¹⁵⁶⁴ it is clear that Paul is speaking of the *'strategy'* adopted by the legalisers: to shut their prey out of the kingdom, and tie them to the Jewish concept of salvation under the Law.

¹⁵⁵⁸ Gal 4:15,16

¹⁵⁵⁹ Gal 4:16-18

¹⁵⁶⁰ Gal 4:17,18, Green's Literal Translation.

¹⁵⁶¹ Gal 2:14-16

¹⁵⁶² Gal 4:10,11

¹⁵⁶³ Gal 1:5

¹⁵⁶⁴ Gal 4:17,18

The delusion under which the Galatians were then labouring brought them to see their adherence as meritorious and the route to salvation, to the extent that they claimed that if only Paul could see it, or, as Paul recorded this claimed 'blessedness' against them, *'If [it had been] possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me,'* then, in their self-congratulatory view, Paul would have been suitably impressed. In this view, the plucking out of eyes, if it were possible, refers to the claim of the Galatians that they were 'blessed,' would that only Paul were able to see it, by being physically present. It has nothing to do with ophthalmia. Another view of the same text, at least equally valid, would be that the reference in *'for I bear you record, that, if it had been possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me,'* in past conditional form, signifies the zealotry of their former state for Paul and his teachings, contrasting it with the legalising fervour into which they had subsequently reverted. Again, nothing to do with ophthalmia. The final text quoted by adherents of the 'ophthalmia school,' albeit infrequently, is found in chapter six, which in the K.J.V. reads, *'Ye see how large a letter I have written unto you with mine own hand.'*¹⁵⁶⁵ A better translation is seen in Green's Literal: *'See in what large letters I write to you with my hand.'*¹⁵⁶⁶ The implication of the ophthalmic contention being that large letters were all that Paul could see and write, given his presumed condition. In reality, perhaps taking the pen from his scribe, the large letters were written for emphasis of important passages, picking out what Paul wished to stress. This was common; Hebrew Scriptures exhibit the same characteristic.

¹⁵⁶⁵ Gal 6:11

¹⁵⁶⁶ this was relatively unusual. Barclay, William, *The Letter to the Romans*, p.xix (with added comment and clarification in square brackets) explains:

'One thing we must note about these letters of Paul. Paul did what most people did in his day. He did not normally pen his own letters; he dictated them to a secretary [an amanuensis]; and then after he had dictated them he added his own authenticating signature. We actually know the name of one of these people who did the writing for Paul. In Rom 16:22 Tertius, the secretary, slips in his own greeting before the letter draws to an end. In I Cor 16:21 Paul says, *"This is my own signature, my autograph, so that you can be sure this letter comes from me."* (cp. Col 4:18; II Thes 3:17). This explains a great deal. Sometimes Paul is hard to understand, because his sentences begin and never finish; his grammar breaks down and his sentences become involved.'

The K.J.V., in subscripted notes to several of the Epistles, gives the following amanuenses:

I Corinthians	Stephanas, Fortunatus, Achaicus, & Timotheus
II Corinthians	Titus & Lucas
Ephesians	Tychicus
Philippians	Epaphroditus
Colossians	Tychicus & Onesimus
Philemon	Onesimus
Hebrews (if by Paul)	Timothy [or possibly, Luke, according to some].

Epaphroditus

[Paul's epistle to the Philippians] mentions Epaphroditus's sickness,¹⁵⁶⁷ but the following verse gives the answer: *'For indeed he was sick nigh unto death: but God had mercy on him; and not on him only, but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow.'*¹⁵⁶⁸ God healed Epaphroditus who was *'sick unto death.'*

Trophimus

The trouble with this is that it lacks specification, the verse merely stating: *'but Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick.'* Again the Greek word translated *'sick'* is astheneo, meaning *'feebleness,'* or *'strengthlessness.'* In the context of the promise of God to heal, the most appropriate rendition of astheneo¹⁵⁶⁹ would appear to be *'feeble,'* as in old age, as a member of the church would not have been left *'sick,'* but would have been healed. Old age, however, does rob man of mobility to a greater or lesser extent, and missionary journeys, conducted under attack from the demon of the Devil, would need some degree of *'speed-off-the-mark'* on occasion. [And] old age does bring on death, *'The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away.'*¹⁵⁷⁰ Divine physical healing cannot continue indefinitely, or else man would not be mortal, but would live forever.

Persecutions

In doing and so revealing to us the unchanging will of God, Jesus healed every sick person that ever applied to Him for healing, but did not promise to take away the buffetings or persecution.¹⁵⁷¹

Some not healed today – why?

Another tradition that has hindered the ministry of healing is the teaching that Jesus healed the sick as the Son of God, not as the Son of man. Such teachings believe that as we are not Christ's we cannot expect such works today. The Scriptures teach us that Jesus, the Son of God, emptied Himself [the Word] and became like unto His brethren in all things [by divine condescendence], except as to sin. He speaks of Himself as *"The Son of man"* about eighty times, and as the Son of man He said, *"I can of mine own self do nothing."* This certainly was not true of Him before He became the Son of man, because all things were made by Him and for

¹⁵⁶⁷ Phlp 2:25,26

¹⁵⁶⁸ Phlp 2:27

¹⁵⁶⁹ in II Tim 4:20

¹⁵⁷⁰ Psal 90:10

¹⁵⁷¹ Paul plainly suffered many persecutions, but did not ail physically.

Him. We have already seen that Jesus did His works in reliance upon the Spirit, and that He *"began both to do and teach, until the day He was taken up,"* what He himself promised in John¹⁵⁷² to continue and augment in answer to the prayers of the church when He should be glorified. The very words here quoted from Acts, *"Jesus began both to do and to teach,"*¹⁵⁷³ prove that what the Lord *"began"* both in doing and teaching was to be continued by the Holy Spirit operating through the church.

I assign for the failure of some to receive healing the breaking of natural laws.¹⁵⁷⁴ Let it be remembered that natural laws are God's Laws and that they are as Divine as are His miracles. Nature is God in action, but not miraculously. Because of their ignorance of natural laws some are not supplying their bodies with the required nourishment, or they may be overeating while asking God to heal them of stomach trouble, and thereby hindering the answer to their prayers. After God had revealed Himself as Jehovah-Rapha—our Healer—the conditions He imposed were that the people observe His laws of health. There are times when sufferers who are ignorant of dietetics and other simple requirements need the advice of someone who is qualified to give advice in such matters.

Some are not healed because of unbelief on the part of the elder or minister who prays for them. Christ's disciples, although divinely commissioned to cast out devils and to heal the sick, failed to deliver the epileptic boy. When Jesus came down from the mountain He delivered the boy and rebuked the disciples for their unbelief.

Some are not healed because their affliction is the work of an evil spirit which must be cast out. Jesus did not heal the epileptic disease but cast out the epileptic spirit. He also cast out the deaf and dumb and blind spirits. He says of those who *"believe," "In my name they shall cast out demons."*¹⁵⁷⁵

Some fail to receive healing because they regard iniquity in their heart. Such ought to learn to say with David: *"If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me."* God has not promised to destroy the works of the devil in the body while we are clinging to the works of the devil in the [mind]. Unconfessed sin hinders people from receiving God's mercy.¹⁵⁷⁶ His Word tells us, *"He that covereth his sins shall not prosper, but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them, shall obtain mercy."*

¹⁵⁷² John 14:12

¹⁵⁷³ Acts 1:1

¹⁵⁷⁴ not the same as 'Natural Law,'—also known as *ius naturae*, which originated with the philosophers of ancient Greece who sought to discover the permanent underlying basis of law and the relationship of law to justice; the central thought being that law is based on the needs of man as a reasonable being, rather than something handed down from a superior authority.

¹⁵⁷⁵ Mat 7:22

¹⁵⁷⁶ Isa 59:1,2 attests to the 'excepting effect' of unconfessed sin on prayer: *'Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.'*

In this Laodicean period of the church, lukewarmness is one of the great hindrances to healing. After Christ was glorified He sent down the message, *"I would that thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth."*

The best thing for us [in the church] is to be red hot for God, the next best thing is to be cold, but it is fatal to be lukewarm, for the Lord said He would spew out the lukewarm.

Lukewarmness is a much worse disease than cancer, therefore God wants to heal lukewarmness first. He has promised and is waiting to heal our backsliding and flood our hearts with His love. God says of the man whose heart is "hot" with love for Him, *"Because he hath set his love upon Me, therefore will I deliver him."*¹⁵⁷⁷ Serving God with gladness and cheerfulness of heart was the condition for healing in Old Testament times. Surely the standard ought not to be lowered in this day of grace!

Sickness and affliction are permitted to remain on some as a halter, with which God leads them into the centre of His will, and when this has been done, He removes the halter. If God were to take the halter off too soon, many would run away, and so would deprive themselves of the pleasure of living out the Divine programme. It is impossible to pray *"the prayer of faith"*¹⁵⁷⁸ to get the halter off those who are unwilling to be led into the glorious centre of God's will.

An unforgiving spirit, or holding a grudge, hinders some from receiving the Lord's healing. Jesus said, *"If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Heavenly father forgive your trespasses."*¹⁵⁷⁹

The first thing we need and the first thing God wants to grant us is the forgiveness of our sins, but God cannot forgive us when we will not forgive others. And if He cannot forgive us He certainly cannot heal us.

Wrongs unrighted hinder the faith of some to receive healing. Those who have wronged their neighbour in any way must ask his forgiveness.

Some have no purpose or no diligence when seeking God for healing. God *"is the rewarder of them that diligently seek Him."*¹⁵⁸⁰

Because of not being properly instructed, many fail to be healed because they endeavour to confine God to miracles. Because they are not made well and strong in an instant, these people cast away their confidence. [Non-physical healing, such as material blessings, especially, may take time to be manifest, even though the petition has been granted immediately. This is sometimes due to God wishing a supernatural start to blessings rather than a natural one, for nothing is too hard for Him].

Some wax weak in their faith by watching their symptoms. Instead of doing this they, like Abraham of old, should be waxing strong in faith by looking unto the promises of God. These people make their feelings the

¹⁵⁷⁷ Psalms 91:14a

¹⁵⁷⁸ James 5:15a

¹⁵⁷⁹ Matthew 6:15 ; also Leviticus 19:18, *'Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself : I am the Lord.'*

¹⁵⁸⁰ Hebrews 11:6

basis for faith rather than God's Word, which He has made its only basis. Others fail to receive healing because they do not act their faith. *"Faith without works is dead."*¹⁵⁸¹ It is not God's turn to move until we have faith with corresponding actions. *"Have faith in God"* literally reads, *"Reckon on God's faithfulness."*¹⁵⁸²

The full exercise of faith means that we think faith, speak faith, act faith. To the blind man Jesus said, *"Go, wash in the pool of Siloam."* This act gave the man an opportunity to exercise faith in heart, mind, and body. He was not healed until he first gave this visible expression of his faith. He believed the healing was his before it was manifested.

It was the same with Naaman, the leper, and also with the ten lepers to whom Jesus said, *"Go, shew yourselves to the priests."* The record is, *"As they went, they were cleansed."* A visible expression of faith, including their heart, mind, and body, was required before their healing was manifested. Some miss being healed by reversing this Divine order. Others, when tested, cast away their confidence, failing to see that, as with Abraham, by the test their faith should be perfected, not destroyed. We are made partakers on the condition that we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end.¹⁵⁸³ If the Word of God is the reason for our faith, then it is never right to cast away our confidence in it....

Some are not healed because of their failure to receive the written promise of God as His direct Word to them. They fail to recognise that to faith the Word of God is the Voice of God. In Psalms we read, *"Thou hast magnified Thy Word above all Thy Name."*¹⁵⁸⁴

Some hinder God by basing their faith on their improvement after prayer rather than upon His promise. They do not realise that there is no other reason for faith as good as the Word of God.

Some will not believe that their prayer for healing has been heard until they have experienced and seen the answer. Christ has not promised that our healing shall begin before we believe that He has heard our prayer. Some suppose that they must keep on praying and not believe that their prayer has been answered, until they are well. This is exactly the opposite of what God requires.'

'The phrase about removing mountains¹⁵⁸⁵ was a quite common Jewish phrase. It was a regular, vivid phrase for removing difficulties. It was especially used of wise teachers. A good teacher who could remove the difficulties which the minds of the scholars encountered was called a *mountain-remover*. One who heard a famous Rabbi teach said that 'he saw Resh Lachish as if he were plucking up mountains.' So the phrase means that if we have real faith, prayer is a power which can solve any problem and make us able to deal with any difficulty.

That sounds very simple, but it involves two things:

¹⁵⁸¹ James 2:18,20,26

¹⁵⁸² Mark 11:22

¹⁵⁸³ Heb 10:35

¹⁵⁸⁴ Psa 138:2

¹⁵⁸⁵ Mark 11:22-26, especially v.23b; *'faith to move mountains.'*

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1. We should be willing to take our difficulties and problems to God....; and,
 2. It must be with the prayer of expectation....¹⁵⁸⁶

'In Mark, Jesus tells us exactly the conditions He requires for our appropriation of the blessings He has promised. He says, *"What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them."*¹⁵⁸⁷ That is, *"ye shall have them"* after you believe that He has heard your prayer. As Jesus said, *"I thank Thee that Thou hast heard Me,"* while Lazarus¹⁵⁸⁸ was still dead;¹⁵⁸⁹ so we should be able to say, *"I thank Thee that Thou hast heard me,"* while we are still sick. *"Ye shall have them,"* is your answer from Jesus, and it is also your proof that your prayer has been heard.

As we have already remarked, to faith, the Word of God is the Voice of God. God has not promised that our healing shall begin before we believe that He has heard our prayer. *"If we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us."* If this is true, then we must believe that our prayer has been heard when we really pray. We must be able to say, *"We know we have the petition that we desire of Him,"* not because we see the answer, but because *"God is faithful, who also will do it."*

Abraham did not keep on praying for the birth of Isaac until the child was born. Instead, he kept on believing and glorifying God for His Word in the matter.

More than once we have read that it was after Solomon had *"made an end of praying"*¹⁵⁹⁰ that the blessing came. Jesus, at the grave of Lazarus, had *"made an end of praying,"* and had said, *"I thank thee that Thou hast heard Me,"*¹⁵⁹¹ before Lazarus came out from his tomb. Jehoshaphat and the children of Israel had *"made an end of praying"* and were all praising God *"with a loud voice"*¹⁵⁹² for the answer to their prayers before they went out to do battle with the three great armies. Their faith was *"the evidence [or assurance] of things not [yet] seen."*¹⁵⁹³ The one hundred and twenty had *"made an end of praying"* and were all *"continually praising and blessing God"* when the Spirit was poured out upon them.¹⁵⁹⁴ It is supposed to be the *"end of praying"* when one has been anointed for healing, and if one who has been anointed really has faith, we will hear nothing from him but thanksgiving until he has been healed.

¹⁵⁸⁶ Barclay, William, *The Daily Study Bible, Gospel of Mark*, p.276

¹⁵⁸⁷ Mark 11:24

¹⁵⁸⁸ shortened form of Eleazar.

¹⁵⁸⁹ Lazarus was not a deliquium (merely apparently dead).

¹⁵⁹⁰ I Kings 8:54a; II Chron 7:1a

¹⁵⁹¹ John 11:41c

¹⁵⁹² II Chron 20:19b

¹⁵⁹³ Heb 11:1

¹⁵⁹⁴ Acts 2:1-4

Perhaps I should say here that after commitment, one must not become indifferent. One's trust must remain active, like that of the children of Israel when they marched around the walls of Jericho¹⁵⁹⁵ and blew their ram's horns; and like that of Jehoshaphat and his men who, after they had "*made an end of praying*," went out to battle, singing praises to God. The healing of the ten lepers came while their trust was still active. God said to the dying Israelites, "*Every one that looketh shall live.*"¹⁵⁹⁶ This word "*looketh*" is in the continuous present tense. It is not a mere glance, but a continuous "*stare*." "*Moses endured by seeing [continually seeing] Him who is invisible.*"¹⁵⁹⁷ It was a "*steadfast*" faith that brought the fulfilment of God's promise to Abraham. Abraham waxed strong in faith by looking [continuously] unto the promise of God. If we allow our trust to become inactive, it will weaken; if we keep it active, it will continually grow stronger.

....God wants to train every Christian to believe Him when everything that they can see, except His promise,¹⁵⁹⁸ is to the contrary. Amen.¹⁵⁹⁹

¹⁵⁹⁵ Garstang, John, *The Foundations of Bible History—Joshua, Judges*, p.130 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'Jericho stood at the foot of the western hills, upon a low mound, [less than] a mile to the north-west of the modern village, and overlooking the most abundant water supply of the vicinity. The identity of the site is not in doubt; no other Canaanite city is to be found in the neighbourhood, nor indeed for miles around; and excavation in the mound itself has not only attested its early origins, but has disclosed the remains of a walled city, corresponding in general with the indications of the [Bible] narrative.

All the great cities of the Canaanites were surrounded by defensive walls, and here there was especial need of protection against man and beast. For though Jericho occupied a strategic point, it stood isolated, remote alike from any centre of authority and order as from the possible support of local alliances. It had accordingly been enclosed by protective ramparts from a remote age. In the latter half of the Middle Bronze Age, 1,800–1,600BC, in common with other Canaanite cities of the country, it had attained the zenith of its prosperity. At that time its buildings covered the whole of the mound, the foot of which was revetted from below ground level to a height of twenty feet [6 metres], all round its circuit of 800 yards [730 metres] with a formidable stone glacis. Upon this rose a defensive parapet of brick, the whole being further protected by an outer fosse.

However, at the time of the spies' visit [q.v. Josh 2:1ff; erroneously assumed by the author to have occurred in 1447BC] those great days of Jericho were already past. About 1,600BC some catastrophe had overwhelmed the city, which then rebuilt was confined to the top of the mound.'

The 'catastrophe,' which took away the city's protective defenses—comprising an outer fosse, a stone glacis, a stone revetment wall, and a surmounting brick parapet wall—did not happen 'about 1,600BC.' It happened in 1,559BC, for that was the year in which the massive defensive structure collapsed before Joshua and the children of Israel, q.v. inf. Jericho town covered about ten acres and was surrounded by a stone wall with a c.9-metre (30 feet) high tower, and probably had a population of somewhere between 2,000 and 3,000.

¹⁵⁹⁶ Num 21:8

¹⁵⁹⁷ Heb 11:27c (with added comment and clarification in square brackets); Targum of Jonathan: '[I]t shall come to pass that if [one bitten] look upon it, he shall live, if his heart be directed to the Name of the Word [Memra] of the Lord'—the bitings of the fiery serpents were cured by looking steadfastly upon a serpent of brass, which had the shape, though free from the venom, of the serpents that bit the children of Israel; this a foretelling of Christ, as confirmed by Christ himself in John 3:14, 'And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up.'

¹⁵⁹⁸ Heb 11:1, 'Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.' To the unbelieving bystander, faith risks everything. To the faithful there is no provision for failure, for there is no risk at all.

¹⁵⁹⁹ Bosworth, F. F., *Christ the Healer*, pp.63,64,73,74,92-100,164,165,171-190 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

Moot?

Another miraculous healing is recorded in Acts: *'Now Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour. And a certain man lame from his mother's womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms of them that entered into the temple; Who seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple asked an alms. And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him with John, said, look on us. And he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something of them. Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have I give thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk. And he took him by the right hand, and lifted him up: and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength. And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God. And all the people saw him walking and praising God: And they knew it was he which sat for alms at the Beautiful gate of the temple: and they were filled with wonder and amazement at that which had happened unto them.'*¹⁶⁰⁰

For some, this account proves problematical. The difficulty lies in the apparent lack of belief on the part of the lame man. He was asking for alms, presumably expecting money, and despite this, and without any confession of faith on his part, he was miraculously healed. However, the Greek word here translated '*alms*' means, equally, '*compassionateness*,' or '*beneficence*.'¹⁶⁰¹ The assumption that the man sought only money is not confirmed absolutely by the Greek text. Taken in tandem with those other miraculous healings during the time of the Apostles, where belief and faith were apparent, the better translation would be '*compassionateness*,' or '*beneficence*,' and this manifested itself in healing the lame man. It follows that the lame man had had faith prior to the healing, for without it, no healing would have been possible.¹⁶⁰² Even Christ found it unprofitable to do much in the face of unbelief, as seen from the events in Galilee: *'And they were offended in him. But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country, and in his own house. And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief.'*¹⁶⁰³ One further aspect to this of considerable note is that the lame man had been lame from birth; he had never walked. Yet, on being healed, he could walk and leap with perfect balance. No 'toddling' learning curve there!

'Jesus did not speak entirely to deaf ears; there were those even of the Jewish authorities, who, in their heart of hearts, believed. But they were afraid to confess their faith, because they did not wish to run the risk of being excommunicated from the synagogue.'¹⁶⁰⁴ These people were seeking to carry out the impossible; they

¹⁶⁰⁰ Acts 3:1-10

¹⁶⁰¹ Greek: eleemansune.

¹⁶⁰² not circular reasoning / affirming the consequent; all the evidence is to the contrary, q.v. inf.

¹⁶⁰³ Mat 13:57,58

¹⁶⁰⁴ John 12:42,43, '*Nevertheless among the chief rulers many believed on him. But because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.*'

were trying to be secret disciples. Secret discipleship is a contradiction in terms for, “either the secrecy kills the discipleship, or the discipleship kills the secrecy.”¹⁶⁰⁵

Other references

‘Some other texts on the subject of Divine healing are these:

‘And he [the Lord] said, Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their eyes heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed.’

¹⁶⁰⁶ *‘And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive: For this people’s heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.’¹⁶⁰⁷*

The same sentiment is expressed in Exodus, *‘And [the Lord] said, If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am the Lord that healeth thee,’¹⁶⁰⁸* and in Psalms, *‘Who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases, Who redeemeth,’¹⁶⁰⁹* where sin forgiveness and healing are linked.

‘He [the Lord] healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds.’¹⁶¹⁰ Again, it is the Lord that heals and binds up. *‘[I]n the day that the Lord bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the stroke of their wound,’¹⁶¹¹* speaks in context of the healing, and salvation, attendant upon the Second Coming of the Messiah.

Deuteronomy links health, material wealth, and other blessings, to obedience: *‘Thou shalt therefore keep the commandments, and the statutes, and the judgments, which I command thee this day, to do them. Wherefore it shall come to pass, if ye hearken to these judgments, and keep, and do them, that the Lord thy God shall keep unto thee the covenant and the mercy which he sware unto thy fathers: And he will love thee, and bless thee, and multiply thee: he will also bless the fruit of thy womb, and the fruit of thy land, thy corn, and*

¹⁶⁰⁵ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of John*, Vol.2, p.133

¹⁶⁰⁶ Isa 6:9,10 (sublinear emphasis added); the word here translated ‘healed’ is the Hebrew: raphah; given that Mat 13:14,15 is a reiteration of Isa 6:9,10, it is clear that the correct translation and meaning of raphah is ‘healed,’ and not ‘saved’ as the Tanakh has it in Isa 6:10. Here, healing is shown as the direct result of belief, understanding, faith, and conversion.

¹⁶⁰⁷ Mat 13:14,15 (sublinear emphasis added); the word here translated ‘heal,’ the Greek: iaomai, means ‘to cure,’ or ‘to heal.’

¹⁶⁰⁸ Ex 15:26 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

¹⁶⁰⁹ Psa 103:3,4

¹⁶¹⁰ Psa 147:3 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

¹⁶¹¹ Isa 30:26b

*thy wine, and thine oil, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep, in the land which he swore unto thy fathers to give thee. Thou shalt be blessed above all people: there shall not be a male or a female barren among you, or among your cattle. And the Lord will take away from thee all sickness, and will put none of the evil diseases of Egypt, which thou knowest, upon thee; but will lay them upon all them that hate thee.*¹⁶¹²

Not only was health promised for all the children of Israel, conditional on obedience, but given obedience, it would also apply to their livestock, and their land and its produce. Nobody, and nothing, would ail. This is God's blessing; subject to obedience to His word, and His will. Not only does God heal in such circumstances, He actually protects from ailment: none would be barren, and all would be protected from sickness. The blessing was preventative and curative.

The word translated '*sickness*'¹⁶¹³—from the Hebrew also meaning '*calamity*'¹⁶¹⁴—means severe sickness, usually unto death, or, at the very least, implying severe illness. Minor ailments, such as bruises, cuts, and the like are healed through the natural healing processes of the body: a system deriving from God in any case.

The body's ability to heal is seen in Luke: '*But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.*'¹⁶¹⁵ The application of bindings, oil, and wine, are all external, and are all aids. The healing of the body, through the processes instilled into the human frame by God, allied to rest in the inn, brought the man back to health.

Wine also has a use internally, for medicinal purposes: '*Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine other infirmities.*'¹⁶¹⁶ It is a little wine, however, and not wholesale, indiscriminate imbibing.

Hezekiah

Another instance of miraculous healing is recorded in Isaiah and Kings, with the latter account reading: '*In those days was Hezekiah sick unto death. And the prophet Isaiah the son of Amos came to him, and said unto him, Thus saith the Lord, Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live. Then he turned his face to the wall, and prayed unto the Lord, saying, I beseech thee, O Lord, remember now how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight. And Hezekiah wept sore. And it came to pass, after Isaiah was gone out into the middle court, that the word of the Lord came to him,*

¹⁶¹² Deut 7:11-15

¹⁶¹³ Deut 7:11-15, cf. v.15

¹⁶¹⁴ Hebrew: *choliy*.

¹⁶¹⁵ Luke 10:33,34 (sublinear emphasis added)

¹⁶¹⁶ I Tim 5:23

saying, Turn again, and tell Hezekiah the captain of my people, Thus saith the Lord, the God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold, I will heal thee: on the third day thou shalt go up unto the house of the Lord. And I will add unto thy days fifteen years; and I will deliver thee and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria; and I will defend this city for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake. And Isaiah said, Take a lump of figs, and they took and laid it on the boil, and he recovered. And Hezekiah said unto Isaiah, what shall be the sign that the Lord shall heal me, and that I shall go up into the house of the Lord the third day? And Isaiah said, This sign shalt thou have of the Lord, that the Lord will do the thing that he has spoken: shall the shadow go forward ten degrees,¹⁶¹⁷ or go back ten degrees? And Hezekiah answered, It is a light thing for the shadow to go down ten degrees: nay, but let the shadow return backward ten degrees. And Isaiah the prophet cried unto the Lord: and he brought the shadow ten degrees backward, by which it had gone down in the dial of Ahaz.¹⁶¹⁸

Here was answered prayer, but still the need on the part of the supplicant for a miraculous sign of its granting. So why the difference, when healing was granted, was there still a residual need of confirmation? The answer appears to lie in the fact that Hezekiah had been told initially that he was sick unto death through an unspecified 'boil,' or 'rash,' and that he was going to die, and, very shortly after his immediate and heartfelt prayer, that he would be healed. To confirm that the latter took precedence over the former word from God, a miraculous sign was requested and granted. It is also noteworthy that not only personal healing was granted, but salvation for the people from the Assyrian attackers of Jerusalem. This occurred a little later than the personal healing. The actual physical healing of Hezekiah, adding fifteen years to his life, involved placing figs¹⁶¹⁹ on the boil. The figs were not medicine; they were a symbol of obedience.

Sickness equals sin?

Sin & suffering: inevitable consequence, grotesque mismatch, or what? Some maintain that sickness is always the result of sin on the part of the sufferer, but this view is not sustained by, *'And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth. And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind? Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.'*¹⁶²⁰

Whose sin was it? A common question. To the believer in original sin: the man. To the believer in the sins of the forefathers being visited on the children: the parents. To the believer in metempsychosis / transmigration of souls / reincarnation: the man in a previous incarnation. To the believer that physical, or, indeed,

¹⁶¹⁷ better 'steps.'

¹⁶¹⁸ Isa 38:1-22; II Kings 20:1-11; the reference to 'degrees' should read, properly, 'steps.'

¹⁶¹⁹ non-medicinal.

¹⁶²⁰ John 9:2

financial or other material ailments are the result of sin and nothing else: either the man or his parents, or, quite possibly, all of them.

The Bible has it differently. The only one that is true in a general sense is the sins of the fathers, although that is not germane here. There is no original sin,¹⁶²¹ no reincarnation, and, to the believer that ailments are always the result of sin, Christ says, '*Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.*'¹⁶²² In fact, another reason for affliction and sickness is found in Psalms, '*It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes,*'¹⁶²³ and in Job, '*He rescues the lowly from their affliction, and opens their understanding through distress,*'¹⁶²⁴ and yet again in Peter, '*That the trial of your faith....though it be tried by fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.*'¹⁶²⁵

The amount of bile spewed down on the head of innocent people by self-appointed advocates of Christ claiming that any and every misfortune or ailment is a direct retribution from God for their sins,¹⁶²⁶ is incal-

¹⁶²¹ q.v. inf. for origins of doctrine of original sin.

¹⁶²² John 9:3

¹⁶²³ Psa 119:71

¹⁶²⁴ Job 36:15

¹⁶²⁵ I Peter 1:7

¹⁶²⁶ *Lion and Lamb Ministries* article, 'Why Does God Let the Wicked Prosper and the Righteous Suffer?' (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'Let's turn....to examine various specific situations in which this problem comes up practically in everyday life. For instance, is God fair when He lets the wicked prosper and the righteous suffer? Why does He let many worldly and uncalled people have financial success? Why does He allow the righteous and called to undergo harsh trials and tests? Is obeying God worthless because the wicked seem to be getting away with it? Does God bless worldly people while afflicting faithful Christians? Often we'll know co-workers, neighbours, classmates, uncalled family members and friends that have better health or financial conditions than our own. But that doesn't mean we should question God's justice or love for us. Clearly, we shouldn't doubt God's fairness when worldly people prosper materially and we don't. Are we complaining about God's having too much mercy for sinners (cf. Mat 5:44,45; Rom 5:6-11) when we think God should sternly impose justice right now on them instead? Of course, when it comes to our own sins, we want understanding, sympathy, and forgiveness from God instead of getting what we deserve, right?

Let's read what David (in Psalm 37) said about how the righteous should react to the prosperity of the wicked. First of all, material prosperity, including good health, only matters for a short time in this temporary physical life. What's really important is our status in the next life and how what we do today affects that. Therefore, the prosperity and health of the wicked, or just average uncalled people, is temporary also. So why get angry? What should matter to us most of all is our status in God's sight, not what the other guy, good or evil, is doing. Instead, let's have faith, and be happy with what we do receive from God. We should obey God regardless of whether the unrepentant prosper or not. By comparing ourselves with others, we end up suffering psychologically, emotionally, and mentally. So let's focus on solving our own problems or enjoying our own successes instead. We will be proven right in the end since the wicked will be defeated in the end. But that's a matter for God's timing, not ours. God will impose justice on His timetable according to His all-knowing wisdom, instead of in accordance to our impatient desires to see our enemies suffer right now. Is it because we lack faith in God's existence or that we worry that He isn't morally trustworthy that we emotionally insist on having God punish (if unrepentant) evildoers right now rather than when they are cast into the lake of fire?

Nobody ultimately "gets away with it" if he wishes to be saved and live forever. On the other hand, since we've all sinned (Romans 3:23), and Jesus' death and resurrection was necessary to save us (Rom 5:8-10), we all "get away with it" after we repent and are forgiven. So then, are we all that much more righteous than others who haven't repented yet, but may in this life or the next [sic] (Ezek 37:11-14)?

culable. Innocent people, not having sinned in a matter, are branded by these wholly misguided children of Satan as sinners deserving punishment. The innocent, so denigrated, have been said to be cursed by God, sometimes even described as 'especially' cursed by God, that is, singled out for particular punishment, or to be excluded by God, or discarded, and almost always given over to Satan. To the poor recipients of such unfounded hatred, there is comfort: *'All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose.'*¹⁶²⁷ *'The works of God'* are made manifest in the 'elect.' The 'merchants of bile' have no part in them.

But if the 'merchants' continue in their error, they could well discover that they have part in the recital contained in the book of Revelation: *'But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.'*¹⁶²⁸ Unbelievers and liars / hypocrites have no place in the kingdom of God, but they do have a place in the lake of fire. Interestingly, included in this recital is the Greek word translated '*sorcerers*,'¹⁶²⁹ which means '*druggist*' or '*pharmacist*.' This is another measure of how serious is the matter of man's usurpation of God's healing role. '*Druggists*' will not enter the kingdom, for by their acts they deny the work of the Holy Spirit.¹⁶³⁰

The translators of the K.J.V. did little to clarify the matter of healing in their translation, *'A merry heart doeth good like a medicine: but a broken spirit drieth the bones.'*¹⁶³¹ The Hebrew,¹⁶³² here incorrectly '*medicine*,' actually means '*cure*.' Its root means to '*remove*.' Another K.J.V. disservice relates to the translation of a Greek word in every case as '*physician*.'¹⁶³³ Latros also means '*healer*,' and comes from the root meaning '*to cure*,' '*heal*,' or '*make whole*.' Taken in the context of the biblical doctrine on healing, some translations should be '*physician*,' as in Luke, *'And he said unto them, Ye will surely say unto me this proverb, Physician, heal thyself,'*

We should be content with what we receive in this life. Rarely are the righteous left in total misery. It's normally a matter of relative, not absolute, deprivation or poverty. If we didn't know about the wicked's prosperous condition, we wouldn't be "suffering" then! Also, God may require self-sacrifice from us to test our motives, such as through asking us to tithe, to observe the Sabbath, to keep the Holy Days, and to avoid taking certain immoral jobs (such as being a soldier and waging war, versus Mat 5:38-48).

Asaph (in Psa 73:16-24) felt the need to repent when he realized his complaints against God about the prosperity of the evildoers were wrong. So he chose to focus on God's greatness and glory instead. We should strive to faithfully obey God regardless of what other people might be seemingly getting away with. Worldly people will have to repent also after being resurrected [and have their consciences tested and assessed, q.v. sup.] if they wish to be saved and gain eternal life. To have material prosperity and even good health are small matters compared to getting eternal life. Because God is both fair and loving to all, nobody ultimately gets away with it (Rev 20:11-15).

¹⁶²⁷ Rom 8:28

¹⁶²⁸ Rev 21:8 (sublinear emphasis added)

¹⁶²⁹ Greek: pharmakeus.

¹⁶³⁰ there can be no medical missionaries in the Judæo-Christian church: missionaries, yes; medical, no.

¹⁶³¹ Prov 17:22

¹⁶³² Hebrew: gehah.

¹⁶³³ Greek: iatros.

¹⁶³⁴ 'And a woman having an issue of blood twelve years, which had spent all her living upon physicians, neither could be healed of any,'¹⁶³⁵ and, 'Luke, the beloved physician.'¹⁶³⁶ Others, however, should be 'healer,' as in, 'And Jesus answering said unto them, They that are whole need not a healer: but they that are sick.'¹⁶³⁷ Taken in the context of all of this, the import of Jeremiah becomes clear: 'Is there no balm in Gilead; is there no physician there? Why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?'¹⁶³⁸ Balms and physicians don't heal. They cannot heal. The actual balm mentioned was a resin from the styrax tree¹⁶³⁹ found in Gilead, located across the Jordan from Anathoth. This ointment had been known of old and was widely exported at the time. But the balm was not the means of God's healing. Faith was the means; the only means.

'The Jews rigidly connected sin and suffering. Eliphaz had long ago said to Job, "*Who ever perished being innocent?*"'¹⁶⁴⁰ This was a cruel and a heartbreaking doctrine, as Job knew well. And Jesus utterly denied it in the case of the individual person. As we all know very well, it is often the greatest saints who have to suffer most. But Jesus went on to say that if his hearers did not repent, they too would perish. What did He mean by that? One thing is clear—Jesus foresaw and foretold the destruction of Jerusalem, what happened in 70AD.¹⁶⁴¹ Jesus knew well that if the Jews went on with their intrigues, their rebellions, their plottings, their political ambitions, they were simply going to commit national suicide; He knew that in the end Rome would step in and obliterate the nation; and that is precisely what happened. So what Jesus meant was this, if the Jewish nation kept on seeking an earthly kingdom [through their own endeavours] and rejecting the kingdom of God, they could only come to one end.

¹⁶³⁴ Luke 4:23

¹⁶³⁵ Luke 8:43

¹⁶³⁶ Col 4:14; Luke, a Gentile, was a physician before conversion, but not afterwards;

Barclay, William, *The Acts of the Apostles*, pp.1,2 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'Although the book [of Acts] never says so, from the earliest times Luke has been held to be its writer. About Luke we really know very little; there are only three references to him in the New Testament—Col 4:14; Phil 24; II Tim 4:11.

From these we can say two things for sure. First, Luke was a doctor; second, he was one of Paul's most valued helpers and most loyal friends, for he was a companion of his in his last imprisonment. We can deduce the fact that he was a Gentile. Col 4:11 concludes a list of mentions and greetings from those who are of the circumcision, that is, from Jews; verse twelve begins a new list and we naturally conclude that the new list is of Gentiles. So then we have the very interesting fact that Luke is the only Gentile author in the New Testament. [However, by being a member of the Judæo-Christian church, he was part of Israel, q.v.].

We could have guessed that Luke was a doctor because of his instinctive use of medical terms. In Luke 4:35, in telling of the man who had the spirit of an unclean [demon], he says "*when the [demon] had thrown him down*" and uses the correct medical word for convulsions. In Luke 9:38 when he draws the picture of a man who asks Jesus, "*I beg you to look upon my son*" he employs the conventional word for a doctor paying a visit to a patient. The most interesting example is in the saying about the camel and the needle's eye. All three synoptic writers give us that saying (Mat 19:24; Mark 10:25; Luke 18:25). For '*needle*' both Mark and Matthew use the Greek *raphis*, the ordinary word for a tailor's or household needle. Luke alone uses *belone*, the technical word for a surgeon's needle. Luke was a doctor and a doctor's words came most naturally to his pen.'

¹⁶³⁷ Luke 5:31

¹⁶³⁸ Jer 8:22

¹⁶³⁹ Latin: *balanites ægyptiaca*.

¹⁶⁴⁰ Job 4:7

¹⁶⁴¹ Luke 19:21-24

To put the matter like that leaves, at first sight, a paradoxical situation. It means that we cannot say that individual suffering and sin are inevitably connected, but we can say that national sin and suffering are so connected. The nation which chooses the wrong ways will, in the end, suffer for it. But the individual is in a very different case. The individual is not an isolated unit. He is bound up in the bundle of life. Often he may object, and object violently, to the course his nation is taking; but when the consequence of that course comes he cannot escape being involved in it. The individual is not an isolated unit, and is often caught up in a situation which he did not make; his suffering is often not his fault; but the nation is a unit and chooses its own policy and will reap the fruit of it. It is always dangerous to attribute human suffering to human sin; but it is always safe to say that the nation which rebels against God is on the way to disaster.¹⁶⁴²

But there are wantings in Barclay's view. Firstly, and starting with the nation, Genesis records a conversation between Abraham and the Lord over the looming fate of Sodom and Gomorrah.¹⁶⁴³ In it, Abraham pleads for a stay of the Lord's hand on account of there being a limited number of righteous men in those cities, eventually reducing to just ten being enough to save the cities of the plain. Something very similar, but on a much grander scale, is recorded in Malachi, where the whole earth would suffer the wrath of the Lord,¹⁶⁴⁴ *'lest I come and smite the earth with destruction,'*¹⁶⁴⁵ and not merely a *'curse.'*¹⁶⁴⁶ The saving grace is a disproportionately small number of people who are turned to the Lord, love mankind, and keep the Law of Moses, with the statutes and judgements.¹⁶⁴⁷ The same is seen, in even greater disproportion, at the time of the end, *'And except those days be shortened, there should no flesh be saved; but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.'*¹⁶⁴⁸ Without the *'elect'* alive today, the whole earth would be destroyed. Throughout recorded history, and into the now very near future, there is always the covering grace and mercy of the loving God. The saddest part of it is that the very people whose lives are being spared are often the ones most active in persecuting God's *'elect.'*

And secondly, for the individual, the link between sin and suffering is convoluted. Yes, sin brings on suffering and death, but other than in the case of wilful sin, the Judæo-Christian has the grace of God and, upon repentance, can live. The part with which many so-called Christians have difficulty is in suffering inflicted simply because a person is Christian, because 'so-calleds' don't suffer this. Satan has no desire to rouse them in any way. He might take delight, as he does, in causing widespread human suffering, but he doesn't take particular interest in them. He's happy with them just the way they are. His primary interest, his 'enemy,' is clear: proper Judæo-Christians. Judæo-Christians, God's *'elect,'* an extremely disproportionate small number of people who

¹⁶⁴² Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Luke*, pp.178,179 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

¹⁶⁴³ Gen 18:23-33

¹⁶⁴⁴ Mal 4:5,6

¹⁶⁴⁵ Mal 4:6c

¹⁶⁴⁶ K.J.V.

¹⁶⁴⁷ Mal 4:4,6

¹⁶⁴⁸ Mat 24:22; the word *'sake'* should be deleted as it does not occur in the original Greek text, leaving *'but for the elect.'*

are turned to the Lord, love mankind, and ‘*keep the Law of Moses....with the statutes and judgments,*’ are in the cross-hairs. Satan persecutes them, as often and as severely as possible. The ‘*elect*’ suffer for not sinning; they suffer for doing God’s will; and they suffer much and often. Yet Paul says, ‘*For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.*’¹⁶⁴⁹ And, of course, there is the suffering of the early Judæo-Christian church, particularly in the Smyrnan era.¹⁶⁵⁰

But there is more in the New Testament on the subject of sin and suffering: ‘*And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth. And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind? Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him,*’¹⁶⁵¹ and, ‘*There were present at that season some that told him of the Galileans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices.*’¹⁶⁵² And Jesus answering said unto them, *Suppose ye that these Galileans were sinners above all the Galileans, because they suffered such things? I tell you, Nay; but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower of Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem? I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.*’¹⁶⁵³ Those last suffered or died not because of excessive sin, but because either the future manifestation of the Power of God demanded it, or God permitted it.

The apparent inability of many ‘so-called’ Christians to understand that personal suffering is not inextricably linked to personal sin—even when the ‘national’ position is admitted—is nothing short of the culpable. How utterly amazing!

Compassion

“*But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, for they were bewildered and dejected, like sheep who have no shepherd.*”¹⁶⁵⁴ The word which is used for ‘*moved with compassion*’¹⁶⁵⁵ is the strongest word for pity in the Greek language. It is formed from the word which means ‘*the bowels,*’¹⁶⁵⁶ and it describes the compassion which moves a man to the deepest depths of his being. In the gospels, apart from

¹⁶⁴⁹ Rom 8:18

¹⁶⁵⁰ Rev 2:8-10

¹⁶⁵¹ John 9:1-3

¹⁶⁵² Gill, John, *Gill’s Exposition of the Bible*:

‘These Galileans were very likely some of the followers of Judas Gaulonitis, or Judas of Galilee....who endeavoured to draw off the Jews from the Roman government, and affirmed it was not lawful to give tribute to Cæsar; at which Pilate being enraged, sent a band of soldiers, and slew these his followers; who were come up to the feast of the Passover, as they were offering their sacrifices in the temple, and so mixed their blood with the blood of the Passover lambs: this being lately done, some of the company spoke of it to Christ.’

¹⁶⁵³ Luke 13:1-5

¹⁶⁵⁴ Mat 9:36

¹⁶⁵⁵ Greek: splagchnistheis.

¹⁶⁵⁶ Greek: splagchna.

its use in some of the parables, it is used only of Jesus.¹⁶⁵⁷ When we study these passages, we are able to see the things which moved Jesus most of all.

1. He was moved to compassion by the world's pain. He was moved with compassion for the sick;¹⁶⁵⁸ for the blind;¹⁶⁵⁹ for those in the grip of demons.¹⁶⁶⁰ In all our afflictions He is afflicted. He could not see a sufferer but He longed to ease the pain;

2. He was moved to compassion by the world's sorrow. The sight of the widow at Nain, following the body of her son out to burial, moved his heart.¹⁶⁶¹ He was filled with a great desire to wipe the tear from every eye;

3. He was moved to compassion by the world's hunger. The sight of the tired and hungry crowds was a call upon His power.¹⁶⁶² No Christian can be content to have too much while others have too little;

4. He was moved to compassion by the world's loneliness. The sight of a leper, banished from the society of his fellowmen, living a life which was a living death of loneliness and universal abandonment, called forth His pity and His power;¹⁶⁶³ and,

5. He was moved to compassion by the world's bewilderment. This is what moved Jesus on this occasion.

The words that are used to describe the state of the common people are vivid words. The word that we have translated '*bewildered*'¹⁶⁶⁴ is [telling]. It can describe a corpse which is flayed and mangled; someone who is plundered by rapacious men, or vexed by those without pity, or treated with wanton insolence; someone who is utterly wearied by a journey which seems to know no end. The word that we have translated '*dejected*'¹⁶⁶⁵ is [similarly telling]. It means 'laid prostrate.' It can describe a man prostrated with drink, or a man laid low with mortal wounds.

The Jewish leaders, who should have been giving men strength to live, were bewildering men with subtle arguments about the Law, which had no help and comfort in them. When they should have been helping men to stand upright, they were bowing them down under the intolerable weight of the scribal law. They were

¹⁶⁵⁷ Mat 9:36,14:14,15:32,20:34; Mark 1:41,9:22; Luke 7:13

¹⁶⁵⁸ Mat 14:14

¹⁶⁵⁹ Mat 20:34

¹⁶⁶⁰ Mark 9:22

¹⁶⁶¹ Luke 7:13

¹⁶⁶² Mat 15:32

¹⁶⁶³ Mark 1:41

¹⁶⁶⁴ Greek: eskulmenoi.

¹⁶⁶⁵ Greek: errimenoj.

offering a religion which was a handicap instead of a support. We must always remember that Christianity exists, not to discourage, but to encourage; not to weigh men down with burdens, but to lift them up with wings.¹⁶⁶⁶

Central to Bible

God's will, in the matter of healing, is simple to discern, for it has been placed in writing. *'Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.'*¹⁶⁶⁷ The 'will of the Lord' in this matter was given to the church by Christ immediately before His ascension, recorded in Mark, *'And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach¹⁶⁶⁸ the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe; in my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.'*¹⁶⁶⁹ The effect of the 'will of God' is given in, *'And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us: And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.'*¹⁶⁷⁰ Those who claim that the 'Great Commission' given to the church does not include physical healing of the sick should re-read the highlighted phrase above.

The Acts and the Epistles document the apostolic church carrying out this Commission. Even Peter's shadow passing over the sick healed them, through the Power of God.¹⁶⁷¹ Paul's ministry resulted in many being healed. Such was the demand for healing, especially from those in remote locations, that God allowed Paul a special means to reach and heal them, recorded in Acts: *'And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul: So that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them.'*¹⁶⁷² The elders of the church prayed over the sick, anointing them with oil for healing, *'and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.'*¹⁶⁷³ It is the 'prayer of faith,' not the prayer of doubt.

¹⁶⁶⁶ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol.1, pp.354-356 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

¹⁶⁶⁷ Eph 5:17

¹⁶⁶⁸ Barclay, William, *The Mind of Jesus*, p.71 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):
'[The disciples] were sent out with two main functions. They were sent out to preach and to heal (Mark 3:14f.; Mat 10:7f.). The normal New Testament word for 'to preach' is *kerussein*, which is the verb of the noun *kerux*, which means 'a herald.' The twelve were to be the heralds of the King, bringing to men the announcement of the arrival of the King, and the proclamation of the message of the King. In their healing they were to bring to men, not a theoretical exposition, but a practical disposition of the love of God.'

¹⁶⁶⁹ Mark 16:15-18 (sublinear emphasis added)

¹⁶⁷⁰ I John 5:14,15

¹⁶⁷¹ Acts 5:15, by the Holy Spirit, the Power of God.

¹⁶⁷² Acts 19:11,12; note these were 'special miracles.'

¹⁶⁷³ James 5:14,15

'Those who first faint in prayer and then cease to pray commonly do so from some kind of latent feeling that God does not regard them.'¹⁶⁷⁴ That is not Judæo-Christianity.

Healing is central to the Bible. During His ministry, Jesus healed lepers, blind men, the lame, a haemorrhaging woman, the demon-possessed, and even raised the dead. Christ involved His disciples in the work of physical healing through anointing with oil,¹⁶⁷⁵ and the book of Acts, together with Paul's epistles, contain accounts of healing by Christ's followers, noted in the latter as a gift of the Holy Spirit.

Jewish record

For two-and-a-half centuries physical healing was an integral component of Judæo-Christian life and faith, as a sign of God's love, compassion, and care. Evidence of physical healing is given by Gruber: 'Other Jews were hearing, reading, and believing the message of the Talmidei Yeshua [Judæo-Christians]. To further isolate them, [Rabbi] Akiba forbade the reading of such books. A Mishnah in Sanhedrin begins, "All Israel has a part in the world to come," and then enumerates exceptions. "R. Akiba added, 'He who reads in external books, also he who whispers over a wound, and says, *None of the diseases which I sent in Egypt will I lay upon thee, I am the Lord thy healer.*'"¹⁶⁷⁶

"Rabbi Akiba decided....that 'whoever is reading in 'outside' books (the Babylonian Gemara explains this as meaning 'in the books of the Minim') and whoever whispers over a wound (as the Judæo-Christians were doing while healing by faith) has no share in the world to come.'¹⁶⁷⁷

The Minim, and all that they touched, were to be strictly and completely avoided. "Slaughter by a Min is idolatry; their bread is Samaritan bread, their wine is wine offered to idols; their fruits are not tithed, their books are books of witchcraft, and their sons are bastards. One does not sell to them or receive from them or take from them or give to them. One does not teach their sons trades, and one does not obtain healing from them, either healing of property or healing of lives."^{1678 1679}

¹⁶⁷⁴ Dods, Marcus, *The Parables of Our Lord, as recorded by St. Luke*, p.192

¹⁶⁷⁵ Mark 6:12,13

¹⁶⁷⁶ Sanh. XI.1.

¹⁶⁷⁷ Footnote: Yonah, Michael Avi, *The Jews Under Roman and Byzantine Rule*, p.143 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'The Scripture to which Rabbi Akiba referred is Ex 15:26, "And He [the Lord] said, 'If you will give earnest heed to the voice of the Lord your God, and do what is right in His sight, and give ear to His commandments, and keep all His statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you which I have put on the Egyptians; for I, the Lord, am your healer.'" Apparently, at that time the Talmidei Yeshua, such as Jacob of Kefar Sekaniah, were using the verse in healing. The verse is still used today by followers of Jesus who believe in divine healing.'

¹⁶⁷⁸ (sublinear emphasis added); Footnote: Herford, *Christianity*, p.389, notes that 'This is not a halachah, an authoritative legal decision, but it represents a consensus of opinion amounting almost to a law.'

¹⁶⁷⁹ Gruber, Daniel, *Rabbi Akiba's Messiah: The Origins of Rabbinic Authority*, pp.153,154,157,158 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

The clear import of the highlighted section is that the Judaeo-Christians were healing the people at that time. The Jewish view of Christ's miracles of healing can be gleaned from Edersheim: 'Egypt was regarded as the home of magic.'¹⁶⁸⁰ In connection with this, it deserves notice that the Talmud ascribes the miracles of Jesus to magic, which He had learned during His stay in Egypt, having taken care, when He left, to insert under His skin its rules and formulas, since every traveller, on quitting the country, was searched, lest he should take to other lands the mysteries of magic.'^{1681 1682}

King's messengers

'The King's messengers'¹⁶⁸³ had words to speak and deeds to do. They had to announce the imminence of the Kingdom. As we have seen, the Kingdom of God is a society on earth,¹⁶⁸⁴ where God's will is as perfectly done as it is in heaven. Of all persons who ever lived in the world Jesus was, and is, the only person who ever perfectly did, and obeyed, and fulfilled, God's will.

But the task of the twelve was not confined to speaking words; it involved doing deeds. They had to heal the sick, raise the dead, to cleanse the lepers, to cast out demons. All these injunctions are to be taken in a double sense. They are to be taken physically, because Jesus came to bring health and healing to the bodies of men. But they are also taken spiritually. They describe the change wrought by Jesus Christ in the [hearts] of men.'¹⁶⁸⁵

The disciples were given the great commission by Christ: '*And he said unto them, go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name they shall cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.*'¹⁶⁸⁶

Healing is apparent in this on every hand. The geographical and national aspects were enlarged to encompass all mankind, everywhere on earth.

¹⁶⁸⁰ Kidd. 49b; Shabb. 75a

¹⁶⁸¹ Shabb. 104b

¹⁶⁸² Edersheim, Alfred, *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, p.1041

¹⁶⁸³ the disciples sent forth by Christ '*to the lost sheep of the house of Israel*'; Mat 10:5-8a.

¹⁶⁸⁴ Mat 6:10,11

¹⁶⁸⁵ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol.1, pp.364,365 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

¹⁶⁸⁶ Mark 16:15-18

Fourth-century declension

By the fourth-century, however, the 'visible church' had mutated, declined, and been transplanted to the point where, owing to persecution, the true church had had to go into hiding, and the view of healing held by the supplanting strain underwent substantial change. Primarily influenced by Western, that is, Roman, theologians, illness became to be regarded solely as punishment from God, and physical healing was first split from spiritual healing, then greatly subsumed. The grim realities of the Dark Ages, where the visible church, again Roman, had nothing to offer by way of healing, and an attitude towards faith in subsequent centuries as intellectual rather than experiential, further diminished the ministry of healing. The Reformers continued in the view that 'salvation was health for the soul [sic], not for the body.'¹⁶⁸⁷

Survived

Despite all, the true faith survived, as Christ had promised it would, and Judæo-Christian theology still bases itself on the doctrine of healing through the Holy Spirit. God can deliver a person from any kind of suffering: sickness, financial troubles, persecution, and the like. But in many cases in Scripture, other than in the instance of sickness, Paul and the other early Christians had to endure persecution in order to fulfil their mission for Christ. *'Beloved, think not it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. If ye be reproached in the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters. Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf. For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls [bodies] to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator.'*¹⁶⁸⁸

Scripture tells of the many times Paul suffered and how he counted this as a small thing to go through compared to the work to be done: *'For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.'*¹⁶⁸⁹ But even this earthly suffering, from persecution, is limited by an ever-loving God: *'There is no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a*

¹⁶⁸⁷ from a misunderstanding of I Peter 1:9, *'Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.'*

¹⁶⁸⁸ I Peter 4:12-19 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

¹⁶⁸⁹ Rom 8:18

way to escape,¹⁶⁹⁰ that ye may be able to bear it.¹⁶⁹¹ The word here translated 'temptation'¹⁶⁹² means 'putting to proof,' 'discipline,' or 'testing.'

'We must be clear as to the meaning of the word temptation as it is used in....the Bible generally. For the most part, we regard temptation as a deliberate and malevolent attempt to seduce a man into sin. But in the New Testament the word¹⁶⁹³ means much more 'to test' than 'to tempt'....The temptation of Jesus was the testing of Jesus. Temptation is always a testing; it is not meant to make a man fall; it is meant to test him and to try him, so that out of the testing situation he will emerge stronger and finer and purer, like a metal that is tested and tried in the fire.'¹⁶⁹⁴

Latter-day recension

Despite such overwhelming evidence of God's promise to heal, the latter-day Laodicean era¹⁶⁹⁵ began to drift far from this basic doctrine of the Judæo-Christian faith. By the late nineteen-sixties, American society in particular had become significantly more litigious. In such an environment, where, despite the hyperbole, the attempts of the by then apostate church in faith healing were patently not working, only succeeding in creating what was seen to be 'a hostage to fortune.' The matter quickly boiled down to a question of 'doctrine' against hierarchical 'wealth,' 'lifestyle,' 'comfort,' and 'peace of mind.' The perceived need to position the organisation on more unassailable ground for the purpose of protecting cherished corporate assets from the ravages of actions for damages through the courts became ever more imperative in the eyes of the hierarchy. What the leadership did was to exacerbate an already parlous position. Faced with clear and overwhelming evidence of the church's apostasy, they lurched the church further from the truth.¹⁶⁹⁶

Herbert Armstrong is reported as saying that he knew as early as nineteen twenty-nine that healing would not be part of 'the Gospel today'—solely due to lack of faith. At the nineteen fifty-five Radio Church of God Ministerial Conference, he shocked delegates when he admitted that he had never felt that he was good enough for God to heal him, and that he was 'out of practice' in having faith for his own healing, although he still had much faith that God healed others. How much faith is apparent here?

Despite this, frequently quoted in church in the fifties and early sixties was, '*Thus saith the Lord, Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord.*'¹⁶⁹⁷ Going

¹⁶⁹⁰ 'way of escape,' in the Greek usage of ekbasis, means 'safe landing place,' a nautical term, in context implying safety and victory.

¹⁶⁹¹ I Cor 10:13

¹⁶⁹² Greek: peirasmos.

¹⁶⁹³ Greek: peirazein.

¹⁶⁹⁴ Barclay, William, *The Mind of Jesus*, p.39

¹⁶⁹⁵ Radio (later Worldwide) Church of God, and its fellow travellers.

¹⁶⁹⁶ Herbert Armstrong and his cronies.

¹⁶⁹⁷ Jer 17:5

to doctors, and taking drugs, was then still seen as idolatry, putting trust in man rather than trust in God. But the 'heaven' was already at work, and it was to wreak much harm and destruction.

Armstrong's nineteen seventy-nine recension of the early fifties healing booklet was simply an attempt to cover a wholly deteriorated position. The fundamental problem facing his church was that 'faith healing,' as taught and practised, patently did not work. The sick were not healed. The dead were not raised. In fact, nothing was happening; healing was not available to the church through the prayers and anointings of the ministers and elders. Healing did not happen because they didn't practise their faith, and they didn't do that because they didn't believe in it. They did not have faith. And rather than go to the root of the problem—the church's apostasy and unbelief—Armstrong took the 'worldly route,' and very substantially modified the doctrine instead.

Doctrine rescinded

This route, while appearing to wander aimlessly for some time, eventually went via a work known by the acronym 'S.T.P.'¹⁶⁹⁸ The S.T.P. represented Armstrong's son, Garner Ted's limp attempt at updating what was then held to be 'old and dangerous theology.' The S.T.P. noted that both medical practice and technology had advanced, and, in consequence, claimed that the doctrine on healing had to be developed in parallel. The S.T.P. then twisted Psalms¹⁶⁹⁹ to mean that healing was only a 'benefit' that was, 'not an absolute and unconditional promise to which God has irrevocably bound Himself.' [It was claimed that] '[H]ealing is a 'special benefit' which God has made available to His church. But it is not part of His spiritual, moral law, as it were; and not being healed, therefore, is not a sin. The ill individual should look to man for whatever physical help he can receive but should also look to God to do what man cannot do—supernaturally intervene and divinely remove illness, sickness or disease.'¹⁷⁰⁰

The advice given was that 'a regular programme of routine physical examinations by a qualified doctor is also important in recognising and solving any potential problems before they become serious.' Seeking what was termed 'external help' was not deemed a sin, 'because it is God's responsibility to give us this special faith, though we certainly have our part in it.' In other words, the membership was to blame God for lack of faith and lack of healing!

¹⁶⁹⁸ *The Systematic Theology Project*, published in 1978AD; the malaise, however, had set in much earlier than the advent of the 'S.T.P.' In 1969AD, at a ministerial conference, it was announced that the booklet on healing (the 1952AD version, 'Does God Heal Today?') was to be withdrawn, ostensibly for 'updating.' Even earlier, subtle manoeuvrings had taken place in the AD1960s, as can be seen from a *Good News* article by Jon Hill, Aug. 1964AD: 'You can go to doctors for your healing if you want—the Church of God advises you that this is NOT the way to be healed.' Prior to this, there was, or appeared to be, a proscription on the use of doctors and medical services. Now it had been reduced to the status of mere 'advice.'

¹⁶⁹⁹ Psa 103:2,3

¹⁷⁰⁰ S.T.P. (with added comment and clarification)

The twisting of Scripture went even further: 'The Scripture which states that "*for whatsoever is not of faith is sin*"¹⁷⁰¹ does not refer to a lack of faith as sin. It rather means that when one violates his conscience, his own sense of right and wrong, then that is sin.'

Sin against God's Laws and word was replaced by an appeal to the good conscience of man. Man's feelings were being elevated above the Laws and word of God. The declension had become precipitate.

The world is in thrall to Satan, and that, in turn, means that Satan controls all the worldly religions, governments, institutions, and organisations which surround and buffet the 'elect.' Satan's agents take many forms, with one being that of the medical profession. Turning away from God's healing to the 'healing' of man, agent of Satan, is worshipping one other than God: breaking the first commandment—bending the knee before the throne of Satan.

Despite considerable internal turmoil over the S.T.P., a second booklet on healing was produced, published in nineteen seventy-nine. The Worldwide Church of God had been without a published doctrine on God's healing for ten years, and much had changed in the interim. While Garner Ted Armstrong's S.T.P. was officially repudiated, much of its apostasy did manage to march into 'officially approved' doctrine, usually under the guise of 'new truth.' The new booklet turned healing on its head, approved doctors and medical services, only introducing the possibility of God's Divine healing once the services of the medical profession had been exhausted.

'Legal defence'

The Worldwide Church of God's evolving policy on healing brought forth the following highly defensive instructions¹⁷⁰² to ministers:

1. 'Do not mention faith healing in any circumstances. It cannot be introduced during the trial as a defence. It will only serve to raise antagonisms at the time of the enquiry and make the whole case newspaper-worthy;
2. Deny any knowledge that the ailment was serious. Or, if this cannot be done, then:
3. Place the time when the seriousness first became apparent as close to the time of death as possible;
4. Take the shortest period of time possible for the illness;
5. If the question of a doctor should arise, it might be met with, "If I had any idea that [the person] was that sick and the doctor could have healed [that person], I certainly would have called [the doctor] immediately";

¹⁷⁰¹ Rom 14:23

¹⁷⁰² from Pasadena, California headquarters.

6. Beware of advising people and involving the church. People are free moral agents¹⁷⁰³ and must make their own decisions. They must learn to stand on their own feet;

7. The church must come before individuals. Don't make the church responsible for lawsuits....Don't obligate the church; and,

8. Don't be hostile toward doctors and hospitals. When brought into contact with medical men, be friendly, but firm. Be careful not to mention the Bible, religion, or the church of God.'

The nineteen-seventy W.C.G. Ministerial Conference issued the following incongruous and modifying instruction: 'We need even more sermons on faith, prayer, healing, getting closer to God, walking with and cleaving to Him. Don't speak against doctors and medicine.' The nineteen seventy-three Conference developed the matter further: 'God does for us what we can't do for ourselves.'¹⁷⁰⁴

This was the overriding principle of Armstrong's second booklet on healing. It meant that whatever medical technology could do should be done, and only then should God be appealed to for healing. The flood-gates of doctrinal apostasy were approaching wide open.

Hierarchical 'benefits'

During that same year, some ministers asked for health benefits. They all received them two years later.¹⁷⁰⁵ The membership knew nothing of this, for the hypocritical ministry kept them in total ignorance. Herbert Armstrong died in January, nineteen eighty-six. During his almost six-month terminal illness, he was taking drugs and being visited by a doctor, sometimes twice a day. The doctrine of divine healing had been turned on its head by an hypocritical, cynical, and apostate hierarchy solely intent on protecting its material wellbeing.

Armstrong died seven years after his introduction of the revised, apostate booklet on God's healing.¹⁷⁰⁶ The 'empire' that he had built over a period of half a century crumbled after him. The much weakened, much diminished, and wholly apostate Worldwide Church of God now has no doctrine of divine healing. It's doctrine could heal no one, least of all itself.

Perhaps the widening gap between the word of God and the ever-mutating Church of God doctrine can be illustrated in the matter of the gravest sin. In Scripture, it is blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. According to Armstrong, however, 'the greatest sin of all [is] failing to do [the] full share, generously [giving] for God's

¹⁷⁰³ sic; q.v. inf.

¹⁷⁰⁴ H. Q. advice to W.C.G. minsters to deny involvement in death and disease of the flock quoted in Harper's magazine, July 1973AD edition.

¹⁷⁰⁵ in 1975AD

¹⁷⁰⁶ in 1979AD

work.¹⁷⁰⁷ Cash, cash, and cash again! Man's evil, avaricious grabbing of God's tithes and offerings. Idolatry: the worship of funds. Much the same as idolatry: the worship of Satan, the counterfeit healer.

In his very own words, Armstrong, in his 'Pastor General's Report',¹⁷⁰⁸ identified the danger, but singularly failed to heed his own warning: 'You take one such false step, accept one false 'truth' and refuse to repent of it at once and turn from it, you will then go on into more and more error.'

Faith in Satan

The declension continued unabated, however, as teaching evolved a *raison d'être* for seeking a doctor's diagnosis: in order that the 'doctor could identify what the person had to repent of!' Faith in God had been replaced by wholesale faith in the medical profession. The '*shepherds*' had totally resiled, as prophesied: *'The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken.'*¹⁷⁰⁹

Revelation gives a succinct statement of the condition of mankind at the time of the end: *'And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk: Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.'*¹⁷¹⁰ The word here translated '*sorceries*',¹⁷¹¹ means '*magic*,' and '*medication*,' with the use of drugs, 'a malevolent, if not also maleficent practice.'¹⁷¹² That was the only word the Greeks had for drugs, and Revelation shows where '*druggists*' end up: in '*the lake of fire*'.¹⁷¹³ In Galatians,¹⁷¹⁴ '*witchcraft*' follows '*idolatry*;' in Revelation,¹⁷¹⁵ it precedes it.

Tricks & deceptions

One further point of note is the attempt by Satan to confuse the issue by bringing forward false healers masquerading as the 'elect,' and that in doing so he can succeed in deflecting people from the truth and the true path. Deuteronomy describes the modus of discerning whether a prophet is of God or not: *'If there arise among*

¹⁷⁰⁷ in 1969AD

¹⁷⁰⁸ in 1980AD

¹⁷⁰⁹ Ezek 34:4 (sublinear emphasis added)

¹⁷¹⁰ Rev 9:20,21

¹⁷¹¹ Greek: *pharmakeia*.

¹⁷¹² Barclay, William quotation.

¹⁷¹³ Rev 21:8

¹⁷¹⁴ Gal 5:20

¹⁷¹⁵ Rev 21:8

you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder,¹⁷¹⁶ And the sign or wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them; Thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams: for the Lord your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul.¹⁷¹⁷ Ye shall walk after the Lord your God, and fear him, and keep his commandments, and obey his voice, and ye shall serve him, and cleave unto him. And that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams, shall be put to death; because he hath spoken to turn you away from the Lord your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt, and redeemed you out of the house of bondage, to thrust thee out of the way which the Lord thy God commanded thee to walk in. So shalt thou put the evil away from the midst of thee.¹⁷¹⁸

False prophets teach false doctrines which have demonic origins: *'Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils.'*¹⁷¹⁹ All such should be shunned. The determination of falsehood is not through a myopic, gullible acceptance of each and every *'wonder,'* or through a subjective judgement of the sincerity or charisma of the wonder-working person or persons involved. There is a warning from Paul concerning this: *'For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers are also transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.'*¹⁷²⁰ The correct modus of discernment is through comparison of the doctrine espoused with the word of God. If it is in accordance with that, then the question is resolved; if it is not, then the *'healing'* or *'wonder'* is not of God, but of Satan.

The end-time Antichrist falls into the latter category: *'And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume¹⁷²¹ with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy¹⁷²² with the brightness of his coming: Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.'*¹⁷²³

'Lying wonders' are illusions, tricks, and deceptions. They can also include *'apparent healing'* through Satan's removal of demon possession through his agent, by calling back his demon; namely, the agent. Luke

¹⁷¹⁶ such as miraculous healing.

¹⁷¹⁷ better, *'being.'*

¹⁷¹⁸ Deut 13:1-5 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

¹⁷¹⁹ I Tim 4:1

¹⁷²⁰ II Cor 11:13-15

¹⁷²¹ Greek: *analisko*, meaning *'to expend,' 'use up,'* or *'destroy'*; cp. with Christ's total destruction, in killing, the wicked, in Mat 10:28, where the Greek: *psuychen apolesia* is translated *'destroy'*; this means immediate and utter destruction, the final destruction, the complete annihilation of the wicked.

¹⁷²² Greek: *katargeo*, meaning *'render inactive,'* or *'inoperable,'* as well as *'do away with'* or *'put an end to'*; again, cp. with Christ's total destruction, in killing, the wicked, in Mat 10:28, where the Greek: *psuychen apolesia* is translated *'destroy'*; this means immediate and utter destruction, the final destruction, the complete annihilation of the wicked.

¹⁷²³ II Thes 2:8-10 (sublinear emphasis added)

perhaps gives an indication of this possibility: *'And, behold, there was a woman which had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bowed together, and could in no wise lift up herself. And when Jesus saw her, he called her to him, and said unto her, Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity. And he laid his hands on her: and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God. And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the sabbath day?'*¹⁷²⁴ Satan can bind with demons, and, while in this case Christ healed the woman by driving out the demon, Satan could also have done so, but in his case by recalling rather than banishing his demon.

As Satan has the power to bind with spirits of infirmity, then Satan can remove these same spirits. The result, to the casual and uninformed observer, would be an apparent and miraculous healing. In reality it would be no such thing; merely the retrieval of a possessing demon spirit by the 'arch-demon' himself: Satan. The critical element in discerning the spirits in relation to healing is through comparison of the doctrine espoused in Scripture. It has nothing to do with charisma, presentation, style, or anything else trite and superficial. It has to be anchored in the word of God, else it is false. The Bible contains a number of examples of the spiritual power of demons.¹⁷²⁵ Fortunately, however, the power of the satanic spirit world is severely limited by God Almighty.

Summary

In summary, at first pass, the present purview appears oppressively bleak. Very few have knowledge of the correct doctrine. Very few have faith in God's healing. Very few possess discernment. As a consequence, very few have any hold whatsoever on salvation, or even the remotest conception of how to set about securing it. Mankind in general continues to delight in 'playing God,' worshipping before Satan, and profiting financially from the whole exercise. And the end is not yet. The end is still some years off, and the declension still has further to go: *'This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come....evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.'*¹⁷²⁶

Up until the time of the end, however, the 'elect' are, and will be, imbued with sufficient of the Holy Spirit to enable miraculous healing to take place, as a witness against apostate man. And then shall the end come, when the Lord our Healer returns for His own.¹⁷²⁷

¹⁷²⁴ Luke 13:11-13,16 (sublinear emphasis added)

¹⁷²⁵ Ex 7:10-12; Acts 8:9-11,16:16-18; II Thes 2:7-9; Rev 13:1-3,11-17, inter alia

¹⁷²⁶ II Tim 3:1,13

¹⁷²⁷ the healing gospel is both physical and spiritual, the imminence of the Kingdom of God here on earth, with Jesus Christ sitting in majesty on His throne, the throne of David, with all healed, and in peace. And with that gospel comes knowledge of the mechanisms whereby the kingdom will be brought about.

Chapter 38

God's Grace

God's grace is not demandable of Him, as of right; it cannot be earned in absolute terms. Grace is a gift of God, a condescension, something granted, bestowed from on high; an act of love. Without Law, there can be no such grace, for grace only exists where the Law of God has been broken, and the penalty suspended, ameliorated, or transferred. The term '*covering of sin*' refers to the latter, either by the substitution of an animal under the sacrificial Law, or by Christ's death for the sins of all who accept Him.

The Lord is compassionate and forgiving. "*The Lord repented concerning this. [It shall not be said the Lord]*."¹⁷²⁸ The use of the word niham in Hebrew (literally, '*console oneself*,' in the general sense of 'change one's purpose,' occurs in the Old Testament with a human subject only in [a few instances].¹⁷²⁹ The verb niham is [only] used for repentance from sin twice.¹⁷³⁰ That for this moral repentance the appropriate term is shubh ('to turn'),¹⁷³¹ which has no modern equivalent, is interesting:

1. It is employed to describe the attitude of Jehovah after Moses' intercession,¹⁷³² and is with great frequency applied, as here, to the relaxation of a chastisement which God had determined, or which at least was anticipated by the people.¹⁷³³ The idea of the Deity changing His plans or purpose in response to a prayer, such as

¹⁷²⁸ Amos 7:3

¹⁷²⁹ Ex 13:17; Judg 21:6,15; Job 42:6; Jer 8:6,31:19

¹⁷³⁰ Jer 8:6; Job 42:6

¹⁷³¹ Aramaic: tubh, Greek: metanoeo.

¹⁷³² Ex 32:12-14

¹⁷³³ e.g., Ex 32:14; II

that in Amos, is [seen as being] amongst the ultimate problems of religion; it is not simply an outcome of the fact that with all ancient people's primitive conceptions of the Deity pictured Him as liable to alter His mind or cease from the fierceness of His anger, as the result of supplication or sacrifice;

2. In one passage in Jeremiah,¹⁷³⁴ God is represented as changing from His good intentions towards any nation if they do evil in His sight; and,

3. In Genesis¹⁷³⁵ and I Samuel¹⁷³⁶ Jehovah is supposed to '*repent of*' (? = 'regret') His action (past) upon perceiving its consequences. It was doubtless with reference to such passages especially that (according to Irenæus) Marcion said of the God of the Old Testament that he was not only 'a maker of evil things, a lover of wars,' but 'inconstant also in His purpose.'¹⁷³⁷

In Numbers and I Samuel, the possibility of 'repentance' by Jehovah is actually denied, as being essentially a characteristic of man.¹⁷³⁸ (In Hosea¹⁷³⁹—where the *noun* occurs—noham implies that not seldom Jehovah does 'repent' of His threatenings).

Notwithstanding the anthropomorphism in these verses in Amos, a good and permanent element in the Divine character is conspicuously presented, which is not always to the fore in Old Testament religion. He is the God, not only of judgement and, even, anger, but of mercy.¹⁷⁴⁰....In the Old Testament, however, this [merciful] attribute of Jehovah seldom carries with it the idea either of indulgence or of favouritism. There can be no question of such if His '*repentance*' is preceded by man's moral repentance ('*they turned from their evil way*'¹⁷⁴¹). On the contrary, conditional relaxation of punishment seems actually to imply that the great principles governing God's actions are righteousness and justice.¹⁷⁴² Why, however, His course of action should be changed (as here) by the prayer of a righteous man, apart from people's repentance, must present a difficulty to many modern minds.^{1743 1744}

¹⁷³⁴ Jer 13:10

¹⁷³⁵ Gen 6:6,7

¹⁷³⁶ I Sam 15:11

¹⁷³⁷ Irenæus, *Against the Heresies*, I.27 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

¹⁷³⁸ Num 23:19, I Sam 15:29; both '*God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent,*' and '*the Strength of Israel will not lie nor repent: for he is not a man that should repent,*' refer to specific instances: one to a commandment of Balaam, the other to a judgement against Saul.

¹⁷³⁹ Hos 13:14

¹⁷⁴⁰ in such passages as Amos 5:15; Joel 2:13,14 ('*repenteth him of the evil*'), Psa 86:15,16a,116:5

¹⁷⁴¹ Jonah 3:9,10

¹⁷⁴² Ex 33:19,34:6,7; and, especially, Jer 26:13

¹⁷⁴³ the matter is explained in Prov 15:8b, '*the prayer of the upright is his delight,*' and later, in the New Testament, James 5:16b, '*The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.*'

¹⁷⁴⁴ Cripps, Richard S., *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Amos*, pp.306-308 and footnotes (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

Suspension and amelioration

Suspension of sentence is quite common in the Bible. The biblical number of probation is forty, thus the duration of the time in the wilderness of the children of Israel was forty years—which, through natural death, rid the nation of all that had rebelled against God's will that they enter the Promised Land on leaving captivity in Egypt, thus permitting entry into the Promised Land by the 'innocent' remnant—as was the probation afforded the Jews after the death of Christ, culminating in the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple, and the massacre / expulsion / enslavement of the inhabitants.

The wicked live by permission and suspension. Although God is patient, and willing to wait, if the wicked do not repent of their evil ways and live as God wills, eventually their inveterate sins fill up to a predetermined level, and then God acts against them, and destroys them. That consummating level, which also relates to a predetermined time and date—for the Lord knows all in advance—triggers God's predeterminate action, with the suspension ended.

But what about murderous Cain?¹⁷⁴⁵ Cain was not killed for murdering Abel. Why? While God's love toward man was abundantly patent, and that underlying principle of Law well established, it seems that the legal proscription on murder had not yet been specifically enunciated, although his conscience, so deeply offended by even the very thought of the act, should have convicted him of ever doing the murderous deed. Sadly, it wasn't. That is why Cain survived, to marry and begin the lineage recited in Genesis.¹⁷⁴⁶

There was another matter that God had against Cain: *'If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted?'* In the Vulgate the phrase reads: *'If thou divide rightly, shalt thou not be accepted?'* The LXX, however, gives more detail with the entire verse: *'And the Lord God said to Cain, Wherefore didst thou become vexed, and wherefore did thy countenance fall? If thou didst rightly offer, but didst not rightly divide, didst thou not sin? Hold thy peace.'*¹⁷⁴⁷ This is referred to by Paul: *'By faith Abel offered unto God a more abundant sacrifice than Cain.'*¹⁷⁴⁸ In short, Cain's sin in that instance lay in withholding part of his tithe; the firstborn of Adam cheated God. In sacrificing low-value goods, or withholding some of their proper number, Cain symbolically asserted that God had lawful title to only the dregs of his assets, the leftovers. This constituted a clear rebellion on his part: the theft of God's property, meaning the public repudiation of his delegated position as God's steward.¹⁷⁴⁹

¹⁷⁴⁵ it is an ominous fact, that, after the fall, the first inventors of the arts and sciences were the descendants, not of the believing Seth, but of the murderer Cain. So in our own days the leaders of science are too often the leaders of infidelity, the despisers of God and of prayer. Except by special grace, man seems incapable of bearing the slightest weight of power upon his shoulders without losing his balance.

¹⁷⁴⁶ Gen 3:16-24

¹⁷⁴⁷ Gen 4:7d, K.J.V.

¹⁷⁴⁸ Heb 11:4

¹⁷⁴⁹ man is still held responsible by God for the faithful administration of God's property. Stewardship is therefore an inescapable concept.

Probation on Cain's line extended to the flood, when all were swept away, since by then sinning had become utterly ingrained and inveterate: *'Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.'*¹⁷⁵⁰ Only after the deluge was the proscription on murder announced to Noah and his family, *'Surely for your lifeblood I will demand a reckoning; from the hand of every beast I will require it, and from the hand of man. From the hand of every man's brother I will require the life of man. Whoever sheds man's blood, by man his blood shall be shed; for in the image of God he made man.'*¹⁷⁵¹ That said, the death of Abel at the hand of Cain, over one-and-a-half millennia before, should have so deeply offended the conscience and sensibility of all mankind as to have prevented any form of repetition. Unfortunately, so evil had man become over the intervening period that that did not constitute any kind of inhibition or bar.

Amelioration is also seen in Scripture, as with king David who did not suffer the death penalty for his murder of Uriah the Hittite, but had the penalty commuted to the death of his firstborn son by Bathsheba. Did the newborn deserve to die? Had he sinned? Of course he hadn't! Will sin be imputed to him in the kingdom of God? Of course not! So what are his prospects? The newborn suffered a death penalty for the sin of others, sin that was committed before his birth. He had no part in it whatsoever.¹⁷⁵²

The penalty of the sins of David and Bathsheba was nailed to the cross by Christ. Bathsheba did not have the rare gift of the Holy Spirit because, in Old Testament times, it was rare indeed. King David, however, did, for he had tasted of the good gifts of God, and knew the gifts of the Holy Spirit. As a result, his sins were not only greater in deed but much more serious, much more deadly. So how much Holy Spirit did David have? The answer must be quite a considerable amount. To be able to write all that he did necessarily involves the active participation of the Holy Spirit. And as writing took time, that Power from God must have been present over a protracted period.

King David was presented with the sight of Bathsheba bathing. Scripture¹⁷⁵³ seems to imply that she was purifying herself of her uncleanness in a ritual bath, a mikvah, but that raises a problem, for mikvot are secluded and private, not open to casual public gaze and scrutiny on rooftops and the like. Better is the idea that she was bathing in an ordinary bath placed on the roof, post her ritual cleansing in a mikvah. Once the ensuing illicit congress had taken place and Bathsheba had become pregnant, however, David was presented with the fruits of his sin, the penalty for which was, in the Israelitish understanding of the Law at that time, for

¹⁷⁵⁰ Gen 6:5

¹⁷⁵¹ Gen 9:5,6

¹⁷⁵² quite the most ridiculous 'explanation' or 'excuse' of David's sin with Bathsheba is the Rabbinic one, taken from the Talmud, Sanh. 107a. (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'When Satan would seduce David he assumed the form of a bird, and that, when David shot at it, Bathsheba suddenly looked up, thus gaining the king by her beauty.'

To compound matters, not only is there here an attempt to palliate the guilt of David, in other places it is entirely explained away as not due to disobedience or to lust, cf. Ab. Zar. 4b, 5a.

¹⁷⁵³ II Sam 11:4

both of them to be put to death by stoning. To cover that sin, David arranged an ‘arms-length’ covering sin to ensure, so far as possible given the vicissitudes of warfare, that Uriah, the Hittite husband of Bathsheba, was killed in battle,¹⁷⁵⁴ thus affording David, in the eyes of man, not only plausible deniability, but also the opportunity of taking Uriah’s widow to wife. This was no sin of ignorance.¹⁷⁵⁵ This was murder, and there had to be capital punishment for the sin of murder.

Through the prophet Nathan, David was shown his sin and told that the child, the fruit of their illicit union, would die, which he did, but, interestingly, not for the murderous sin of his father, but because David’s actions had given ‘*great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme*.’¹⁷⁵⁶ The enemies of the Lord could have pointed to the firstborn and said: ‘Behold, isn’t a bastard¹⁷⁵⁷ to sit on the throne of David? What worth then the God of Israel? Is He not exactly like the other gods—our gods? Where is His Law? Is He not like one of our own, and no better than one of us?’ As a result, the nation’s enemies were provided with easy ground for heaping disdain on God’s people and on His throne.

The child was the firstborn son,¹⁷⁵⁸ and he died, so the ‘*holy unto the Lord*’ firstborn was lost, in terms of a human life, but saved in terms of a resurrection to eternal life. Had David and Bathsheba been put to death—there is no doubt in this under a strict reading of the Law, for even though they had not been caught in the act, and there was a complete lack of human witness to that act, required under the Law,¹⁷⁵⁹ there was a written record of it in the letter to Joab,¹⁷⁶⁰ the substance of which must have been known by the royal court—and God knew. Moreover, there is more than a suggestion that the matter was engineered at the first by Bathsheba, in

¹⁷⁵⁴ II Sam 11:3c-6,8,9,14,15,26,27,12:1a,9,13,14, ‘*Is not this Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite? And David sent messengers, and took her; and she came in unto him, and he lay with her; for she was purified from her uncleanness: and she returned unto her house. And the woman conceived, and sent and told David, and said, I am with child. And David sent to Joab, saying, Send me Uriah the Hittite. And Joab sent Uriah to David. And David said to Uriah, Go down to thy house, and wash thy feet. And Uriah departed out of the king’s house, and there followed him a mess of meat from the king. But Uriah slept at the door of the king’s house with all the servants of his lord, and went not down to his house....And it came to pass in the morning, that David wrote a letter to Joab, and sent it by the hand of Uriah. And he wrote in the letter, saying, Set ye Uriah in the forefront of the hottest battle, and retire ye from him, that he may be smitten, and die....And when the wife of Uriah heard that Uriah her husband was dead, she mourned for her husband. And when the mourning was past, David sent and fetched her to his house, and she became his wife, and bare him a son. But the thing that David had done displeased the Lord. And the Lord sent Nathan unto David. And he came unto him, and said unto him....Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the Lord, to do evil in his sight? thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and hast taken his wife to be thy wife, and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon. And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the Lord. And Nathan said unto David, The Lord hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die. Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, the child also that is born unto thee shall surely die.*’

¹⁷⁵⁵ Edersheim, Alfred, *The Temple—Its Ministry and Service*, §§5,6:

‘By sins ‘*through ignorance*,’ however, we are to understand....not only such as were committed strictly through want of knowledge, but also those which had been unintentional, or through weakness, or where the offender at the time realised not his guilt.’

¹⁷⁵⁶ II Sam 12:14

¹⁷⁵⁷ Hebrew: mamzer.

¹⁷⁵⁸ II Sam 12:23

¹⁷⁵⁹ Deut 17:6,7

¹⁷⁶⁰ II Sam 11:14

displaying herself while bathing on the rooftop in clear line of sight of David and, possibly, others that took a late evening's walk along the flat rooftop of the king's house, with that act providing, perhaps, some slight measure of mitigation for the king. The initial impetus to the ensuing, concatenated sins then would have been Bathsheba's through a wilful, premeditated act; not David's. But her act could not have been thoroughly thought through; women's sinful actions rarely are. It was impulsive, opportunistic, irrational, and unlawful, but it was compromised by ignorance of the potential cadence and consequences, so even her 'premeditation' can be seen as somewhat compromised or mitigated.

Had David's mitigation not been there, regardless of Bathsheba's position, God's purpose in working out the matter in the way He did would have been frustrated: to have David's throne continue with Solomon, who would be the second son of David and Bathsheba. As another consideration, was there some terrible, fatal flaw lurking in the nature of the firstborn? It cannot be said with any degree of certainty,¹⁷⁶¹ but the possibility does seem to present itself, for a baby cannot die by substitution for the sins of one or both of its parents, for that is a pagan notion. And, of course, there would have been the question of a mamzer ascending the throne.

Solomon did become king, but, despite his wisdom, he followed his pagan wives into idolatry, and in the next generation, what became the northern house of Israel was wrenched away, leaving Judah and Benjamin, some of Levi, and possibly some remnants of Simeon.¹⁷⁶² God's promise to David, *'I will raise up thy seed after thee, which shall be of thy sons, and I will establish his kingdom....I will stablish his throne forever,'*¹⁷⁶³ refers to Solomon and his heirs and successors.

David's sin was complex. It consisted of spur-of-the-moment lust and covetousness,¹⁷⁶⁴ then adultery, augmented by subsequent ingratitude, and the devious, deceitful, and treacherously premeditated planning of

¹⁷⁶¹ admittedly, an argument from silence.

¹⁷⁶² cf. Gen 49:7b; v8c for Levi

¹⁷⁶³ I Chron 17:4-27, in particular vv.11,12

¹⁷⁶⁴ paraphrased from Barclay, William, *The Plain Man's Guide to Ethics*, pp.193-199 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'The tenth commandment runs: 'You shalt not covet your neighbour's house; you shalt not covet your neighbour's wife, or his manservant, or his maidservant, or his ox, or his ass, or anything that is your neighbour's' (Ex 20:17; Deut 5:21). With the tenth commandment the commandments enter a new world. Up to now the commandments have dealt with outward actions [until Christ's fulfilment of the Law in stating that it applies both in deed and in thought]; but this commandment deals with inward thoughts. This commandment lays by far the hardest task upon man. To control one's actions is one thing. To control one's thoughts and feelings and emotions is quite another....

In Prov 28:16, as the Authorised Version has it, the Sage says that 'He that hateth covetousness shall prolong his days,' while the Revised Standard Version has 'he who hateth unjust gain.' In Jer 6:13 and Jer 8:10 Jeremiah's challenge in the A.V. is that everyone is given to covetousness, and in the R.S.V. it has that everyone is greedily looking for unjust gain....Light is thrown on the true meaning of covetousness by these various translations. To covet something is to desire something which is not one's own and which belongs to someone else. But this is not in itself a bad thing, for one might honourably covet the great qualities which belong to someone whom one has made one's....pattern and example. So we have to add something to this.

To covet something is to desire something which one has no right to have or to possess. We have no right either to the possessions or to the person who belongs to someone else. So to covet is not merely to desire something which one does not possess; it is to desire something which one has no right to possess. But examples....from the Old Testament go further than that in some cases.

murder, and the act of murder itself, at the hand of third parties. When David slew Goliath, it was done publically, for all to see, but when he undertook the baleful slaying of Uriah,¹⁷⁶⁵ it had to be done clandestinely.¹⁷⁶⁶

While God covered or *'put away'* those sins, there was a heavy penalty to pay. Instead of an innocent animal in propitiation, not that any such thing could be effected under the Law in circumstances of wilful sin, God took a greater innocent: his son by Bathsheba. Moreover, he placed the sword amongst his family¹⁷⁶⁷ which resulted in the violent deaths of his children: Amnon, Absalom, and Adonijah.¹⁷⁶⁸

When we turn to the New Testament we find covetousness condemned, if possible, even more sternly....[where] there is more than one word for covetousness. The word most often translated covetousness in the A.V. is pleonexia. To the Greek and the Roman this word described a detested quality. It comes from two Greek words which taken together mean *'to have more,'* and it is the spirit which always wants more, and wants it in the ugliest way....It is used to describe over-reaching ambition, shameless cupidity, conscienceless rapacity....

Closely connected with pleonexia there is the word pleonektes, which means *'the covetous man'....[or] the 'grabber'....* The word philarguros occurs three times in the New Testament (Luke 16:14; II Tim 3:2; Heb 13:5)....It is composed of two Greek words which literally mean, when taken together, *'a lover of money'....*The translation of Heb 13:5 well shows the difference between three translations. The A.V. has *'Let your conversation be without covetousness.'* This is a seventeenth-century use of the word conversation; in modern English conversation means talk, but in seventeenth-century English it meant a way of life and conduct. The R.S.V. has: *'Keep your life free from love of money.'* And the N.E.B. has succinctly: *'Do not live for money'* [viz., plutomania, inter alia].

Still another Greek word is translated *'to covet'* in the New Testament. It is the verb epithumein. The regular translation of it in the A.V. is *'lust'* or *'lusts'* in the plural (Mark 4:19; John 8:44; Rom 1:24; Gal 5:16; I Peter 1:14; I John 2:16,17)....The modern translations usually use *'passion'* or *'desire'*....It implies an almost overmastering desire to get and to possess, whether the object of desire be a person or a thing.

One thing about the word *'covet'* as a word remains to be noted. The A.V. can and does use the word *'covet'* in a good sense, translating the word zeloun. In I Cor 12:31 it has: *'covet earnestly the best gifts,'* and in I Cor 14:39 it has: *'covet to prophesy.'* In both places the R.S.V. has *'earnestly desire'*....it denotes a fervent and even passionate desire....

We are so built and so constructed that we must desire something: and we are so built that these instinctive desires of ours are the strongest part of our natures. They constitute the real dynamic force and driving power within us....

Man's desires cannot be eradicated from the heart of man. Man's desires will drive him to long for things, and to take such action that he can to get them. If he is driven by selfish ambition and by the desire to get, then the desire will issue in the covetousness which cannot be other than an evil thing. If in his heart there is a love of God and man, then he will, as the A.V. has it, covet the best gifts; and his desire, his covetousness, his driving power will be for the things that are high and holy and good and true and lovely.

The conclusion is clear. Desire cannot be eradicated from the heart of man. Man will always covet something. And it is only when Jesus Christ reigns within his heart that the desire for the wrong will be eradicated and the desire for the good will be the dynamic of life.'

Despite the incomplete contention of Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol.1, p.297 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'The Greek verb [translated 'worship' in Mat 8:2: 'And, behold, a leper came and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean'] is proskunein, and [in Greek] that word is never used of anything but worship of the gods; it always describes a man's feeling and action in presence of the divine.'

Rev 3:10, *'Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I will also keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world [Greek: oikoumene; in context, 'all in the final eruption of the Roman Empire'], to try them that dwell upon the earth.'*

¹⁷⁶⁵ meaning, *'light of the Lord.'*

¹⁷⁶⁶ II Sam 12:12; q.v. inf.

¹⁷⁶⁷ II Sam 12:11,12, *'Thus saith the Lord, behold, I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house, and I will take thy wives before thine eyes, and give them unto thy neighbour, and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of this sun. For thou didst it secretly: but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun.'*

¹⁷⁶⁸ II Samuel chpts. 13,18; I Kings chpt. 2

But God, and by inference His Law, is '*no respecter of persons*,'¹⁷⁶⁹ so David should not have been accorded an unique amelioration of the provision of the Law. Wasn't the punishment under the Law owing to him, and him alone, rather than his innocent offspring? But God '*put away*' his compounded sin, and the reason given for the death of the fruit of his transgression, the child, was that his sin had afforded the enemies of the Lord great opportunity to blaspheme Him.

There was a cadence, an almost inevitable declension into sin. David did not set out, *ab initio*, to murder anybody. He became caught in a train of events of his own making. As a possible, slight amelioration or plea in part mitigation, his instruction to Joab did not 'guarantee' the death of Uriah. It might have been possible, and would have been had God willed it, for Uriah to have fought his way out of the trap set by David, but it wasn't to be. Uriah was killed.

Present in all of the events were elements of weakness, and ignorance. David did not realise that he had committed murder until hearing Nathan's parable, but were those sufficient to blunt the sword against David under the Law?

Neither was Bathsheba innocent, from the bare text, '*she came in unto him, and he lay with her*.'¹⁷⁷⁰ Doubtless, she found herself in a difficult situation. David had sent messengers, '*and took her*.' Had she fought off his sexual advances in the palace bedchamber and called for help, under the Law David would have been put to death, and she would not. Or perhaps the whole affair would have been 'hushed up'? The implication is that in addition to the bathing incident, in some greater measure—and admittedly it might have been slight—there was complicity on her part.

Joab too was complicit. He did not question the patent evil in what he was instructed to do, for David explicitly stated that he was to withdraw at the crucial moment in order that Uriah be killed in battle. Joab complied in full, to devastating effect.

The penalty meted must mean that to God is reserved the right to commute the death penalty for wilful sin (upon baptism, for Judæo-Christians) on extraordinary occasions, where the person involved has a crucial role and purpose in God's great work. I Kings gives hint of why God covered David's sin: '*Because David did what was right in the eyes of the Lord, and had not turned aside from anything that he commanded him all the days of his life, except in the matter of Uriah the Hittite*.'¹⁷⁷¹ An otherwise exemplary record was most deeply marred by his sin, but not exculpated, for '*put[ing] away*' is not exculpation.¹⁷⁷²

There is, however, another interpretation of the flow of events, one which rests on an alternative, and equally valid, translation. The K.J.V. renders it, '*And David sent messengers, and took her; and she came in*

¹⁷⁶⁹ Acts 10:34

¹⁷⁷⁰ II Sam 11:4

¹⁷⁷¹ I Kings 15:5

¹⁷⁷² i.e., clearing of guilt or blame.

unto him, and he lay with her; for she was purified from her uncleanness: and she returned unto her house,¹⁷⁷³ whereas it can equally be translated, 'And David sent messengers, and took her; and she came in unto him, and he lay with her; and after she was purified from her uncleanness, she returned unto her house.'

The first important aspect of the latter lies in the purpose of Bathsheba's bathing. The K.J.V. could be taken to imply that it was a ritual mikvah purification from the uncleanness of menstruation. But there is a fundamental problem with that which has been referred to previously: 'Then it happened one evening that David arose from his bed and walked on the roof of the king's house. And from the roof he saw a woman bathing, and the woman was very beautiful to behold,'¹⁷⁷⁴ and mikvahs are closed-in below ground, with the bather hidden.¹⁷⁷⁵ To see someone bathing, and to see them clearly, in the evening, demands that this was not a ritual purification in a mikvah, but an upper floor or even roof-top affair, close by, probably undertaken with intent on display. That would mean that Bathsheba's bathing of purification took place after her tryst with the king, as a belated, futile attempt at absolution, after which she returned to her house.

That train of events, at least, flows more cogently than the K.J.V. version. It also implies that they did not continue with further illicit congresses, and, admittedly with less certainty, intended never to. In this view, David's liaison with Bathsheba would have been but once, followed by some form of regret and shame over her sin by Bathsheba. Her subsequent conceiving, therefore, would come as a shock, sufficiently profound to impel the king into the crass devices and sins which subsequently unfolded.

But if that describes Bathsheba's conduct, and partly explains why she did what she did, it completely fails to do anything remotely similar for David. Nathan's parable¹⁷⁷⁶ brought out the realisation in David that he had sinned. In other words, he had broken the sixth, seventh, and tenth commandments,¹⁷⁷⁷ and yet, he did not appear to have realised that he had sinned. If David's estimate of the Law was such that he considered, as Bathsheba appeared to think, that an act of ritual bathing by the female involved would absolve both of them, or, at the very least, remove sufficient guilt to escape punishment for their illicit congress, or to lay claim to plausible excuse through human weakness to the same end, then it is nothing short of the staggering. When that is compounded by his deviously plotting to murder, and the commission of the act itself—to which Bathsheba, apparently, was not an active party—one is left questioning exactly what David thought the Law to be about. He could not think that he was above the Law, for there is no hint of that in the Torah, so his deeds and complacency remain inexplicable in rational, legal terms.

In an attempt to rationalize the matter away, David could have regarded the death of Uriah, given that to some extent it was contingent on events at Ammon, as being left to God. In this aberrant view, it would have

¹⁷⁷³ II Sam 11:4

¹⁷⁷⁴ II Sam 11:2

¹⁷⁷⁵ Hebrew: mikvah, 'a collection,' as in 'a collection of water.'

¹⁷⁷⁶ II Sam 12:1-12

¹⁷⁷⁷ murder, Ex 20:13; adultery, v.14; covetousness, v.17

been God's consent that would have resulted in Uriah's death, with David absolved from blame. Since the same 'rational' could then be extended, mutatis mutandis, to excuse every heinous crime in all history, it collapses in its own absurdity.

Intriguingly, had David and Bathsheba not acted as they did, the underlying implication is that Uriah the Hittite would have been killed in battle in any event, Bathsheba would have been free to remarry, they would have married (in the 'royal custom' of the time), and their firstborn son would have sat on the throne, unless taken by God.¹⁷⁷⁸ The firstborn male, holy unto the Lord, may well have conducted his affairs in a manner more congruent to God's ways, and then perhaps the kingdom would not have been divided, although the fact that it was—and given the prophecy bound up in the story of Perez and Zarah which suggests an inevitability to it, firstborn or no—was clearly in God's strategic plan for Israel from the outset. In short, it was God's intention that David and Bathsheba produced offspring.

It would appear, therefore, that the core reason David and Bathsheba were allowed to live—in addition to God's respect for His divine plan—was the existence of sufficiently compromising circumstances to remove the full value and penalty of premeditated sin, commuting the cadence, or most of it at least, to a complex web of ignorance, indulgence, avarice, weakness, and false estimates of the Law, against which the sacrificial Law could apply, dread though its application was. But that is not the sum of it, for that litany does not remove the penalty for adultery. The only 'save' in that lies in the provision of the Law concerning witnesses, and their lack in this case. If that is correct, it came so close—so very, very close—to disaster, and only by God's Grace did the two survive. 'Forgiveness is not so much the remission of penalty as the restoration of a relationship.'¹⁷⁷⁹

A further consideration of the implications of the child's position is enunciated by Cripps: '[Concerning] the supposed sending by God of suffering on children for the sins of a parent—of course Amos would have endorsed the principle, as did the prophet Nathan;¹⁷⁸⁰ for the time of Jeremiah and Ezekiel had not yet come. (*'But everyone shall die for his own iniquity.'*¹⁷⁸¹ *'What mean ye, that ye use this proverb concerning the land of Israel, saying, The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge? As I live, saith the Lord God, ye shall not have occasion any more to use this proverb in Israel. Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die'*¹⁷⁸²).¹⁷⁸³ There can be no transmuting God's word. All have sinned and fallen short. Adam's fall set the seal on all mankind. Accordingly, all men, being mortal, die.

¹⁷⁷⁸ q.v. sup.

¹⁷⁷⁹ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Luke*, p.14

¹⁷⁸⁰ II Sam 12:14b

¹⁷⁸¹ Jer 31:30a

¹⁷⁸² Ezek 18:2-4

¹⁷⁸³ Cripps, Richard S., *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Amos*, p.238 and footnotes (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

Did God's standards transmute after the time of David et al? Paul says that death reigned over all men from Adam onward, for all men have sinned,¹⁷⁸⁴ but here the infant didn't sin. There is no parallel with, *'for I, the Lord thy God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon 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,'*¹⁷⁸⁵ for the newborn did not and could not hate God. Accordingly, his standing will be high in the kingdom of God, for he is due much. It is God's responsibility to reward him, for it was He who was responsible for his early death, imputing to the newborn innocent the penalty of his parents' sin.

If there is no Saviour, no life after death, no kingdom of God, and no reward to the righteous, then the events surrounding the deaths of Uriah and the newborn immediately descend into the moral abyss, taking with them all of the acting parties. There would be no scope for a righting. Death would be death, forever. Injustice would prevail, forever. But with the Saviour, while the parents stand responsible for the death of their firstborn, they are saved by His redeeming sacrifice, the sacrifice of Jesus Christ who died for the sins of all. Indeed, there is even a question of whether the innocent dying for the sinner possibly was set as a dim foregleam of what was to come much later at Calvary. He who created all died for all, making available, to all who accept, a complete reconciliation to God the Father, and more, as will be seen.

God is just and God is merciful. God is not a respecter of persons,¹⁷⁸⁶ but He is a respecter of purposes—divine purposes. The newly-born did not sin; the newly-born did not hate God; the newly-born could not possibly hate God, yet the child died for the sin of his parents, and for the shame brought down on the royal throne from an illegitimate¹⁷⁸⁷ sitting on that throne. Could it possibly be some form of 'blessed release'? The Lord's purpose, in part, is why multiple-sinning David did not die for his sins. There was divine purpose in the lineage that extended from king David of Israel to Christ, the Messiah, King of kings and Lord of lords, the Saviour of the world. The corroborating reason for the covering of those multiple sins by God has been seen already in Kings, *'Because David did what was right in the eyes of the Lord, and had not turned aside from anything that he commanded him all the days of his life, except in the matter of Uriah the Hittite.'*¹⁷⁸⁸ God's grace permitted it, God's grace covered it.

Justification

The inveterately wicked man cannot be reconciled and be held justified before God, for he is beyond saving, in the thrall of wickedness, but the repentant sinner can, through Christ's expiatory sacrifice.

¹⁷⁸⁴ Rom 5:12-14

¹⁷⁸⁵ Ex 20:5b,6

¹⁷⁸⁶ Acts 10:34

¹⁷⁸⁷ Hebrew: mamzer.

¹⁷⁸⁸ I Kings 15:5

'In the New Testament, especially in Paul, the verb *'to justify,'* when it is used of God, has a very different sense from that which it has in English. In English, to justify a person means to produce reasons why he was right, to bring forward arguments which prove, or attempt to prove, that he was perfectly correct to act as he did. If I justify myself, using the word in its English sense, it means that I seek to produce reasons in defence of any action that I have taken. But that is not at all what the word means in the New Testament. In the Greek, the word for *'to justify'* is dikaion. Greek verbs which end in -oun do not mean to make a person something; they mean to treat, to reckon, to account a man as being something. And when Paul speaks of God justifying the sinner, it means that God, instead of punishing the sinner, instead of issuing penalty like a righteous but merciless judge, treats the sinner as if he had been a good man.

This is exactly what shocked the Jews to the very core of their being. For any judge to treat a bad man as if he was a good man was to the Jew the acme of injustice and wickedness.¹⁷⁸⁹ The Old Testament has it: *'He that justifieth the wicked is an abomination to the Lord.'*¹⁷⁹⁰ God says: *'I will not justify the wicked.'*¹⁷⁹¹ In face of that Paul comes with the audacious and the tremendous paradox that God is characteristically the God who justifies the ungodly.¹⁷⁹²

Paul gives pertinent example of justification by God, from the Old Testament, *'But to him who works, the wages are not counted as grace but as debt. But to him who does not work but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. Just as David also describes the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness apart from works: Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, and whose sins are covered; Blessed is the man to whom the Lord shall not impute sin....For the promise that he would be the heir of the world was not to Abraham or to his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.'*¹⁷⁹³

¹⁷⁸⁹ here lies an obvious wanting in Judaism. Primarily, it is a religion of the 'here-and-now.' It is autosoteric, seeking to cure the world of its ills and wickedness through the example and agency of religious Jewry. The sheer impossibility of this is implicit in Judaism's adoption of a notion paralleling the pagan concept of 'weighings' of a man's deeds in the divine scales, with a 50%+1 'good' deigned the base 'pass' threshold, being the artificial dividing line between a 'good man' and a 'bad' one.

Barclay, William, *Many Witnesses, One Lord*, pp.57,58:

'Jewish religion unquestionably believed that....a man could, by his good deeds, win the approval of God. 'All is according to the amount of work,' said Akiba (Akiba, *Sayings of the Fathers*, 3.19). 'It pleased God,' said Rabbi Hananiah ben Akashaya, 'to make Israel able to acquire merit; therefore he multiplied to them Law and commandments.' 'Let a man,' says the Talmud, 'regard himself as if he were half-guilty and half-deserving, and then, if he fulfils one commandment, happy is he, for he inclined the scale to merit; equally one sin will turn the scale the other way' (Kid. 40b)—a massive lowering of the bar.'

cp. Judæo-Christianity's post-baptismal standards, where one wilful sin, if not immediately and fully repented, loses one one's place in the kingdom!

¹⁷⁹⁰ Prov 17:15

¹⁷⁹¹ Ex 23:7

¹⁷⁹² Rom 4:5

¹⁷⁹³ Rom 4:4-8,13

Justification comes by faith. 'Therein,' he writes, 'is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, The just shall live by faith.'¹⁷⁹⁴ In Romans, Paul writes: 'Therein we conclude that a man is justified by faith.'¹⁷⁹⁵ The great key passage is in Galatians, 'Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.'¹⁷⁹⁶

Paul's perfect illustration of faith....turns the idea of faith into a person, and that person is Abraham. It is in Romans chapter four and Galatians chapter three that this idea is most fully worked out. Abraham was justified; that is to say, Abraham was in a right relationship with God. How did Abraham arrive at that right relationship? It was certainly not by keeping the [codified] Law, for the simple reason that the [codified] Law was not given until four hundred years after Abraham was dead. It was certainly not through circumcision, because Abraham was in his right relationship with God years before he was circumcised. The promise and the blessing and the right relationship came to Abraham independently of the [codified] Law and of circumcision. Abraham took God at His word when God promised and when God commanded, and that is faith.¹⁷⁹⁷

[I]n Romans chapter three¹⁷⁹⁸ Paul introduces another idea. We have propitiation through faith in His blood. What then is propitiation? A propitiation is a sacrifice which restores the lost relationship between God and man. A man commits a sin; that sin causes a breach between him and God. That breach is healed when a sacrifice is brought with a humble and a contrite heart. So what Paul is saying is: It cost the life-blood of Jesus Christ, it cost the cross, to restore the lost relationship between God and man. Faith is the complete trust that that which Jesus Christ has done in His life and in His death opens for us the way to God.

We may put this in another way, and in a simpler way. It may be that for us the idea of sacrifice is difficult to understand, because, unlike the Jews, we have not been brought up in a sacrificial system.¹⁷⁹⁹ But Paul has another way of putting this which is a much more universal way. In Romans¹⁸⁰⁰ he speaks of access by faith; in Ephesians¹⁸⁰¹ he speaks of access with confidence through faith....[T]he word for access is the technical Greek word for access to the presence of a king¹⁸⁰²....Quite clearly, no one would ever dream that sinning men should have access to the presence of the holiness of God [but here, in the person of God, the Son, there is]. What's more, there is reconciliation, the picture from friendship. But the fact remains that no one

¹⁷⁹⁴ Rom 1:17

¹⁷⁹⁵ Rom 3:28; man is saved by Grace, justified by Faith, and rewarded according to his works, the latter confirmed by Christ in Mat 16:27, 'For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels, and then he shall reward every man according to his works.'

¹⁷⁹⁶ Gal2:16

¹⁷⁹⁷ and his 'faith was counted unto him as righteousness,' Gen 15:6; Rom 4:9-13; q.v. inf.

¹⁷⁹⁸ Rom 3:25

¹⁷⁹⁹ and, some would say, neither had they!

¹⁸⁰⁰ Rom 5:2

¹⁸⁰¹ Eph 3:12

¹⁸⁰² Greek: prosagoge.

can draw near to the holiness of God [the Father] unless he has clean hands and a pure heart, for God in His very nature is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity. Someone must supply the merits which are necessary for that approach; and that someone is Jesus Christ.

There is redemption, emancipation, the picture from slavery. It is true that man is delivered from the bondage of sin, but no man, in a world of slavery, ever received his freedom unless he paid the price, or unless some generous-hearted soul paid it for him, when he could not pay it for himself. Man's emancipation had its cost; man's freedom had its price; someone had to pay that cost and that price and that someone was Jesus Christ.

There is adoption, the picture from the family....But again [in the Roman system of the time, the adoption] ceremony centred in a symbolic sale; someone had to pay the price, and that someone was Jesus Christ.

There is one last picture which Paul uses. It is a picture which is seldom talked about nowadays; but in view of all that we have said it is very close to the heart of Paul. It is the metaphor from the world of accounting, which the Authorised Version translates '*to count*,'¹⁸⁰³ or '*to impute*,' or '*to reckon*.'¹⁸⁰⁴ The word means to set down to someone's account. It can be used equally of setting down to a man's debit or to a man's credit.

Paul's idea is that there is not a man in all the world who has not a vast debit balance in his account with God; he is in God's debt to an extent that he can never repay. But, in the mercy of God, his debt is cancelled and the merits of Jesus are credited to him, and he is clothed with a righteousness which is not his own.

Paul saw in the death of Jesus Christ an action of God Himself, by which God made it possible for the sinner to come home to Him, and possible for Him to accept that sinner when he came. [That union is yet in the future. Once purified in absolute terms, and after the passage of the Millennium of rest, when sin and death are consigned to the lake of fire,¹⁸⁰⁵ access is extended to the Father, when the Father is united with His own, here on earth.¹⁸⁰⁶ That is the immeasurable gift through the Grace of God].

Grace is something which we could never deserve, which we could never have earned, something which is given generously and freely for the accepting. Here is the very essence of Pauline [religious belief]. The Jew would have said: You must earn the favour of God; you must keep the Law; you must live a life entirely obedient to the Law's commands; and then you will earn and receive the favour of God. The whole duty of a Jew was to earn God's favour. Paul would have said—and he said so because he had tried it—that it is utterly impossible for any man ever to earn the favour of God, that man's imperfection can never satisfy God's perfection, that in relation to God the best man in the world, and the best man who can ever be, is always in default.

¹⁸⁰³ Greek: *logizesthai*.

¹⁸⁰⁴ Rom 4:3,5,6,8-11

¹⁸⁰⁵ Rev 20:14

¹⁸⁰⁶ Rev 21:2,3,22

What then is the consequence? The consequence is that we cannot earn, we must freely accept and trustingly take. We cannot earn God's love; God's love is offered to us freely and for nothing. That is what grace means.

When Paul laid such stress on grace, he set out on a road of thought which was quite strange to the orthodox Jewish teaching of his day. It is true that in its highest and most devotional moments Jewish religion did rest in the mercy of God and in nothing else. From the daily prayer book of the Jews there comes the prayer which every Jew still knows: "Sovereign of the worlds, not because of our righteous deeds do we present our supplications before thee, but because of thine abundant mercies." On this prayer Abrahams comments: "Rewards and punishments were meted out in some sort of accordance with a man's righteousness and sin, yet nothing that a man with his small powers and finite opportunities can do constitutes a claim on the favour of the Almighty and the Infinite. In the final resort, all that a man receives from the divine hand is an act of grace." There speaks the highest and most devoted thought of Judaism; but that is not representative of the orthodox Rabbis in the days of Paul.

Much more representative of orthodox Judaism is this passage: "The world is ruled by goodness, yet everything is according to the amount of work."¹⁸⁰⁷ That saying is closely followed by a kind of parable or allegory: Everything is given on pledge (that is, on pledge of repayment) and the net (i.e., of destiny) is spread all over the living. The shop is opened and the shopman (or money-lender) gives credit; everyone who desires to borrow comes and borrows; but the collectors go round every day and exact payment from a man.... And the judgement is a judgement of truth (that is, accurate and fair); men have to pay what they owe but no more.

This is the accounting and the legalistic idea of religion. It looks on the relationship between God and man as a relationship of debit and of credit; it looks on religion as something which either earns so much credit, or incurs so much debit.¹⁸⁰⁸

In the Mishnah there is the sentence: "It was because the Holy One wished to give Israel an opportunity to acquire merit that he gave them so much Torah (Law) and so many commandments." The Law was designed to enable a man to amass and to acquire credit in the sight of the Lord.

Nothing could be more diametrically opposed to the conception of Paul. To Paul, the essential idea...is grace, and grace means that no man can ever acquire anything in the sight of God. In Romans, grace and debt are contrasted.¹⁸⁰⁹ Payment, contract, debt are something which a man earns and incurs, and to which he has a right; grace is something unearned and undeserved. In Romans chapter eleven, grace and works are contrasted.¹⁸¹⁰ If works determine the relationship between God and man, then grace is no longer grace.

Christianity was a religion which issued in a certain way of life. Was not its first titled 'The Way'?

¹⁸⁰⁷ Akiba, *Sayings of the Fathers*, 3.22f.

¹⁸⁰⁸ viz, the weighings in the scales, or the net balance of accounts, once again.

¹⁸⁰⁹ Rom 4;4

¹⁸¹⁰ Rom 11:6

A man is saved by grace. What is the result of that? The result is that it lays upon a man the tremendous obligation to spend his life showing that that grace was not expended upon him in vain. In grace there has reached out to him the love of God; he must therefore be filled with the unutterable longing and the burning desire to show himself, by the help of that grace, worthy of that grace.

Here is what is at the back of Romans chapter six. At the back of that chapter there is an argument. The misguided ones say to Paul: "You believe that God's grace is the biggest thing in the world?" "Yes," answers Paul. "You believe that God's grace is wide enough to forgive any sin?"¹⁸¹¹ "Yes." Then the misguided ones go on to argue: "If that be so, let us go on sinning to our heart's content. God will forgive. Nay, more, the more we sin, the more chances this wonderful grace of God will receive to abound. Let us continue in sin that grace may get more chances to abound.

The whole essence of that argument is that it is a legal argument. Basically it says that we can go on sinning because sin will not be punished, and grace will find a way of escape.¹⁸¹²

Here is the balance we need. We can never be saved by works; but, if our salvation does not issue in works it is not salvation. It is not first works, and then salvation. It is first salvation, and then works. We do not become saved by keeping the Law; we can only keep the Law by being saved.

[But would not the religiously orthodox rejoin by pointing out that what a man or a nation does is important, and does earn merit before God, by reference to Deuteronomy chapter twenty-eight, with its blessing for obedience, and its curse for disobedience? The lists of blessings therein are national, physical blessings, of course, flowing from the covenant that God had made with the children of Israel. Were they to turn away from that covenant, by disobedience to the Law, then the punishment, again in physical terms and similarly listed, would follow. It is a matter of record that the children of Israel disobeyed so often and so severely that they effectively resiled from the covenant with God.

But we are not discussing national, earthly blessings here, on foot of a covenant or contract. The scarce availability of the Holy Spirit in Old Testament times limited the relationship of the people, even that of the chosen people, with God. With the coming of Jesus Christ, all that changed. The relationship with God, through the agency and free availability of the Holy Spirit, God's Power, God's Will, changed forever. The open prospect of salvation and eternal life in the kingdom of God took central position.

Matthew chapter five contains the first plenary sermon preached by Jesus. The passage starts '*Do not think that I am come to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I do not come to destroy but to fulfill.*'¹⁸¹³ He then goes on to correct the false estimate of the Law that the Jews held at that time: *Ye have heard that it hath been*

¹⁸¹¹ bar the '*unforgivable sin*,' q.v. inf.

¹⁸¹² the Judæo-Christian response: We are saved by grace through faith, but should we not produce Christian works, including keeping the Law? If we do not, then our faith is in vain, and the grace wasted.

¹⁸¹³ Mat 5:17-48

said.'is repeated, with a key variant, in six verses.¹⁸¹⁴ Jesus used this phrase to highlight the restrictions placed on the extent and working of the Law by the Jews, and their unwarranted extrapolations, with the wording He used immediately following indicating which case applied. The way the Jews had configured their law and their customs, with imports from pagan societies and beliefs coupled with hard-hearted restrictions, had reduced the effect of the Law to nought. In terms of benefit to the person, Jewish law afforded nothing. With no merit in it, no merit could ever be gleaned from it. A rigorous adherence to its minutiae and imports actually estranges a person from God.

That had to be righted, at the start, if any were to be saved. '*I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.*'¹⁸¹⁵].

'The Jews used the expression 'The Law' in four different ways:

1. They used it to mean the Ten Commandments;
2. They used it to mean the first five books of the Bible. That part of the Bible which is known as the Pentateuch—which literally means '*The Five Rolls*'—was to the Jew The Law par excellence, and was to them by far the most important part of the Bible;
3. They used the phrase '*The Law and the Prophets*' to mean the whole of Scripture; they used it as a comprehensive description of what we would call the whole of the Old Testament; and,
4. They used it to mean the Oral or the Scribal law.

In the time of Jesus, it was the last meaning which was commonest; and it was in fact this Scribal law which both Jesus and Paul so utterly condemned. What, then, was this Scribal law?

In the Old Testament itself we find very few rules and regulations; what we do find are great, broad principles¹⁸¹⁶ which a man must himself take and interpret under God's guidance, and apply to the individual situations in life....[but t]o the later Jews these great principles did not seem enough. They held that the Law was divine, and that in it God had said His last word, and that therefore everything must be in it. If a thing was not in the Law explicitly, it must be there implicitly. They therefore argued that out of the Law it must be possible to deduce a rule and a regulation for every possible situation in life. So there arose a race of men called the Scribes who made it the business of their lives to reduce the great principles of the Law to literally thousands upon thousands of rules and regulations.

¹⁸¹⁴ Mat 5:21,27,31,33,38,43; key variant q.v. inf.

¹⁸¹⁵ Gal 2:21

¹⁸¹⁶ together immutable Laws, which must not be transgressed.

We may best see this in action. The Law lays it down that the Sabbath day is to be kept holy, and that on it no work is to be done....But the Jewish legalists had a passion for definition. So they asked: What is work?

All kinds of things were classified as work. For instance, 'to carry a burden on the Sabbath day is work. But next a burden has to be defined. So the Scribal law lays it down that a burden is "food equal in weight to a dried fig, enough wine for mixing in a goblet, milk enough for one swallow, honey enough to put upon a wound, oil enough to anoint a small member, water enough to moisten an eye-salve, paper enough to write a customs house notice upon, ink enough to write two letters of the alphabet, reed enough to make a pen"—and so on, endlessly. So they spent endless hours arguing whether a man could or could not lift a lamp from one place to another on the Sabbath, whether a tailor committed a sin if he went out with a needle in his robe, whether a woman might wear a brooch or false hair, even if a man might go out on the Sabbath with artificial teeth or an artificial limb, if a man might lift his child on the Sabbath Day. These things to them were the essence of religion. Their religion was a legalism of petty rules and regulations.

To write was [deemed] to be to work on the Sabbath. But writing has to be defined. So the definition runs: "He who writes two letters of the alphabet with his right or with his left hand, whether of one kind or two kinds, if they are written with different inks or in different languages, is guilty. Even if he should write two letters from forgetfulness, he is guilty, whether he has written them with ink or with paint, red chalk, vitriol, or anything which makes a permanent mark. Also he that writes on two walls that form an angle, or on two tablets of his account book so that they can be read together is guilty....but if anyone writes with dark fluid, with fruit juice, or in the dust of the road,¹⁸¹⁷ or in sand, or in anything which does not make a permanent mark, he is not guilty....If he writes one letter on the ground, and one on the wall of the house, or on two pages of a book, so that they cannot be read together, he is not guilty." That is a typical passage from the Scribal law; and that is what the orthodox Jew regarded as true religion and the true service of God.

To heal was [deemed] to work on the Sabbath. Obviously this had to be defined. Healing was allowed when there was danger to life, and especially in troubles of the ear, nose, and throat; but even then, steps could be taken only to keep the patient from becoming worse; no steps might be taken to make him get any better. So a plain bandage might be put on a wound, but no ointment; plain wadding might be put in a sore ear, but not medicated ointment.¹⁸¹⁸

['Jesus'] defence was shattering. God did not stop working on the Sabbath day and neither did He. Any scholarly Jew would grasp its full force. Philo had said: "God never ceases doing but as it is the property of fire to burn and snow to chill, so it is the property of God to do." Another writer said: "The sun shines; the rivers flow; the processes of birth and death go on to the sabbath as on any other day; and that is the work of God."

¹⁸¹⁷ cp. John 8:6,8, which occurred on the morning following the last great day of the feast, which may or may not have been a weekly Sabbath.

¹⁸¹⁸ Barclay, William, *The Mind of St. Paul*, pp.58,59,80-82,106,108-111,118,119,123,128,129 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

True, according to the creation story, God rested on the seventh day; but He rested from creation; His higher works of judgement and mercy and compassion and love still went on.

Jesus said: “*Even on the Sabbath God’s love and mercy and compassion act; and so do mine.*”¹⁸¹⁹ It was this last passage which so shattered the Jews, for it meant nothing less than that the work of Jesus and the work of God were the same.¹⁸²⁰

‘The Scribes were the men who worked out these rules and regulations. The Pharisees, whose name means ‘The Separated Ones,’ were the men who had separated themselves from all ordinary activities of life to keep all these rules and regulations.

We can see the length to which this went from the following facts. For many generations, this Scribal law was never written down;¹⁸²¹ it was the ‘oral’ law, and it was handed down in the memory of generations of Scribes.¹⁸²² In the middle of the third century AD a summary of it was made and codified. That summary is known as the Mishnah; it contains sixty-three tractates on various subjects of the law, and in English makes a book of almost eight hundred pages. Later Jewish scholarship busied itself with making commentaries to explain the Mishnah. These commentaries are known as the Talmuds.¹⁸²³

To the strict orthodox Jew, in the time of Jesus, religion, serving God, was a matter of keeping thousands of legalistic rules and regulations; they regarded these petty rules and regulations as literally matters of life and death and eternal destiny. Clearly Jesus did not mean that not one of those rules and regulations was to pass away; repeatedly He broke them himself; and repeatedly He condemned them; that is certainly not what Jesus meant by the Law, for that is the kind of law that both Jesus and Paul condemned.

What then did Jesus mean by the Law? He said that He had not come to destroy the Law, but to fulfil the Law.¹⁸²⁴ That is to say, He came really to bring out the real meaning of the Law. What was the real meaning of the Law?....The one great principle was that in all things a man must seek God’s will, and that, when he knows it, he must dedicate his whole life to the obeying of it. The Scribes and Pharisees were right in seeking God’s will...[but] they were wrong in finding that will in their man-made hordes of rules and regulations.

What then is the real principle behind the whole Law, that principle which Jesus came to fulfil, the true meaning of which he came to show?

When we look at the Ten Commandments, which are the essence and the foundation of all [proper] law, we can see that their whole meaning can be summed up in one word—‘respect,’ or even better, ‘rever-

¹⁸¹⁹ John 5:16,17, also cf. Deut 13:17; Psa 86:15,145:8; Rom 9:15

¹⁸²⁰ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of John*, Vol.1, p.183 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

¹⁸²¹ starting c.165BC, or thereabouts.

¹⁸²² with its origins dating from during and after the return from captivity in Babylon.

¹⁸²³ Jerusalem Talmud extends to twelve printed volumes; Babylonian Talmud extends to sixty printed volumes.

¹⁸²⁴ Mat 5:17, ‘*Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill*’; also cp. Rom 10:4a, ‘*For Christ is the end of the Law,*’ Greek: telos gar nomou, meaning the ‘aim’ or ‘objective of the Law,’ not its ceasing to be.

ence.' Reverence for God and for the name of God, reverence for God's day, respect for parents, respect for life, respect for property, respect for personality, respect for the truth and for another person's good name, respect for oneself so that wrong desires may never master us—these are the fundamental principles behind the Ten Commandments, principles of reverence for God, and respect for our fellow men and for ourselves. Without them there can be no such thing as law. On them [should] all law be based.

That reverence and that respect Jesus came to fulfil. He came to show men in actual life what reverence for God and respect for men are like....Jesus came to show men in actual life what it means to give to God the reverence and to men the respect which are their due.

That reverence and that respect did not consist in obeying a multitude of petty rules and regulations. They consisted not in sacrifice, but in mercy; not in legalism but in love; not in prohibitions that men should not do things, but in the instruction to mould their lives on the positive commandment to love.

The reverence and respect which are the basis of the Ten Commandments can never pass away; they are the permanent stuff of man's relationship to God and to his fellow-man.

There had to be the Law before the Gospel could come. Men had to learn the difference between right and wrong, men had to learn their own human inability to cope with the demands of the Law, and to respond to the commandments of God; men had to learn a sense of sin and unworthiness and inadequacy.

[The love and Law of God] presents a man with a task the like of which the man who thinks in terms of [legalism as law] never dreams of, [for that 'Love and Law' involves] an obligation more binding than the obligation to any law.¹⁸²⁵

Faith

The coming of Jesus Christ brought much: the taking of the penalty of sin; the reconciliation of man to God; the free and universal availability of the Holy Spirit; the surplus of God's grace; and a place in the coming kingdom of God. Is all we need do accept it?

It is not possible to feign genuine penitence and contrition, though many may try. But there is more to the receipt of grace than that. Baptism is a precursor, of course. But after baptism, and receipt of the Holy Spirit, is there then no longer need of good works, good conduct, abiding by the Law? Has it all been cast aside, covered by forgiving Grace, no matter what? Does faith cleanse everything? Does it destroy the Law?

James sets faith in context: *'What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can [that] faith save him? Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. Do you see that faith was working together with [Abraham's] works, and by works faith was made perfect? You see then*

¹⁸²⁵ Barclay, William, *The Mind of St. Paul*, pp.58,59,80-82,106,108-111,118,119,123,128,129 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets); *The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol. 1, pp.127-133 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

*that man is justified by works, and not by faith only. For as the body without the breathe is dead, so faith without works is dead also.*¹⁸²⁶

The kind of faith that produces no works is no faith at all. We are saved by grace, God's grace, and rewarded by our works in faith. Our place in the kingdom, our standing therein, relies upon a living faith, and the living works of that faith. All else is dead. God's own are saved by grace, but ranked in the coming kingdom by the works they have done.

'Faith that is mere emotionalism is no faith, however decked about in pious practice or phrase. Faith that lacks emotion is only half-faith, with neither vitality nor joy....The answer to emotionalism is simply to refuse to suppress one's critical faculties, to refuse to turn religion into an individual affair in which the touchstone is the feeling one may or may not have. The answer is to turn outwards, and see what matters most in other people, not oneself.

Likewise, the answer to the suppression of true emotion is to realise that to live the Christian life is to be constantly open to surprises, to new opportunities of response....to be capable of spontaneity....Let us therefore recognise emotionalism for what it is and have done with its works. But we are also invited to cast off our inhibitions, and rejoice, not with any synthetic smile, but with a whole life, as those who have something to shout about.'¹⁸²⁷

But some would still choose to beg the question: Are Christians Free of the Law? They would exclaim, "Upon total immersion baptism for the remission of sins, and having received the gift of the Holy Spirit, the Christian is free to return to his or her old sinning ways, free of the Law and immune from any penalty from God." Ridiculous, isn't it? But many so-called Christians believe just that, especially in the 'born-again' brigades. Usually, they are easily discerned, telling any willing to listen that they are 'born-again,' the 'elect' of God, who will be whisked away in a 'secret rapture' before the onset of the Great Tribulation. In the interim, of course, they claim that they can sit back and wait, sinning with impunity in their new-found freedom from the Law through the grace of God.

But the Bible has it differently: the Christian is not to live in sin! *'What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?'*¹⁸²⁸

In the parable of the talents,¹⁸²⁹ the Christian is encouraged to do good, to build on it, ultimately being rewarded in proportion to that which has been gained. In that of the pounds or minas, the same is seen for the

¹⁸²⁶ James 2:14,17,22,24,26

¹⁸²⁷ *The Word for All Seasons*, edited by Birkbeck, John, chapter by Shaw, D. W. D., pp.54,55

¹⁸²⁸ Rom 6:1,2

¹⁸²⁹ Mat 25:14-30

eras of the church.¹⁸³⁰ In the Sermon on the Mount,¹⁸³¹ Christ shows how the spirit and intent of the Law translates into personal, loving conduct. A true Christian, a Judæo-Christian, will faithfully obey God's commandments: *'If ye love me, keep my commandments,'*¹⁸³² and, *'For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments; and his commandments are not grievous.'*¹⁸³³ Obedience to the Law, and the outpouring of love, must be translated into deeds and actions: *'Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock.'*¹⁸³⁴

The Judæo-Christian's conduct is modelled on Christ: *'And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him. He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.'*¹⁸³⁵

How then does faith fit into this? Hebrews chapter eleven, often termed the 'faith chapter',¹⁸³⁶ shows time and time again that God's own, the 'elect,' 'by faith' performed the commandments of God. Faith and obedience go hand-in-hand: *'Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.'*¹⁸³⁷ The matter is summed in Hebrews: *'But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.'*

¹⁸³⁰ a foregleam of which was to be found in Solomon's Temple in the form of the ten lampstands of the Sanctuary, in the Holy Place, q.v. I Kings 7:49; also cf. 'Messages to the Churches.'

¹⁸³¹ Matthew chpts. 5-7

¹⁸³² John 14:15

¹⁸³³ I John 5:3

¹⁸³⁴ Mat 7:24

¹⁸³⁵ I John 2:3-6

¹⁸³⁶ Heb 11:7-38

¹⁸³⁷ Rev 14:12

Chapter 39

Christian Baptism

'The Jewish world knew about baptism, for the three necessary elements through which a proselyte entered the Jewish faith were circumcision, baptism, and sacrifice. So prominent a place did baptism hold in the reception of converts into Judaism, that Rabbi Joshua agreed that it alone was necessary, although he was confuted by Rabbi Eliezer.

Jewish proselyte baptism was carried out in the presence of three witnesses, if possible members of the Sanhedrin. The nails and the hair of the candidate were cut; he was stripped naked; he was totally immersed in water, so that his whole body was totally covered; the essence of the Law was read to him, and he was warned of the difficulties and the dangers and the possible persecution which lay ahead; he confessed his sins to the men who were known as 'the fathers of baptism,' and who correspond to godparents [sic!]; then after blessings and exhortations he emerged a Jew. This process was held to effect in him the most radical change. He was said to emerge as 'a little child just born,' 'a child of one day.' So completely was he a new man that it was theoretically argued that a proselyte who had been baptised might marry his own sister or his own mother, because for him the connection with the past was completely broken....Certainly John would know of proselyte baptism although....no such baptism had ever been undergone by Jews themselves.

It is not difficult to find antecedents for John's practice of baptism. It is not suggested that John was dependent on any of them, but it is certain that John came into a situation in which baptism was known and practiced.¹⁸³⁸

'Christian baptism was a lineal descendant of the baptism of John. It is probable that the Jews were already practising the baptism¹⁸³⁹ mentioned in the Mishna as part of the ceremony of cleansing by which proselytes were admitted to Israel,¹⁸⁴⁰ since they would hardly have introduced the practice after the institution of Christian baptism.¹⁸⁴¹ But John gave baptism a new eschatological meaning by demanding that the Jews also should undergo a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins¹⁸⁴²....into the coming messianic community, into which the Coming One would gather the true sons of Abraham as wheat into the garner....

All our sources agree that John drew a distinction between his own baptism with water and the coming baptism with the Spirit, which he expected to supersede his own. The Coming One was not only to burn the chaff [in the baptism of fire¹⁸⁴³ at the time of the final judgement] but also to gather the wheat, that is, the new Israel, with which the gift of the Spirit was already firmly connected in the Old Testament....

¹⁸³⁸ Barclay, William, *The Mind of Jesus*, pp.23,24

¹⁸³⁹ Hebrew: tebilah.

¹⁸⁴⁰ more correctly, proto-Judaism.

¹⁸⁴¹ Gavin, F., *The Jewish Antecedents of the Christian Sacraments*, pp.30-40

¹⁸⁴² Mat 3:11a; and of purification in preparation for the coming of the Messiah, preparatory to entry.

¹⁸⁴³ many seem to maintain that baptism, to be fulsome, has to involve a 'baptism with fire,' this from an erroneous translation in the K.J.V. appearing in Mat 3:11 (sublinear emphasis added): 'I indeed baptise you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptise you with the Holy Spirit, and with fire.' The last three words should actually and correctly read 'or with fire.' Those desiring the 'baptism of fire,' as it is called, actually seek the second death, in the lake of fire. The unique event described in Acts 2:3, 'And it appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them,' patently uses the phrase 'like unto fire,' rather than 'of fire,' had nothing to do with baptism, and was a singular visual indicator of the coming and general availability of the Holy Spirit. There is no record of it ever having been repeated. Also cf. Armstrong, Herbert, *Do You Want the Baptism of Fire?* Zoroastrianism, or fire-worshipping, monotheistic root and branch paganism, has in the mythical story of Zoroaster—from Zeroashta, in Chaldee meaning 'the seed of the woman' and 'the seed of the fire'—that not only was he raised aloft in prayer, but his body became luminous at the same time, flammanque capiti insidentem, a 'flame resting on his head': a type of baptism with fire.

Collins, Andrew, *Twenty-First Century Grail—The Quest for a Legend*, pp.4,21,58 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'Baphomet, the baptizer of Wisdom,' referring to some great stone statue....was to confer....through the power of baptism; yet not by water, but by fire,' and 'we [grail-questors / psychic questors, viz., pagans] should undergo a 'baptism of fire.'" 'The occultist [Aleister Crowley] believed that Baphomet was in fact the Persian god Mithras [sic; should read Mithra, as Mithras was a predominantly Roman god, although the same, in essence], whose cult....involved seven degrees of initiation.'

The place of fire as the great pagan god, source, and purifier is seen in Hislop, Alexander, *The Two Babylons*, p.245 footnote:

'The name Tammuz, as applied to Nimrod or Osiris, was equivalent to Alorus or the "god of fire," and seems to have been given to him as the great purifier by fire. Tammuz is derived from tam, "to make perfect," and muz, "fire" and signifies "Fire the perfecter," or "the perfecting fire." To this meaning of the name, as well as to the character of Nimrod as the Father of the gods, the Zoroastrian verse alludes when it says: "All things are the progeny of one fire. The Father perfected all things, and delivered them to the second mind, whom all nations of men call the first." Here fire is declared to be the Father of all; for all things are said to be its progeny, and it is also called the "perfecter of all things." The second mind is evidently the child who displaced Nimrod's image as an object of worship; but yet the agency of

Jesus not only spoke of His own death as a baptism, but declared that it was possible for others to share that baptism. "*With my baptism you shall be baptised.*"¹⁸⁴⁴ The way was open, therefore, for His followers to interpret baptism as a symbolic sharing of His death. It is surely significant that Paul, who regarded baptism as a putting on of Christ crucified, a symbolic dying with Christ, assumed that this was the commonly accepted interpretation.¹⁸⁴⁵

Nimrod, as the first of the gods, and the fire-god, was held indispensable for "perfecting" men. And hence, too, no doubt, the necessity of the fire of Purgatory to "perfect" men's souls at last, and to purge away all the sins that they have carried with them into the unseen world.'

Theriomorphic demons—demons masquerading in animal form—are found abounding in pagan religious superstition and fable. The biblical seraphim (cf. Isa 6:1-3; q.v. Appendix, 'Ranking of Angels') become degraded to demons of the waste or wilderness, often depicted as serpents and scorpions. In other words, the highest ranking angels of God are reduced, in pagan eyes, to no more than 'flaming' (for that is what the word seraph signifies) animals. It follows that the notion of a baptism with fire, transforming the believer into a 'flaming being' or a 'burning one,' is nothing more than a crass parody instigated by Satan. Pagan Rome's burning of early Christians on inverted crosses as 'lamps' or on fiery wheels merely constitutes a further manifestation. The Roman church's later practice of burning 'heretics' at the stake is another.

As to the *Mysteries*, much of the root of the claimed magical virtues and properties of water and baptism can be traced back to ancient Babylonian beliefs, via Gnosticism. The Gnostic writing *Pistis Sophia* (with added comment and clarification in square brackets) contains the following exchange, put into the mouths of Mary and Christ: 'Then came forth Mary and said: Lord, under what form do baptisms remit sins?...[Christ replied] Now, therefore, if anyone hath received the mysteries of baptism, those mysteries become a great fire, exceeding strong and wise, so as to burn up all the sins: and the fire entereth into the soul secretly, so that it may consume within it all the sins which the counterfeit of the spirit hath printed there. Likewise it entereth into the body secretly, that it may pursue all its pursuers and divide them into partsThe fire separates the counterfeit of the spirit, fate, and the body into one portion, and the soul and the power into another portion. The mystery of baptism remaineth in the middle of them, so that it may perpetually separate them, so that it may purge and cleanse them in order that they may not be polluted by matter.'

Any form of purification to the benefit of a mendicant either by their mortal death in physical fire or through the physical destruction by fire of that which is evil within the individual human while leaving untouched that which is pure is root-and-branch paganism. Old Testament references to '*refining in fire*' are metaphorical representations of the Great Tribulation, as seen in such as Zech 13:8,9 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets), '*And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the Lord, two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein. And I will bring the third part through the fire [i.e., the heat of the Great Tribulation], and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The Lord is my God.*' II Peter 3:7 identifies the final conflagration of this world, and the fate of the wicked therein: '*But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.*' The wicked are to be destroyed, forever, along with the heavens and the earth. The new heavens and the new earth, with the spirit beings therein, will then be all-in-all.

¹⁸⁴⁴ Mark 10:38f.

¹⁸⁴⁵ q.v. Gal 3:27, Rom 6:3f.; Caird, G. B., *The Apostolic Age*, pp.49,50,52 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

Chapter 40

Dying without hearing the Word

A study is felt necessary into what happens to those who die without having heard the Word of God in their lives, or who have heard none but a counterfeit, worthless version. How, and on what basis are they judged? The judgement which they must face is known as The Great White Throne Judgement, which happens at the second resurrection at the end of the Millennium of rest.

The Judge is Christ: *'For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son. And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man.'*¹⁸⁴⁶ *'And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into the world, that they which see not might see; and they which see might be made blind. Jesus said unto them [the Pharisees], If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth.'*¹⁸⁴⁷ *'For the son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save.'*¹⁸⁴⁸

And all are judged: *'And it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.'*¹⁸⁴⁹ *'For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.'*¹⁸⁵⁰ *'[S]o that every one of us shall give account of*

¹⁸⁴⁶ John 5:22,27

¹⁸⁴⁷ John 9:39,41

¹⁸⁴⁸ Luke 9:56a

¹⁸⁴⁹ Heb 8:27

¹⁸⁵⁰ II Cor 5:10

himself to God.’¹⁸⁵¹ *‘For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God.’*¹⁸⁵²

The thoroughness and comprehensiveness of that judgement is plain: *‘Some men’s sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment; and some men they follow after. Likewise the good works of some are manifest beforehand; and they that are otherwise cannot be hid.’*¹⁸⁵³

Giving account

*“But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.”*¹⁸⁵⁴ Jesus laid it down that a man would specifically render account for his idle words. The word that is used for idle is the Greek for ‘a deed’;¹⁸⁵⁵ and the prefix¹⁸⁵⁶ means ‘without’; [*‘without deeds’*¹⁸⁵⁷ or *‘without works’*] describes that which was ‘not meant to produce anything.’ It is used, for instance, of a barren tree, of fallow land, of the Sabbath day when no work could be done, of an idle man.’¹⁸⁵⁸

Great flowing words of intent, spoken to garner the admiration and respect of one’s fellows, and not acted upon, and with no intention to do so, are but idle words: ‘All talk and no delivery,’ in modern parlance. The speaker has a momentary, self-satisfied standing, as an idle-monger, then all is lost—until the judgement. And then it really will be lost; all of it, for all time.

Words spoken only for effect are the words of the hypocrite, the person who misrepresents himself and his motives and his works to gain the approbation of others. In short, the words of the person who is all too willing to lie to immediate and short-term effect. For him, instantaneous self-gratification is all-in-all, no matter how fleeting it may be.

In Revelation, John lists those who will be kept out of the coming kingdom of God, the New Jerusalem: *‘For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.’*¹⁸⁵⁹ Liars, hypocrites, and mongers of the idle word are out!

¹⁸⁵¹ Rom 14:12b

¹⁸⁵² I Peter 4:17

¹⁸⁵³ I Tim 5:24,25

¹⁸⁵⁴ Mat 12:36

¹⁸⁵⁵ Greek: aergos, ergon.

¹⁸⁵⁶ Greek: a, as a prefix, means ‘without-.’

¹⁸⁵⁷ Greek: aergos.

¹⁸⁵⁸ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol.2, pp.51,52 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

¹⁸⁵⁹ Rev 22:15

Self-condemned

In order to escape the lake of fire at the end, it is essential to avoid the dread trap of recidivism after baptism: *'But if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.'*¹⁸⁶⁰ *'I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterwards destroyed them that believed not.'*¹⁸⁶¹

Those who know of God's Law and wilfully ignore it and, worse, take delight in others who revel in their lawlessness, have but one fate: *'Who knoweth the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.'*¹⁸⁶² *'That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.'*¹⁸⁶³ This is the same fate as those who wrest and pervert the true meaning of scripture, presenting lies and perversions before men: *'As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; by which are some hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned wrest,'*¹⁸⁶⁴ *as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.'*¹⁸⁶⁵ *'And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.'*¹⁸⁶⁶

The unjust, the lawless, are reserved by God unto that fateful day of judgement: *'The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished.'*¹⁸⁶⁷ *'But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire in the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.'*¹⁸⁶⁸ *'What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction. And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he hath afore prepared unto glory.'*¹⁸⁶⁹ *'But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.'*¹⁸⁷⁰

¹⁸⁶⁰ Heb 10:26,27

¹⁸⁶¹ Jude 5

¹⁸⁶² Rom 1:32

¹⁸⁶³ II Thes 2:12; speaking of the end-time conditions in the world.

¹⁸⁶⁴ i.e., 'twist.'

¹⁸⁶⁵ II Peter 3:16

¹⁸⁶⁶ II Peter 2:3

¹⁸⁶⁷ II Peter 2:9

¹⁸⁶⁸ II Peter 3:7

¹⁸⁶⁹ Rom 9:22,23

¹⁸⁷⁰ I Tim 6:9; cf. Rom 2:12 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets), *'For as many as have sinned [lawlessly] shall also perish [lawlessly]; and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law,'* where Greek: anomos, 'lawlessly,' has the preferred translation, compared to the K.J.V.'s paradoxical and thus largely meaningless 'without law.'

Those who, despite having had ample opportunity to learn God's Law and live accordingly, insist on disregarding it, choosing to adhere to their own delusions, have a similar fate: *'Jesus said unto them [the Pharisees], If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth.'*¹⁸⁷¹

Without God's supervening Holy Spirit, man is left, at best, with his conscience to rely upon. This is not entirely nothing, being the innate standard dwelling in the minds of all men and women.¹⁸⁷² This standard is severely debased by comparison with God's, but it still exhibits some fragments or remnants of higher morals and ethics.¹⁸⁷³ And their place will be given to another: *'He will miserably destroy those wicked men,'*¹⁸⁷⁴ *and will let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in due season.'*¹⁸⁷⁵ *'He shall come and destroy these husbandmen, and shall give the vineyard to others. And when they heard it, they said, God forbid.'*¹⁸⁷⁶

The destruction of the wicked is complete and utter annihilation:¹⁸⁷⁷ *'And fear not them who are able to kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.'*¹⁸⁷⁸ *'And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels. In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting'*¹⁸⁷⁹ *destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day.'*¹⁸⁸⁰ *'If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.'*¹⁸⁸¹ *'Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat.'*¹⁸⁸² *'Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.'*¹⁸⁸³

¹⁸⁷¹ John 9:41 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

¹⁸⁷² psychopaths / sociopaths excepted, possibly.

¹⁸⁷³ and so its description as 'Dull Care' in Bohemian Grove.

¹⁸⁷⁴ viz., the wicked husbandmen who defrauded the vineyard owner of its produce, and murdered the owner's servants and his son.

¹⁸⁷⁵ Mat 21:41b

¹⁸⁷⁶ Luke 20:16

¹⁸⁷⁷ i.e., perdition.

¹⁸⁷⁸ Mat 10:28

¹⁸⁷⁹ Greek: aionios, 'age ending,' with the suffix -ios meaning 'pertaining to.'

¹⁸⁸⁰ II Thes 1:7-10; at the Second Coming.

¹⁸⁸¹ I Cor 3:17

¹⁸⁸² Mat 7:13

¹⁸⁸³ Phlp 3:19

Conformed to the world, or not!

'The people whom Jesus would call happy the world would call wretched; and the people Jesus called wretched the world would call happy. Just imagine anyone say, "Happy are the poor, and, Woe to the rich!" To talk like that is to put an end to the world's values altogether.

Where then is the key to this? The key comes in Luke. There Jesus says, "*Woe to you who are rich because you have all the comfort you are going to get.*"¹⁸⁸⁴ The word Jesus used there for 'have'¹⁸⁸⁵ is the word which is used for receiving payment in full of an account. It is a business word, the word which a tradesman wrote on an account when he had received payment in full. What Jesus is saying is this, "If you set your heart and bend your whole energies to obtain the things which the world values, you will get them—but that is all you will ever get. That is your payment in full." In the expressive modern phrase, literally, you have had it! But if on the other hand you set your heart and bend all your energies to be utterly loyal to God and true to Christ, you will run into all kinds of trouble; you may by the world's standards look unhappy, but your payment is still to come; and when it comes it will be joy eternal.

We are here face to face with an eternal choice. It is a choice which begins in childhood and never ends till life ends. Will you take the easy way, and the way which yields immediate pleasure and profit? or, will you take the hard way which yields immediate toil and sometimes¹⁸⁸⁶ suffering? Will you seize on the pleasure and the profit of the moment? or, Are you willing to look ahead and sacrifice them for the greater good? Will you concentrate on the world's rewards or, Will you concentrate on Christ? If you take Christ's way you must abandon the values of the world. Jesus had no doubt which way in the end brought happiness....It is Jesus' teaching that the joy of [the kingdom of God] will amply compensate for the trouble of earth. As Paul says, "*Our light affliction is but for a moment and works for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.*"¹⁸⁸⁷ The challenge of the Beatitude is, "Will you be happy in the world's way, or in Christ's way?"¹⁸⁸⁸

Bunyan, concerning finding the strait gate and entering in thereat, relates conversations between Christian—the pilgrim—and one called Evangelist, and, some time later, another called Goodwill:

Christian & Evangelist: 'Now, I saw, upon a time, when he [Christian] was walking in the fields, that he was (as he was wont) reading in his book, and greatly distressed in his mind; and as he read, he burst out, as he had done before, crying, "*What shall I do to be saved?*"'¹⁸⁸⁹

I saw also that he looked this way and that way, as if he would run; yet he stood still, because (as I perceived) he could not tell which way to go. I looked then, and saw a man named Evangelist coming to him,

¹⁸⁸⁴ Luke 6:24

¹⁸⁸⁵ Greek: apecho, 'have' or 'received,' and modified, as Mat 6:2, correctly meaning: 'paid in full.'

¹⁸⁸⁶ better, always.

¹⁸⁸⁷ II Cor 4:17

¹⁸⁸⁸ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Luke*, pp.74,75 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

¹⁸⁸⁹ Acts 16:30,31

and ask, Wherefore doest thou cry? He answered, Sir, I perceive by the book in my hand, that I am condemned to die, and after that to come to judgment;¹⁸⁹⁰ and I find that I am not willing to do the first,¹⁸⁹¹ nor able to do the second.¹⁸⁹²

Then, said Evangelist, Why not willing to die, since this life is attended by so many evils? The man answered, Because I fear that this burden that is upon my back will sink me lower than the grave, and I shall fall into Tophet.¹⁸⁹³ And, sir, if I be not fit to go to prison, I am not fit to go to judgment, and from thence to execution; and the thoughts of these things make me cry. Then said Evangelist, If this be thy condition, why standeth thou still? He answered, Because I know not whither to go. Then he gave him a parchment roll, and there was written within, "*Flee from the wrath to come.*"¹⁸⁹⁴

The man, therefore, read it, and looking upon Evangelist very carefully, said, Whither must I fly? Then said Evangelist (pointing with his finger over a very wide field), Do you see yonder Wicket-gate?¹⁸⁹⁵ The man said, No. Then said the other, Do you see yonder shining light?¹⁸⁹⁶ He said, I think I do. Then said Evangelist, Keep that light in your eye, and go directly thereto: so shalt thou see the gate; at which when thou knockest, it shall be told thee what thou shalt do. So I saw in my dream that the man began to run....'

Christian & Goodwill: [S]o, in process of time, Christian got up to the gate. Now, over the gate there was written, "*Knock, and it shall be opened unto you.*"¹⁸⁹⁷ He knocked, therefore, more than once or twice, saying: "May I now enter here? Will he within open to me, though I have been an undeserving rebel? Then shall I not fail to sing his lasting praise on high." At last there came a grave person to the gate called Goodwill, who asked who was there, and whence he came, and what he would have?

Here is a poor burdened sinner. I come from the City of Destruction, but am going to Mount Zion, that I may be delivered from the wrath to come; I would therefore, sir, since I am informed that by this gate is the way thither, know if you are willing to let me in. "I am willing with all my heart," saith he; and, with that, he opened the gate....and set me on the way.'¹⁸⁹⁸

¹⁸⁹⁰ Heb 9:27

¹⁸⁹¹ Job 16:21,22

¹⁸⁹² Ezek 22:14

¹⁸⁹³ Isa 30:33

¹⁸⁹⁴ Mat. 3:7

¹⁸⁹⁵ Mat 7:13,14

¹⁸⁹⁶ Psa 119:105; II Peter 1:19

¹⁸⁹⁷ Mat 7:7

¹⁸⁹⁸ Bunyan, John, *The Pilgrim's Progress*, pp.26,27,29,40,41,62 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

Like little children

*'And [Jesus] said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.'*¹⁸⁹⁹ *'Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for such is the kingdom of God.'*¹⁹⁰⁰ *'Of such,' said Jesus, 'is the kingdom of God.'*

'What is it about the child that Jesus liked and valued so much?

1. There is the child's *humility*. There is the child who is an exhibitionist, but such a child is rare and almost always the product of misguided adult treatment. Ordinarily, the child is embarrassed by prominence and publicity. He has not yet learned to think in terms of place and pride and prestige. He has not yet learned to discover the importance of himself;

2. There is the child's *obedience*. True, a child is often disobedient, but, paradox though it may seem, his natural instinct is to obey. He has not yet learned the pride and the false independence which separate a man from his fellow men and from God;

3. There is the child's *trust*. That is seen in two things:

(a) It is seen in the child's acceptance of authority. There is a time when he thinks his father knows everything and that his father is always right. To our shame, he soon grows out of that. But instinctively the child realizes his own ignorance and his own helplessness and trusts the one who, as he thinks, knows.

(b) It is seen in the child's confidence in other people. He does not expect any person to be bad. He will make friends with a perfect stranger. A great man once said that the greatest compliment ever paid him was when a little boy came up to him, a complete stranger, and asked him to tie his shoelace. The child has not yet learned to suspect the world. He still believes the best about others. Sometimes that very trust leads him into danger for there are those who are totally unworthy of it and who abuse it, but that trust is a lovely thing; and,

4. The child has a *short memory*. He has not yet learned to bear grudges and nourish bitterness. Even when he is unjustly treated—and who among us is not sometimes unjust to his children?—he forgets, and forgets so completely that he does not even need to forgive.¹⁹⁰¹

Indeed, of such is the kingdom of God.¹⁹⁰²

¹⁸⁹⁹ Mat 18:3 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

¹⁹⁰⁰ Mark 10:14b

¹⁹⁰¹ Lev 19 :18, *'Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself : I am the Lord.'*

¹⁹⁰² Barclay, William, *The Daily Study Bible, Gospel of Mark*, p.242

Summary

1. God's 'elect,' the 'firstfruits,' are the only ones who participate in the first resurrection, on the day of Pentecost in the year of His return.¹⁹⁰³ They endure the first six hundred and sixty-six days of the Great Tribulation, are raised immortal at the Second Coming, partake of the wedding supper '*in the air*,' and are granted the rank of crowned cherubim, having overcome the world;¹⁹⁰⁴
2. The 'intermediate peoples,'¹⁹⁰⁵ go through the entire of the Great Tribulation plus the start of the '*day of the Lord*.'¹⁹⁰⁶ They face the second resurrection and the judgement thereanent, and are granted immortal life, with the rank of crowned angels, having overcome the world;¹⁹⁰⁷
3. The 'knowingly wicked' face the second resurrection and condemnation, resulting in their being cast into the lake of fire;
4. Those who have given their all to Satan, through oath and / or demonic or satanic possession, are consigned to the lake of fire; but,
5. The 'innocently' wicked, who have known nothing of God's Law, or who have been presented with nothing but a counterfeit version and have been unable to discern it for what it is, are judged on their merits, all having been given a conscience for a moral and ethical compass. Those who are judged and then enter the kingdom will do so as immortal uncrowned angels, for they have not overcome the world. God knows all minds, and, in the individual case, had that person heard the Word of the Lord, whether he or she would have accepted it, acted on it, and so lived a proper Judæo-Christian life. Everything in God's judgement in this complex matter will be scrupulously fair, with God's mercy abounding.

¹⁹⁰³ q.v. sup.

¹⁹⁰⁴ q.v. sup.; with the exception of the two witnesses who will become crowned seraphim, the rank of archangels.

¹⁹⁰⁵ q.v. sup.

¹⁹⁰⁶ q.v. sup.

¹⁹⁰⁷ q.v. 'Ranking of Angels' in the Appendix.

Chapter 41

Prayers: Answered & Unanswered

It is all too apparent that the vast bulk of prayer remains unanswered. Much comment has been made upon this, and, of course, much play has been made of it. To the atheist and the agnostic this is 'proof positive' of the futility of prayer directed to a God either who does not exist, or, at best, who does not hear and does not care. Empirical evidence amassed by detractors concerning the lack of tangible benefit deriving from prayer, together with a general scepticism or even cynicism in the modern world, has inculcated a repudiation of praying to God, at least in the western world.

But do they judge incorrectly? James supplies the biblical response: *'Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.'*¹⁹⁰⁸ Selfish consumption cannot be satisfied through prayer. The preceding verses show the mindset of those selfish individuals who 'ask amiss': *'From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members? Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not.'*¹⁹⁰⁹ Those who act in that way, in other words, the vast bulk of humanity, can ask as often as they like, but they will not receive: *'But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.'*¹⁹¹⁰

'Some fail to receive [answers to prayer] because they regard iniquity in their heart. Such ought to learn to say with David: *"If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me."* God has not promised to destroy

¹⁹⁰⁸ James 4:3

¹⁹⁰⁹ James 4:1,2

¹⁹¹⁰ Mat 6:7

the works of the devil in the body while we are clinging to the works of the devil in the [mind]. Unconfessed sin hinders people from receiving God's mercy. His Word tells us, "*He that covereth his sins shall not prosper, but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them, shall obtain mercy.*"¹⁹¹¹ Isaiah attests to the deeply 'excepting effect' of unconfessed sin on prayer: '*Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither is his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.*'¹⁹¹² 'God wants to train every Christian to believe Him when everything that they can see, except His promise, is to the contrary.'¹⁹¹³ Amen.¹⁹¹⁴

The 'elect,' are commanded in this wise: '*Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.*'¹⁹¹⁵ Indeed, the 'elect' have a direct communication with the Father: '*Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God. And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight,*'¹⁹¹⁶ and, '*And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.*'¹⁹¹⁷ It is God's stated will to heal,¹⁹¹⁸ to bless the tither,¹⁹¹⁹ and to protect that person from physical harm.

¹⁹²⁰

'For the true proof of faith is the assurance when we pray that God will really perform what He has promised us....When we really embrace the grace of God which He offers us, He meets us and precedes us with His goodness, and thus we in time respond to His offers, and bear witness to our expectation of His promises. Nothing, therefore, can be better for us, than to ask for what He has promised. Thus in the prayers of the saints these feelings are united, as they plead God's promises wherein they entreat him. And we cannot possibly exercise true confidence in prayer, except by resting firmly on God's word.'¹⁹²¹

Keeping the commandments, the Law, and pleasing God, doing what He wants us to do, opens up the line of communication, and lays hold of God's willingness to help. Warring, fighting, lusting, killing, and all the rest simply ensure that the line of communication remains closed.

In Judæo-Christian life, prayer is an act of total confidence and assurance of the plan and purpose of God. It is not an expression of panic and desperation. The protection and blessings afforded to those who,

¹⁹¹¹ Bosworth, F. F., *Christ the Healer*, pp.63-190 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

¹⁹¹² Isa 59:1,2

¹⁹¹³ Heb 11:1, '*Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.*'

¹⁹¹⁴ Bosworth, F. F., *Christ the Healer*, pp.63-190

¹⁹¹⁵ Mat 6:8

¹⁹¹⁶ I John 3:21,22

¹⁹¹⁷ I John 5:14,15 (sublinear emphasis added)

¹⁹¹⁸ James 5:13-15

¹⁹¹⁹ Mal 3:10-12

¹⁹²⁰ Psa 91:1-16

¹⁹²¹ Calvin, John, *Commentary on Daniel*, Vol. 2, p.80

*'keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ,'*¹⁹²² can be classified under three headings:

1. Blessings of the Holy Spirit;
2. Physical protection; and,
3. Material blessings.

Blessings of the Spirit

The blessings of the Holy Spirit, called *'gifts of the Holy Spirit'* by Paul, are recited conveniently in Corinthians: *'Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant. Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led. Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Spirit. Now there are diversity of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues: But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will. For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptised into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.'*¹⁹²³

Material blessings, physical protection

The blessings for obedience, under the covenant made by God, are recorded in Deuteronomy, *'And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the Lord thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth: And all these blessings shall come on thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God. Blessed shalt thou be in the city, and blessed shalt thou be in the field. Blessed shalt be*

¹⁹²² Rev 12:17b

¹⁹²³ I Cor 12:1-13

*the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy ground, and the fruit of thy cattle, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep. Blessed shall be thy basket and thy store. Blessed shalt thou be when thou comest in, and blessed shalt thou be when thou goest out. The Lord shall cause thine enemies that shall rise up against thee to be smitten before thy face: they shall come out against thee one way, and flee before thee seven ways. The Lord shall command the blessing upon thee in thy storehouses, and in all that thou settest thine hand unto; and he shall bless thee in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee. The Lord shall establish thee an holy people unto himself, as he hath sworn unto thee, if thou shalt keep the commandments of the Lord thy God, and walk in his ways. And all the people of the earth shall see that thou art called by the name of the Lord; and they shall be afraid of thee. And the Lord shall make thee plenteous in goods, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy ground, and in the land which the Lord sware unto thy fathers to give thee. The Lord shall open unto thee his good treasure, the heaven to give the rain unto thy land in his season, and to bless all the work of thine hand: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, and thou shalt not borrow. And the Lord shall make thee the head, and not the tail; and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath; if that thou hearken unto the commandments of the Lord thy God, which I command thee this day, to observe and do them: And thou shalt not go aside from any of the words which I command thee this day, to the right, or to the left, to go after other gods to serve them.'*¹⁹²⁴ These blessings are founded on God's promise to Abraham.

Physical protection is assured in Psalms, *'He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust. Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence. He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler. Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day; Nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday. A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee. Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked. Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the most High, thy habitation; There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone. Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder; the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet. Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him on high, because he hath known my name. He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him. With long life will I satisfy him, and shew him my salvation.'*¹⁹²⁵

The converse, the results of disobedience, is recited in Deuteronomy, *'But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes*

¹⁹²⁴ Deut 28:1-14

¹⁹²⁵ Psal 91:1-16

which I command thee this day; that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee: Cursed shalt thou be in the city, and cursed shalt thou be in the field. Cursed shall be thy basket and thy store. Cursed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy land, the increase of thine kine, and the flocks of thy sheep. Cursed shalt thou be when thou comest in, and cursed shalt thou be when thou goest out. The Lord shall send upon thee cursing, vexation, and rebuke, in all that thou settest thine hand unto for to do, until thou be destroyed, and until thou perish quickly; because of the wickedness of thy doings, whereby thou hast forsaken me. The Lord shall make the pestilence cleave unto thee, until he hath consumed thee from off the land, whither thou goest to possess it. The Lord shall smite thee with a consummation, and with a fever, and with an inflammation, and with an extreme burning, and with the sword, and with blasting, and with mildew; and they shall pursue thee until thou perish. And thy heaven that is over thy head shall be brass, and the earth that is under thee shall be iron. The Lord shall make the rain of thy land powder and dust: from heaven shall it come down upon thee, until thou be destroyed. The Lord shall cause thee to be smitten before thine enemies: thou shalt go out one way against them, and flee seven ways before them: and shalt be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth. And thy carcase shall be meat unto all fowls of the air, and unto the beasts of the earth, and no man shall fray them away. The Lord will smite thee with the botch of Egypt, and with the emerods, and with the scab, and with the itch, whereof thou canst not be healed. The Lord shall smite thee with madness, and blindness, and astonishment of heart: And thou shalt grope at noonday, as the blind gropeth in darkness, and thou shalt not prosper in thy ways: and thou shalt be only oppressed and spoiled evermore, and no man shall save thee. Thou shalt betroth a wife, and another man shall lie with her: thou shalt build an house, and thou shalt not dwell therein: thou shalt plant a vineyard, and shalt not gather the grapes thereof. Thine ox shall be slain before thine eyes, and thou shalt not eat thereof: thine ass shall be violently taken away from before thy face, and shall not be restored to thee: thy sheep shall be given unto thine enemies, and thou shalt have none to rescue them. Thy sons and thy daughters shall be given unto another people, and thine eyes shall look, and fail with longing for them all the day long: and there shall be no might in thine hand. The fruit of thy land, and all thy labours, shall a nation which thou knowest not eat up; and thou shalt be only oppressed and crushed alway: So that thou shalt be mad for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see. The Lord shall smite thee in the knees, and in the legs, with a sore botch that cannot be healed, from the sole of thy foot unto the top of thy head. The Lord shall bring thee, and thy king which thou shalt set over thee, unto a nation which neither thou nor thy fathers have known; and there shalt thou serve other gods, wood and stone. And thou shalt become an astonishment, a proverb, and a by-word, among all nations whether the Lord shall lead thee. Thou shalt carry much seed out into the field, and shalt gather but little in; for the locust shall consume it. Thou shalt plant vineyards, and dress them, but shall neither drink of the wine, nor gather the grapes; for the worms shall eat them. Thou shalt have olive trees throughout all thy coasts, but thou shalt not anoint thyself with the oil; for thine olive shall cast his fruit. Thou shalt beget sons and daughters, but thou shalt not enjoy them; for they shall go into captivity. All thy trees and

the fruit of thy land shall the locust consume. The stranger that is within thee shall get up above thee very high; and thou shalt come down very low. He shall lend to thee, and thou shalt not lend to him: he shall be the head, and thou shalt be the tail. Moreover all these curses shall come upon thee, and shall pursue thee, and overtake thee, till thou be destroyed; because thou hearkenest not unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to keep his commandments and his statutes which he commanded thee: And they shall be upon thee for a sign and for a wonder, and upon thy seed forever. Because thou servest not the Lord thy God with joyfulness, and with gladness of heart, for the abundance of all things; Therefore shalt thou serve thine enemies which the Lord shall send against thee, in hunger, and in thirst, and in nakedness, and in want of all things: and he shall put a yoke of iron upon thy neck, until he have destroyed thee. The Lord shall bring a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flieth; a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand; A nation of fierce countenance, which shall not regard the person of the old, nor show favour to the young: And he shall eat the fruit of thy cattle, and the fruit of thy land, until thou be destroyed: which also shall not leave thee either corn, wine, or oil, or the increase of thy kine, or flocks of thy sheep, until he have destroyed thee. And he shall besiege thee in all thy gates, until thy high and fenced walls come down, wherein thou trustest, throughout all thy land: and he shall besiege thee in all thy gates throughout all thy land, which the Lord thy God hath given thee. And thou shalt eat the fruit of thine own body, the flesh of thy sons and of thy daughters, which the Lord thy God hath given thee, in the siege, and in the straitness, wherein thine enemies shall distress thee: So that the man that is tender among you, and very delicate, his eye shall be evil toward his brother, and toward the wife of his bosom, and toward the remnant of his children which he shall leave: So that he will not give to any of them of the flesh of his children whom he shall eat: because he hath nothing left him in the siege and in the straitness, wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee in all thy gates. The tender and delicate woman among you, which would not adventure to set the sole of her foot upon the ground for delicateness and tenderness, her eye shall be evil toward the husband of her bosom, and toward her son, and toward her daughter, And toward her young one that cometh out from between her feet, and toward her children which she shall bear: for she shall eat them for want of all things secretly in the siege and straitness, wherewith thine enemy shall distress thee in all thy gates. If thou wilt not observe to do all the words of this law that are written in this book, that thou mayest fear this glorious and fearful name, THE LORD THY GOD; then the Lord will make thy plagues wonderful, and the plagues of thy seed, even great plagues, and of long continuance, and sore sicknesses, and of long continuance. Moreover he will bring upon thee all the diseases of Egypt, which thou wast afraid of; and they shall cleave unto thee. Also every sickness, and every plague, which is not written in the book of this law, them will the Lord bring upon thee, until thou be destroyed. And ye shall be left few in number, whereas ye were as the stars of heaven for multitude; because thou wouldst not obey the voice of the Lord thy God. And it shall come to pass, that as the Lord rejoiced over you to do you good, and to multiply you; so the Lord will rejoice over you to destroy you, and bring you to nought; and ye shall be plucked from off the land whither thou goest to possess it. And the

*Lord shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other; and thou shalt serve other gods, which neither thou nor thy fathers have known, even wood and stone. And among these nations shalt thou find no ease, neither shalt the sole of thy foot have rest: but the Lord shall give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind: And thy life shall hang in doubt before thee; and thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have none assurance of thy life: In the morning thou shalt say, Would God it were even! and at even thou shalt say, Would God it were morning! for the fear of thine heart wherewith thou shalt fear, and for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see. And the Lord shall bring thee into Egypt again with ships, by the way whereof I spake unto thee, Thou shalt see it no more again: and there ye shall be sold unto your enemies for bondmen and bondwomen, and no man shall buy you.'*¹⁹²⁶

The stark contrast between the fruits of obedience and disobedience is well delineated. One leads to wellbeing and blessing; the other to penury, slavery, and death.

Answers promised

'The most conspicuous statements in the Scriptures about our Heavenly Father are the declarations concerning His love, His mercy, His compassion. There is no note that can be sounded concerning God's character that will so inspire faith as this one....It is not what God can do, but what we know He yearns to do, that inspires faith.

'Unless those seeking [the answer to prayer] can say, when tested, "*It is written,*" and then can quote to the adversary a promise which settles the question of God's will, their faith cannot remain steadfast. Multitudes of sufferers who have prayed for healing [and all manner of other matters] for years without success, because of having used in their prayers the faith destroying phrase, "IF it be thy will," have afterwards been healed through the truth of God's Word.'¹⁹²⁷

As noted before in relation to physical healing, the conditional 'if,' when injected into confident faith in God's desire, and willingness, and promise to act, reduces the whole affair to that of a provisional plea, and negates and denies God's holy word. Is it any wonder that God does not answer in such circumstances? The first move, the move of faith, is entirely absent; and so is the answer. The entire is blocked, by that little 'if.' Matthew puts the matter succinctly: '*And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.*'¹⁹²⁸ There is no 'if' qualification contained in this statement.

Prayer and faith are inextricably bound. Faith in God and belief that He will grant our petitions and supplications are the precursors of answered prayer. This is seen in, '*Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by*

¹⁹²⁶ Deut 28:15-68

¹⁹²⁷ Bosworth, F. F., *Christ the Healer*, pp.63-190 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

¹⁹²⁸ Mat 21:22

prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God,'¹⁹²⁹ when read with, 'And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God. For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith,'¹⁹³⁰ and, 'And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.'¹⁹³¹

Belief, faith, praying to the Father in the name of Jesus Christ and asking in accordance with the will of God, a will that can be discerned through searching and understanding the Scriptures, is a constant theme in the New Testament:

'Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.'¹⁹³²

'And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For everyone that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? Or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?'¹⁹³³

'But I [Martha] know, that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee.'¹⁹³⁴

'Be not afraid, only believe.'¹⁹³⁵

'And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye ask any thing in my name, I will do it.'¹⁹³⁶

'If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and appointed you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.'¹⁹³⁷

'And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.'¹⁹³⁸

¹⁹²⁹ Phlp 4:6

¹⁹³⁰ Mark 12:22-24

¹⁹³¹ I John 5:14,15

¹⁹³² Heb 11:1; true faith lays hold and settles upon the word and promises of God, and the true believer, knowing His power and faithfulness, is firmly persuaded that, in due course, there shall be a performance of what is said by Him

¹⁹³³ Luke 11:9-13

¹⁹³⁴ John 11:22 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

¹⁹³⁵ Mark 5:36b

¹⁹³⁶ John 14:13,14

¹⁹³⁷ John 15:7,16

¹⁹³⁸ John 16:23,24

*'If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord.'*¹⁹³⁹

*'And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight.'*¹⁹⁴⁰

*'And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.'*¹⁹⁴¹

A major benefit flowing directly from effectual prayer is stated in Philippians: *'Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Jesus Christ.'*¹⁹⁴² James confirms another benefit: *'The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.'*¹⁹⁴³ The heart-felt, fervent prayer of the righteous, quietly and in secret, produces much indeed. Importunate demands, indignation, impatience, and a self-assured external show, on the other hand, produce nothing. The difference in end result is shown in Proverbs: *'The fear of the wicked, it shall come upon him: but the desire of the righteous shall be granted.'*¹⁹⁴⁴ This is confirmed in Psalms, *'The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth. He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him: he will also hear their cry, and will save them. The Lord preserveth all them that love him: but all the wicked will he destroy.'*¹⁹⁴⁵

Place before God

Regardless of the extent of apparent distress, matters should be placed directly before God. Hezekiah spread out the writing containing the wicked demands of Sennacherib, king of Assyria, before the Lord in His Temple, *'And Hezekiah received the letter from the hand of the messengers, and read it: and Hezekiah went up unto the house of the Lord, and spread it before the Lord. And Hezekiah prayed unto the Lord, saying, O Lord of hosts, God of Israel, that dwest between the cherubims,*¹⁹⁴⁶ *that art the God, even thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth: thou hast made heaven and earth. Incline thine ear, O Lord, and hear; open thine eyes, O Lord, and see: and hear all the words of Sennacherib, which hath sent to reproach the living God.'*¹⁹⁴⁷ The

¹⁹³⁹ James 1:5-7

¹⁹⁴⁰ I John 3:22

¹⁹⁴¹ I John 5:14,15

¹⁹⁴² Philp 4:6,7

¹⁹⁴³ James 5:16b

¹⁹⁴⁴ Prov 10:24

¹⁹⁴⁵ Psa 145:18-20

¹⁹⁴⁶ Tanakh renders the highlighted phrase more correctly: *'enthroned on the Cherubim.'*

¹⁹⁴⁷ Isa 37:14-17 (sublinear emphasis added)

decision and judgement of God was then given in the matter: *'Therefore thus saith the Lord concerning the king of Assyria, He shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there, nor come before it with shields, nor cast a bank against it. By the way that he came, by the same shall he return, and shall not come into this city, saith the Lord. For I will defend this city to save it for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake. Then the angel of the Lord went forth, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians a hundred and fourscore and five thousand: and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses.'*¹⁹⁴⁸

Answered

When prayer is answered, be thankful. Once God hears, He answers, and the thanks of the righteous is due then, even before the matter is seen played out here on earth.

As to the form or structure of prayer, rather than the actual words for constant repetition which would be as the heathen do, this was prescribed by Christ in Matthew: *'After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.'*¹⁹⁴⁹ The secrecy and intimacy of prayer is also commanded by Christ, *'But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.'*¹⁹⁵⁰

Given the weaknesses of human beings with inevitable wantings in the correct form of prayer, and in its secrecy, intimacy, and fulsomeness of content, all are made good by the Holy Spirit, the Power of God, acting on behalf of the 'elect,' confirmed in, *'Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.'*¹⁹⁵¹

Summary

In summary, the fundamental reason for unanswered prayer is lack of faith and lack of deed. Keeping the commandments, the Law, and pleasing God, opens up the line of communication, and certainty concerning the will of God, allied to the power of the Holy Spirit, ensures that the prayer of the faithful blossoms into reality here on earth as a result of absolute confidence in God. The 'elect' are comforted that in whatever straits they

¹⁹⁴⁸ Isa 37:33-36

¹⁹⁴⁹ Mat 6:9-13; or v.13a, *'from the evil one.'*

¹⁹⁵⁰ Mat 6:6

¹⁹⁵¹ Rom 8:26

may find themselves, they are always under God's protection, and that they should give thanks: *'In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.'*¹⁹⁵²

¹⁹⁵² I Thes 5:18

Chapter 42

Wilful Sin & Others

There are instances where those elevated to the 'elect' later wittingly and wilfully revert to their former self, a route ably described by Peter: *'For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.'*¹⁹⁵³

Ketcherside describes such falling away: 'A much better way to state this is to say, the advocacy of doctrines which separate from God. Such doctrines are humanly contrived systems of philosophy which overtly or covertly deny the faith....The term 'false teacher'¹⁹⁵⁴ occurs only once in the New Testament scriptures. It occurs then as a description of a certain type of character. False teachers were those who denied the [Devil]¹⁹⁵⁵ that bought them, secretly brought in damnable heresies, and caused the truth to be blasphemed.'¹⁹⁵⁶

Blasphemers are particularly insidious, for they call something holy that is not, and call that which is, unholy. As a result, they completely confuse and mislead the 'gullible.' Paul delivered Hymenæus and Alexander unto Satan for blasphemy: *'Holding faith and a good conscience: which some have put away concerning*

¹⁹⁵³ II Peter 2:20-22

¹⁹⁵⁴ Greek: didaskelos.

¹⁹⁵⁵ viz., the master of the wicked, Satan or the Devil; q.v. sup.

¹⁹⁵⁶ II Peter 2:17-19; Ketcherside, W. Carl, *The Twisted Scriptures* (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

faith have made shipwreck: Of whom is Hymenæus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme.¹⁹⁵⁷ Hymenæus is also mentioned again: 'And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenæus and Philetus; Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some.'¹⁹⁵⁸

Paul delivers a warning to the Corinthians: 'I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators: Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world.'¹⁹⁵⁹ 'Paul is saying that he did not mean that they were to sever themselves from all men of evil life indifferently, for that is impossible, living in the world amongst heathen and profane persons; but from those who, being members of the church, do belie their profession, and are spots, ulcers, and leprosy in the body, whereby they must, by this punishment, either be reduced to repentance, or be quite cut off, for the ease and cure of the whole body.'¹⁹⁶⁰ He also delivers them another, somewhat similar warning: 'But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat.'¹⁹⁶¹ The reason is given in the following chapter: 'Know we not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.'¹⁹⁶² Simply, it is not possible for a man to be a brother, a member of the 'elect,' and retain and nurture all or any of these fatal deficiencies.

'Again it must be remembered that [Paul] is here assessing a lifestyle rather than an occasional or isolated instance of sin [sic].¹⁹⁶³ It is a matter of interest that the list generally deals with those things which are inimical to a social relationship. The covetous feels an inordinate desire for what belongs to another. A railer reviles in harsh, abusive language, and thus destroys the peace and dignity of another. A drunkard makes himself obnoxious by his irrationality which destroys communion with others. An extortioner obtains by force, illegality or ingenuity the property of another.

The attitude enjoined by Jesus is summed up in the admonition to do unto others as you would have them do unto you. In the community of the saints, each must esteem others better than himself, in honour preferring one another. It is obvious that the body cannot exist if the members destroy one another for selfish ends. Such a course is not only inimical to the congregation but destructive of the divine purpose.'¹⁹⁶⁴

¹⁹⁵⁷ I Tim 1:17,18

¹⁹⁵⁸ II Tim 2:17,18

¹⁹⁵⁹ I Cor 5:9,10

¹⁹⁶⁰ (subscripted emphasis added); cf. Diodati (Italian Bible)

¹⁹⁶¹ I Cor 5:11

¹⁹⁶² I Cor 6:9,10

¹⁹⁶³ cp. unrepented wilful sin and its effects, inf.

¹⁹⁶⁴ Ketcherside, W. Carl, *The Twisted Scriptures*

The sin of incest, and its ramifications, is mentioned by Paul: *'It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife. And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you....To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. Your glorying [boast] is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?'*¹⁹⁶⁵

Most expositors here have Satan 'doing the work of God,' by destroying the flesh (*'the first death'*), and having some strange part in the saving of the breath (*'the second death'*). This is illogical, incongruous in the extreme, and a wholly incorrect conclusion to draw from the context. There is no mention in the latter of any repentance on the part of the perpetrator, or his forgiveness by God, for pummelling by the Devil unto death can import neither. Taking these two 'referrals' to Satan, and allowing for normal Greek grammatical construction, the appropriate meanings are as follows:

1. For blasphemy, the divine protection over the 'elect' is withdrawn, and the blasphemer is left unprotected from the wiles of the Devil; all this is for the purpose of punishment, repentance, and eventual reinstatement; but,
2. For incest, patently a premeditated, wilful sin on the part of the perpetrator, presumably one who was baptised for he is noted as being a member of the church, upon receipt, Satan is allowed to influence the person in question in ways leading to the destruction of the body, that is, meaning death. However, this actually refers to the 'Devil's damnation,' often referred to as the 'second death.' Given that there is no forgiveness noted in the Scriptures for unrepented or repeated wilful sin after baptism, the saving of the '*spirit*'¹⁹⁶⁶ can only refer to those who were boastful of their own self-righteous position, who tolerated the perpetrator in their midst, and who did not seek that he be taken away from amongst them. Once the perpetrator was '*delivered to Satan*' he would no longer be able to influence the '*whole lump*' of the church, and, in such a case, the '*lump*' would be a deal more likely to be preserved '*in the day of the Lord Jesus,*' that is, the Day of Judgement. Once the delivery were accomplished, the result would be the purifying described in Corinthians, '*Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened,*'¹⁹⁶⁷ and the complete annihilation of he who had committed incest, through the first death and, later, through the second, the latter in the lake of fire.

Concerning the unavailability of forgiveness for unrepented wilful sin after baptism, the Old Testament sacrificial law mirrors this in, '*And if any body sin through ignorance, then he shall bring a she goat of the first*

¹⁹⁶⁵ I Cor 5:1,2,5,6 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

¹⁹⁶⁶ Greek: pneuma, '*breath*.'

¹⁹⁶⁷ I Cor 5:7

year for a sin offering'¹⁹⁶⁸ (that is, unintentional sin), compared with, *'But the person that doeth ought presumptuously, whether he be born in the land or a stranger, the same reproacheth the Lord; and that person shall be cut off from among the people'*¹⁹⁶⁹ (that is, presumptuous, unrepented, intentional or repeated instances of wilful sin). In the New Testament there is no reversionary mechanism for those committing unrepented or repeated wilful sin after baptism, for all are given but one chance, *'For it is impossible for those who were once'*¹⁹⁷⁰ *enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Spirit, And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.'*¹⁹⁷¹ The penalty for the reversion to being under the Law, without the covering of grace, is stated in Hebrews: *'For if we sin wilfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.'*¹⁹⁷²

Paul exposes yet another wanting in a flawed congregation, in the words: *'But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain. A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject; Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself.'*¹⁹⁷³ This requires some explanation in its details, for it can be difficult to grasp all of the meaning at first sight: *'foolish questions,'* or subtle fine distinctions, and *'genealogies,'* the notion that men were better in the sight of God from being descended from the patriarchs. These matters, and the contests and angry disputations of the Jewish teachers of the time about the Mosaic Law, and the obligations of its ceremonies, were utterly vain and worthless.

The contentions and strivings over genealogies were largely pursuant to Herod's torching of the Temple archives which destroyed the Jews' ancestral records. Foolish questions and strivings over the Law, so characteristic of the Pharisees and religious rulers of the time, have no place in Judæo-Christian belief and conduct. Vanity was a strong element in such Jewish disputing, as philosophising proponents vied for the attention and admiration of their peers, while treating competing views to scorn and derision. The word *'heretick'* comes from the Greek meaning *'to choose, prefer, or to take for oneself.'*¹⁹⁷⁴ It imports the idea of choosing to believe what one wants, in spite of what God says. It also conveys the concept of erroneous additions and further revelations that have erupted from time to time down through the ages after completion of the New Testament canon. Such a person holding these aberrant views is termed *'subverted,'* from the Greek meaning *'twisted.'*¹⁹⁷⁵ By his own

¹⁹⁶⁸ Num 15:27

¹⁹⁶⁹ Num 15:30

¹⁹⁷⁰ Greek: hapax, 'once-for-all.'

¹⁹⁷¹ Heb 6:4-6

¹⁹⁷² Heb 10:26,27

¹⁹⁷³ Titus 3:9-11

¹⁹⁷⁴ Greek: hairetikos.

¹⁹⁷⁵ Greek: ektrepo.

contentions, the subverted condemns himself. Again, this is continuing and sinful subversion, as can be seen from the complete disregard of *'the first and second admonition'* given by the 'elect.'

Correction and recovery is possible, under certain circumstances: *'But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness. If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work. Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart. But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do generate strifes. And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.'*¹⁹⁷⁶ The 'elect' are to point out and expose the errors of the fallen concerning the truth, but it is God Who gives repentance.¹⁹⁷⁷ Repentance is not sorrow for sin—that is contrition—but such heartfelt sorrow that leads to repentance: *'Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing. For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death.'*¹⁹⁷⁸ God, in his infinite wisdom, grants correction and recovery for those who might be termed 'the elect, temporarily fallen, contrite, and, by the grace of God, repentant.' The rest stand condemned in their own sinful subversions.

Those in positions of service in the church,¹⁹⁷⁹ such as elders, are to police themselves, under the overarching guidance of the Holy Spirit: *'Against an elder receive not accusation, but before two or three witnesses. Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear. I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality.'*¹⁹⁸⁰ 'Accusation'¹⁹⁸¹ was the Greek word used in formal charges before a court. If found guilty, an elder must be rebuked publicly, *'before all,'* and it must be done in a proper, orderly manner, with complete impartiality.

All sin equally heinous?

An indication of the effect of recusant¹⁹⁸² sin on the part of God's chosen, the 'elect,' is seen in the incident involving Moses' sin at the waters of Meribah, where he struck the rock twice with the rod rather than

¹⁹⁷⁶ II Tim 2:16,21-26

¹⁹⁷⁷ Greek: metanoia.

¹⁹⁷⁸ II Cor 7:9,10

¹⁹⁷⁹ note the word 'service,' as in servants.

¹⁹⁸⁰ I Tim 5:19-21

¹⁹⁸¹ Greek: kategoria.

¹⁹⁸² viz., obstinate refusal.

speaking to the rock as God had commanded.¹⁹⁸³ The water still flowed out to the salvation of the thirsty Israelites, serving as an analogy or type of Christ as the 'rock'¹⁹⁸⁴ and the water of life pouring out to those in the kingdom of God, but, as punishment for disobedience and striking against the 'rock,' Moses was not permitted to lead the children of Israel into the Promised Land, nor to enter in himself. This is a dire warning to all for the Promised Land clearly stands as a type of the kingdom of God. In due course, Moses will take his place in that kingdom, but nowhere in the Bible is there found a mechanism for the forgiveness of wilful sin after baptism, unless immediately-repented, and not repeated.¹⁹⁸⁵ Repetition is deadly.

Moses appears again in Scripture over the question of sin: *'And it came to pass in those days, when Moses was grown, that he went out unto his brethren, and looked on their burdens: and he spied an Egyptian smiting an Hebrew, one of his brethren. And he looked this way and that way, and when he saw that there was no man, he slew the Egyptian, and hid him in the sand. And when he went out the second day, behold, two men of the Hebrews strove together: and he said to him that did the wrong, why smitest thou thy fellow? And he said, Who made thee a prince and a judge over us? intendest thou to kill me, as thou killedst the Egyptian? And Moses feared, and said, Surely this thing is known. Now when Pharaoh heard this thing, he sought to slay Moses, but Moses fled from the face of Pharaoh, and dwelt in the land of Midian....And the Lord said unto Moses in Midian, Go, return into Egypt: for all the men are dead that sought your life. And it came to pass by the way in the inn, that the Lord met him, and sought to kill him. Then Zipporah took a sharp stone, and cut off the foreskin of her son, and cast it at his feet, and said, Surely a bloody husband art thou to me. So he let him go: then she said, A bloody husband thou art, because of the circumcision.'*¹⁹⁸⁶

On this occasion, however, Moses' sin in killing the Egyptian was not premeditated; circumstances presented, and he reacted. His sin was spur-of-the-moment. He was presented, unexpectedly, with a situation which deeply offended his sensibilities, and while he cast around to see if there were any witnesses, he did not plan the act coldly in advance. His subsequent flight to Midian from the wrath of Pharaoh,¹⁹⁸⁷ and his forty years in exile,¹⁹⁸⁸ was God's primary judgement on his sin. Since during his probation he was not recidivist,¹⁹⁸⁹ he was

¹⁹⁸³ Num 20:7-13

¹⁹⁸⁴ Barclay, William, *The Mind of Jesus*, p.181:

'The word 'rock,' this time in Hebrew sur, is again and again applied to God in the Old Testament. 'Who is a rock, except our Lord? (Psa 18:31; II Sam 22:32). 'The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer' (Psa 18:2; II Sam 22:2)' To which could be added: 'For who is God, save the Lord, and who is a rock, save our God?' (II Sam 22:32).

¹⁹⁸⁵ q.v. inf.

¹⁹⁸⁶ Ex 2:11-15,4:19,24-26

¹⁹⁸⁷ Ex 2:15

¹⁹⁸⁸ forty being the number of probation.

¹⁹⁸⁹ viz., falling back, recurring; but consider Ex 4:24-26 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets): *'And it came to pass by the way in the inn, that the Lord met him [Moses], and sought to kill him. Then Zipporah [his wife] took a sharp stone, and cut off the foreskin of her son [Gershom], and cast it at his feet, and said, Surely a bloody husband art thou to me. So he let him go: then she said, A bloody husband thou art, because of the circumcision.'* Interestingly, Moses had not had his son circumcised according to the Law. Zipporah's action made good that wanting, so far as it could be made good. In addition, the fact that the Lord met Moses with a view to killing him, as punishment

free on its conclusion to return to Egypt and lead the children of Israel to freedom. Even then, he barely escaped with his son's life. On his return from exile, and after receiving, but before acting on his divine commission¹⁹⁹⁰—the time sequence is important here—his son¹⁹⁹¹ was almost killed by the Lord.¹⁹⁹² If nothing else, this indicates the profound seriousness of the sin of murder before God.¹⁹⁹³ The wanting of his son's circumcision prior to the events leading to the release of the captive children of Israel in Egypt, and specifically the death there of the uncovered firstborn, was conjoined with retribution for and purification of Moses' act of murder, for there was a form of blood sacrifice, but restricted to the foreskin of Moses' son.¹⁹⁹⁴

Forgivable

If we do not repent and offer recompense under the Law, for that is what we must do, and resolve not to repeat the fault, then wilful sin will be added upon wilful sin, and soon the position will be wholly adulterated, and, with it, salvation lost.

There is a discernible and very important distinction concerning wilful sin made in the Bible. While there was no formal system of sacrifice for all wilful sin, there was, and remains, the trespass offering / payment. This was in respect of certain offences against God and loss or damage to persons and property,¹⁹⁹⁵ which had to be restored, plus one fifth part.¹⁹⁹⁶

If an offender becomes convicted at heart of sin, confesses, is contrite, and offers the trespass offering or makes the trespass payment to the wronged / defrauded party (the latter being apposite in Judæo-Christian

for murder, indicates that Moses had not fully repented of it, even after forty years' probation in the land of Midian. Again, Zipporah's action came to his aid, with the circumcision of Gershom standing as substitutionary blood (there was no ritual sacrificial Law at that time, for that did not appear until the events at the mount of Horeb).

¹⁹⁹⁰ had God's desire to kill Moses' son been for the sole reason of a wanting of circumcision, then it would have been pre-factum, and illogical without support of the other wanting, q.v.

¹⁹⁹¹ either his firstborn, Gershom (the more likely since the introductory verses refer to the death of the firstborn impending in Egypt, subject to Pharaoh's conduct in releasing the Israelites or not), or his second-born son, Eliezer.

¹⁹⁹² readers of the various English translations often miss this, for the English language is syntactic, where word order is of paramount importance to meaning and the pronoun refers to its antecedent, unlike Hebrew, which, like many ancient languages, is inflective, and where pronouns, or the equivalent word suffixes, do not necessarily refer to the immediate antecedent, and can refer to subjects at some distance, i.e., twice displaced.

¹⁹⁹³ a reasonably analagous parallel is seen in the death of David's first son by Bathsheba, q.v. inf., where the sin was perpetrated by the father, but the son suffered the punishment. In this case, of course, Moses' son did not suffer death.

¹⁹⁹⁴ Ex 4:25

¹⁹⁹⁵ Lev 6:1-7

¹⁹⁹⁶ there is a parallel to be found in the tithing laws, where a redeemed tithe has to be repaid in full plus one fifth.

There are a few aspects to this which merit highlighting:

1. the tithe had to have been paid when due;
2. and it had to have been redeemed owing to poverty and the need of funds in order to live; and,
3. as soon as possible, it was to be repaid, plus the fifth part (Lev 27:31).

Incidentally, were it not paid, ab initio, but simply withheld, then it would rank as theft, and the eventual payment would be double the original tithe amount (Ex 22:4f.).

terms where there is no longer a sacrificial system since Christ was our '*once for all sacrifice*'),¹⁹⁹⁷ all of their own volition, prior to being discovered, then that sin will fall within the scope of the trespass offering / trespass payment and the sin will have guaranteed forgiveness. Sin must be renounced and restitution made. In this, there is a parallel in Matthew and the first son's response to the prodigal's return.¹⁹⁹⁸

If the sinner repents not and is caught in the sin, then the penalty is exacted, under the Law. If, however, the sin remains undiscovered by man, and the sinner remains unrepentant, and indulges in that sin and commits more sins, eventually leading to sin-addiction, then there is no availability of a trespass offering / payment, and the sins remain unforgiven.

Debt, trespass, & forgiveness

There is a common teaching among many who call themselves Christian that claims they are to offer unconditional forgiveness to all who do evil against them (and others), followed by reconciliation. Some teach that they are to allow this cycle of 'offense, forgiveness, reconciliation' to continue forever, '*unto seventy times seven*.'¹⁹⁹⁹ Is this really what Christ commanded the Judæo-Christian to do?

Sadly, to forgive sin, however heinous, under all circumstances, unconditionally, and then to reconcile with the unrepentant offender communicates a false gospel. It is not biblical. This is not what God does, nor is it what the Judæo-Christian is commanded to do. However, to be unforgiving of sins against us by others also communicates a false gospel. So what is the true believer to do?

In what is commonly termed 'The Lord's Prayer',²⁰⁰⁰ there is a passage dealing with '*debts*' and '*debtors*,' sometimes translated '*trespasses*': '*And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors*.'²⁰⁰¹ Following, there is an important injunction, '*For if we forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses*.'²⁰⁰² One interesting aspect lies in the Greek words translated '*debts*'²⁰⁰³ and '*trespasses*.'²⁰⁰⁴ '*Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors*' should read more correctly: '*Forgive us our indebtedness, as we forgive those who*

¹⁹⁹⁷ Heb 10:10

¹⁹⁹⁸ Mat 21:28-32; prodigal son parable; elder son's reaction to the return of the repentant prodigal (foolish spender).

¹⁹⁹⁹ Mat 18:22b

²⁰⁰⁰ actually a type or example given by Our Lord, for the purposes of illustration and guidance, q.v., Mat 6:9-13; Luke 11:2-4.

²⁰⁰¹ Mat 6:12

²⁰⁰² Mat 6:14,15

²⁰⁰³ Greek: *opheile*, '*indebtedness*,' '*delinquency*,' or '*transgressions*.'

²⁰⁰⁴ Greek: *paraptoma*, '*side slips*'; Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol.1, pp.220,221:

'It describes the slip which a man may make when he is off his guard, when he is not looking where he is going, when he takes his eye off the goal. Sin is the failure in concentration, the failure in self-control through which a man is swept or slips into sin.' These are not premeditated.

transgress against [are 'indebted to] us,' and where the Greek translated '*trespasses*'²⁰⁰⁵ refers to '*side slips*,' '*lapses*,' and the like, unintentional infractions of the Law committed either through ignorance, weakness, forgetfulness, accident, inadvertence, error, oversight, or indulgence.²⁰⁰⁶

In part,²⁰⁰⁷ this can be taken as a reference to the Law dealing with the Sabbath-year release from debt. Our indebtedness to God is the sum of our sins committed before baptism, plus '*slips*' or '*lapses*' thereafter.²⁰⁰⁸ However, post-baptismal slips will not be forgiven us unless we also forgive others, not only in terms of the provision of the Law in relation to money debts, but also in relation to the much wider purview of Judæo-Christian forgiveness.²⁰⁰⁹

The Greek word translated '*forgive*,'²⁰¹⁰ in the Lord's Prayer and extensively throughout the gospels,²⁰¹¹ means to remit sin, acquit, let go, or remove guilt or obligation of punishment, all deriving from the figure of a prisoner being released from prison or a debtor being released from a debt. This forgiveness may be complete, or it may constitute a suspension of punishment pending reform, as seen, for example, in the God-granted Jews' probationary period of forty years following upon the crucifixion.²⁰¹²

Unfortunately, the English word 'forgiveness,' as commonly used nowadays, offers the wrong meaning, in part, for it often imports the sense of ignoring sin, overlooking sin, or having good feelings about the person who sins. This is not forgiveness but compromising tolerance and it has made many 'professing Christians' cowards and turncoats to the cause of Christ's banner against evil, which Paul pictures unambiguously: '*And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.*'²⁰¹³ They think that when they ignore sin, or overlook it, they are being kind and loving, when in reality they are unloving. To tolerate or ignore sin is not forgiveness. Worse, it allows a professing brother or sister in Christ, if the party in default, to continue in sin, with all the destructive elements of that pursuit, including introducing leaven to the church, which begins to grow and weaken the resolve of all. That is not to say there isn't a sense of truth here, as Christian love does '*cover a multitude of sins*,' in the sense that many sins are simply minor issues of human weakness—side-slips, or lapses, in other words—and those can be '*covered*,' in the expression of Judæo-Christian love: '*Hatred stirreth up strifes: but love covereth sins.*'²⁰¹⁴ '*He that covereth a transgression seeketh love; but he that*

²⁰⁰⁵ Greek: paraptoma.

²⁰⁰⁶ q.v. sup.

²⁰⁰⁷ de minimus in the grand scheme of things.

²⁰⁰⁸ dealt with in much greater detail sup., as is the question of the '*unforgiveable sin*.'

²⁰⁰⁹ q.v. sup.; also Prov 25:21; Mat 5:44-48; Rom 12:20; James 2:14-16; Rom 12:19b, '*Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord*,' a reference to Isa 63:4.

²⁰¹⁰ Greek: aphiamei.

²⁰¹¹ used about fifty times in all, as opposed to Greek: charizomai, used only seven times by Paul in the epistles, which means '*to grant pardon as a favour*.'

²⁰¹² q.v. sup. and Luke 23:44, '*Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do*.'

²⁰¹³ Eph 5:11; Greek: elegcho, '*admonish*,' '*rebuke*,' '*confute*'; N.I.V. '*expose*.'

²⁰¹⁴ Prov 10:12; K.J.V.'s '*all*' does not appear in the Hebrew; v.12 doesn't tell how love does this. It doesn't explain the basis on which love covers sins or the conditions, but it does set forth the ministry of love, i.e., a desire to conceal sins,

repeateth a matter separateth friends.’²⁰¹⁵ There is also the question of prudence: ‘A fool’s wrath is presently known: but a prudent man covereth shame.’²⁰¹⁶ The covering, in love for mankind, is outgoing and ongoing: ‘Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up. Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Charity never faileth. And now abideth faith, hope, and charity, these three: but the greatest of these is charity.’²⁰¹⁷ All make mistakes and errors. All have lapses and slips. All need forgiveness in outgoing, brotherly love.²⁰¹⁸ All must confess sins, be contrite, repent, and resolve not to repeat the infraction in order to gain God’s forgiveness, for ‘If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.’²⁰¹⁹

Confession precedes forgiveness.²⁰²⁰ Without genuine confession by the guilty party / parties for serious sins, forgiveness is beyond the remit of the Judæo-Christian. Only God can forgive such sins,²⁰²¹ because those types of infraction of God’s Law are matters for the lawgivers, the Father and the Son, to decide and adjudicate upon, not the individual Judæo-Christian, and are crucially dependent upon confession, repentance, and divine forgiveness through the grace of God—where the ability to extend forgiveness is restricted to the persons of the Father and the Son,²⁰²² a power which the Son specifically retained whilst incarnate on earth²⁰²³—for which there should always be evident much love of God and extreme gratitude on the part of the sinner, bringing forth much fruit in a new, Holy Spirit-filled life.²⁰²⁴ If the Judæo-Christian ever could forgive with absolute authority

as far as one is righteously able to do so. Covering of sin goes back to the literal act of two of the sons of Noah who covered the nakedness of their drunken father, in contrast to the act of Ham, who repeated the sin in the sense that he shared with his brothers the physical condition of his father, cf. Gen 9:20f.

²⁰¹⁵ Prov 17:9

²⁰¹⁶ Prov 12:16

²⁰¹⁷ I Cor 13:4-8a,13; K.J.V. ‘charity,’ from Greek: agape, means ‘brotherly love.’

²⁰¹⁸ Adams, Jay E., *From Forgiven to Forgiving: Learning to Forgive One Another God’s Way*, p.82:

‘[W]hen you forgive another, you declare that you are cancelling his debt, removing his guilt, and promising that you will never bring up his guilt, and promising that you will never again bring up his offenses to use against him.’

²⁰¹⁹ I John 1:9; Mark 11:25,26, ‘And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have aught against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses.’ ‘Forgive,’ Greek: aphiemi, means ‘remit’; ‘trespasses,’ Greek: paraptoma, means ‘side-slips.’

²⁰²⁰ I John 1:19

²⁰²¹ Dan 9:9, ‘To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgiveness, though we have rebelled against him.’

²⁰²² Mat 9:6a, ‘But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins,’ also cf. Mark 2:10, and not just the Father, as the scribes had it, q.v. Mark 2:6,7

²⁰²³ Luke 5:21-26 (subscripted emphasis added), ‘And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, Who is this which speaketh blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, but God alone? But when Jesus perceived their thoughts, he answering said unto them, What reason ye in your hearts? Whether is easier, to say: Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Rise up and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power upon earth to forgive sins (he said unto the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy couch, and go into thine house. And immediately he rose up before them, and took up that whereon he lay, and departed to his own house, glorifying God. And they were all amazed, and they glorified God, and were filled with fear, saying, We have seen strange things today.’

²⁰²⁴ Luke 7:36-50 (sublinear emphasis added), ‘And one of the Pharisees desired him that he would eat with him. And he went into the Pharisee’s house, and sat down to meat. And, behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she

and in 'splendid' isolation, then, amongst other things, it would overturn the doctrine of binding and loosing,²⁰²⁵ which, sadly, is something many seek to do.

No resentment, no grudge, no judgement

The Judæo-Christian cannot harbour resentment or grudges. There is no space for the common saying: 'carrying a grudge to the grave.'²⁰²⁶ In his letter to the Colossians,²⁰²⁷ Paul states that the subjects of 'quarrels'²⁰²⁸ are to be forgiven²⁰²⁹ by pardon, granted as a favour to the erring party or parties. Writing to the church at Ephesus, he says, '*Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.*'²⁰³⁰

There is no room in Judæo-Christianity for bitterness, malice, or holding grudges. If wronged, Judæo-Christians are not to take action or seek recourse through civil courts. God is the judge, and He will repay. The Judæo-Christian must ask for God's judgement in the matter, for '*it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.*'²⁰³¹ Rather, Judæo-Christians have another Christ-commanded imperative to comply with con-

knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment. And stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment. Now when the Pharisee which had bidden him saw it, he spake within himself, saying, This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him: for she is a sinner. And Jesus answering said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, Master, say on. There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty. And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most? Simon answered and said, I suppose that he, to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him, thou hast rightly judged. And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment. Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little. And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven. And they that sat at meat with him began to say within themselves, Who is this that forgiveth sins also? And he said to the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace.'

Acts 26:18, '*To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.*'

²⁰²⁵ q.v. sup.

²⁰²⁶ neither is there place in Judæo-Christianity for what is sometimes termed 'the doctrine of convenience,' where help and assistance to one's fellow man in need is held conditional upon it being 'convenient' for it to be done. Wherever is heard the rebuttal "Sorry, but it isn't convenient," there will not be found Jesus Christ, neither can He be.

²⁰²⁷ Judæo-Christian church at Colossus.

²⁰²⁸ Col 3:13, '*Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye,*' where Greek: momphe, translated 'quarrel' in the K.J.V., means 'blame' or 'fault.'

²⁰²⁹ Greek; charizomai, 'grant, as a favour,' or 'pardon.'

²⁰³⁰ Eph 4:31,32

²⁰³¹ Rom 12:19; Lev 19 :18, '*Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I am the Lord.*'

cerning those who wrong them: *'But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you.'*²⁰³²

The Judæo-Christian is not set up to be the judge of the sinner; for presumptive judgement can inhibit one's forgiveness and salvation. Judgement is solely God's prerogative: *'Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven,'*²⁰³³ *'And he said unto him, thou hast rightly judged,*²⁰³⁴ where Greek: krino, 'separate,' or 'discern' is translated 'judge' in the K.J.V.²⁰³⁵

Judæo-Christian conduct and interaction with sinners, in the mission of spreading the gospel, is given in Christ's commandment to the seventy: *'After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come. Therefore said he unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest. Go your ways: behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves. Carry neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes: and salute no man by the way. And into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, Peace be to this house. And if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it: if not, it shall turn to you again. And in the same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they give: for the labourer is worthy of his hire. Go not from house to house. And into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you: And heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you. But into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you not, go your ways out into the streets of the same, and say, Even the very dust of your city, which cleaveth on us, we do wipe off against you: notwithstanding be ye sure of this, that the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you. But I say unto you, that it shall be more tolerable in that day for Sodom, than for that city.'*²⁰³⁶ This is not judgement, but a warning. Judæo-Christians are to deal with unbelievers in wisdom and with gentleness, always seeking their good.

²⁰³² Mat 5:44; Luke 6:27,30,31, *'But I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you. Give to every man that asketh of thee: and of him that taketh away thy goods ask them not again. And as you would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise';* Rom 12:19-21, *'Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath; for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him: If he thirst, give him to drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.'* The results may not be edifying, however, since 'No good deed goes unpunished.'

Wikipedia: 'The phrase 'No good deed goes unpunished' is a sardonic commentary on the frequency with which acts of kindness backfire on those who offer them. In other words, because life is inherently unfair, those who help others are doomed to suffer as a result of their being helpful.' God's solution to such ingratitude is found more pointedly in Prov 25:21,22, *'If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink: For thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head, and the Lord shall reward thee.'*

²⁰³³ Luke 6:37

²⁰³⁴ Luke 7:43b (sublinear emphasis added)

²⁰³⁵ John 7:24, K.J.V. translation: *'Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment,'* has Greek: krino translated poorly as 'judge' (where it should read 'discern') but paradoxically contains the translation 'judgment,' from Greek: krisis, meaning 'discernment.'

²⁰³⁶ Luke 10:1-12

Numerical limits?

Against that, some, seeking to set a numerical limit to forgiveness, cite Matthew chapter eighteen,²⁰³⁷ where Christ is questioned by Peter on the subject of the forgiveness of sin: *'Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shalt my brother sin against me, and I forgive him. Till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but Until seventy times seven,'*²⁰³⁸ where the phrase 'seventy times seven' is a colloquial device indicating very large numbers of forgiving and not merely restricted to four hundred and ninety. The Greek word translated 'forgive' again means 'remit.'²⁰³⁹ These two verses are followed immediately by the parable of the servants in debt, which is summed, at the last, by Christ, comparing the forgiving King and the unforgiving servant: *'Then his lord, after he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desirest me: Shouldst thou not also have had compassion on thy fellowservant, even as I had pity on thee? And his lord was wroth, and delivered him up to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him. So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.'*²⁰⁴⁰

At first pass, this might seem to cover sins of all types²⁰⁴¹ and thus bolster the concept of universal forgiveness of all sin that many Christians see as entirely in accord with Christ's commandments and parables. However, there are wantings in that view, firstly owing to the lack of the earlier words of Christ to which Peter was obviously responding, and, secondly, because the Greek words Peter used for 'sin' mean 'to miss the mark' and so not share the prize,²⁰⁴² and Christ, in clarification, when referring to same, used the Greek word translated 'trespasses' in the concluding verse of the chapter, meaning 'side slips,' 'lapses,' or 'deviations.'²⁰⁴³ In other words, He was not referring to all types of sin, but to slips and lapses, namely, unintentional sins, more often of omission than commission, arising through weakness, forgetfulness, ignorance, error, oversight, accident, inadvertence, or indulgence.²⁰⁴⁴ These must be distinguished from the much more serious premeditated wilful sin, namely, sin coldly conceived and undertaken in the full knowledge of the penalty under God's Law.²⁰⁴⁵

Remember the sins the Judæo-Christian has been forgiven by God. The Judæo-Christian must forgive sins of weakness, etc., and must be merciful, in order to receive forgiveness from God of personal sins: *'But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind to the unthankful and the evil. Be ye therefore merciful, as*

²⁰³⁷ Mat 18:21-35

²⁰³⁸ Mat 18:21,22

²⁰³⁹ Greek: aphiemi.

²⁰⁴⁰ Mat 18:32-35

²⁰⁴¹ save for the unpardonable / unforgivable sin, q.v.sup.

²⁰⁴² Greek: hamartano, q.v. inf.

²⁰⁴³ Greek: paraptoma.

²⁰⁴⁴ e.g., the last being a sin of commission.

²⁰⁴⁵ q.v. sup.

*your Father is also merciful....Forgive, and ye shall be forgiven.*²⁰⁴⁶ There is also the opportunity of a proactive element in the process of forgiveness where the offended party can initiate possible forgiveness of many sins, *'Take heed to yourselves; If thy brother trespass²⁰⁴⁷ against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him. And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him.'*²⁰⁴⁸ This is not six repetitions of the same sin in one day, however, for that could not elicit forgiveness owing to the obvious lack of genuine repentance and conviction not to repeat the sin. The entire is predicated upon genuine confession and repentance on the part of the sinning party.

Summary

No Judæo-Christian has the authority or the right to forgive unconditionally all and every kind of sin in all and every possible circumstance. As has been seen, there are a number of prescriptions on forgiveness for several types of sin, and an effective proscription on others. The notion of Christian unconditional love covering all and every taxonomy of sin, including unrepented sin, is nothing less than a pernicious misrepresentation and myth. If all sin were so treatable, then universalism, another pernicious myth, would become a reality, and there would be no need of a final judgement and the lake of fire, for, at the last, all would be forgiven everything and all would be saved and granted immortality in the kingdom of God.

²⁰⁴⁶ Luke 6:35-37a

²⁰⁴⁷ Greek: hamartano, 'to err,' 'miss the mark,' or 'be mistaken,' incorporating the Greek root word meros, importing the idea of untypical, outlier sin, thus not something of an habitual nature. Again, this is in relation to sideslips and errors, not premeditated sin.

²⁰⁴⁸ Luke 17:3,4, where 'seven' is taken as an indication of much sin in a day.

Chapter 43

Original Sin

'Original sin' is usually defined as: 'The sin which all the descendants of Adam inherit from their first progenitor.'²⁰⁴⁹ But there is an error here, surely, for it is not the sin that is inherited, but the punishment, death, that is inherited: '*For the wages of sin is death.*'²⁰⁵⁰ 'Death is the curse of sin. Natural death came into the world by sin.'²⁰⁵¹ If then Christ has taken away our guilt; has borne our sins, has made an atonement for iniquity; has procured for us a pardon from God, and love, and blessing, and eternal life; and this by His own obedience unto death: then the words are fulfilled which say that Christ is the Destroyer of Death by His death; by that death from which indeed He rose; by that death wherein and whereby He bore and took away the sin of the world.'²⁰⁵²

Paul says, '*Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin: and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned....For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.*'²⁰⁵³ For Paul, the first Adam's fall, with its dire consequences, can only be remedied by Jesus Christ, the second Adam.

The Roman church, through Augustine, had 'original sin' in this wise: 'He [Adam], exiled after sin, bound his offspring also, which by sinning he had corrupted, as it were in the root, under the penalty of death and

²⁰⁴⁹ *Encyclopedia Americana*, article 'Original Sin.'

²⁰⁵⁰ Rom 6:23

²⁰⁵¹ to unreconstructed and incorrigible man, natural death is the vestibule of the second death, which is death eternal.

²⁰⁵² Vaughan, C. J., *Christ the Light of the World*, pp.218,219 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets); and finally, at the end of measured time, the last enemy, death, will be destroyed (or abolished).

²⁰⁵³ Rom 5:12,17

condemnation, so that all progeny born of himself and his wife....should draw to itself original sin, and thence be drawn through diverse errors and pains to that last and endless torture with the angels, who deserted and corrupted [others], and with those who inherit and share in their portion.' 'Adam was the head of mankind, and he being guilty, we are guilty, as the children of a traitor have their blood stained.'²⁰⁵⁴

Aquinas came to the fore in the thirteenth-century, and described 'original sin' as the 'privation of original justice,' with the understanding that by original justice was that state in which Adam was created and lived prior to the fall. The Roman Catholic doctrine of original sin is thus: 'That Adam lost original justice, not only for himself, but also for us; that he poured sin, which is the death of the soul, into the whole human race, and that this sin comes, not by imitation of Adam's transgression, but by propagation from him.'²⁰⁵⁵ Original sin is seen as sin contracted without consent, with punishment being the deprivation of the vision of God, in contradistinction to actual sin, the punishment for which is the torture of the 'immortal soul'²⁰⁵⁶ in the torments of everlasting hell.

The word 'propagation' means 'by natural generation or reproduction,' and therein lies the fundamental flaw in the Romanist view. Original sin by reproduction means that everyone is born, through reproduction, immediately a sinner, before any sin is actually committed by that new-born person.²⁰⁵⁷ The Roman view has given rise for the weird and illogical need for the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary, to free her from the dominion of sin, in order to be, according to the Roman church's claim, the Mother of God.²⁰⁵⁸ The Protestant churches maintain that Jesus alone was free from original sin. In both Roman Catholic and Protestant views, certain liberal views have come into play in more recent times, but these are of no consequence here.

Rome's infant baptismal rites are propelled in large measure by the nature of that church's belief in original sin. A child of but a few days must be baptised with haste if in danger of dying, for, in that belief, to die without infant baptism condemns the child to an existence in Limbo, denying it a place in heaven. It is this concept of sin ab initio, before any personal sin is committed, and the correlation between original sin and spiritual retribution in the hereafter unless avoiding action be taken for the child, that identifies the particular belief in Romanism. Pope Innocent III stated: 'We say that distinction must be made, that sin is twofold: namely, original and actual: original, which is contracted without consent; and actual which is committed with consent.... The punishment of original sin is deprivation of the vision of God, but the punishment of actual sin is the torments of everlasting hell.'²⁰⁵⁹

²⁰⁵⁴ Augustine, *Enchirid.* ch.10 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

²⁰⁵⁵ Aquinas, Thomas.

²⁰⁵⁶ man does not possess an immortal soul, q.v. inf.

²⁰⁵⁷ Traducianism: the doctrine that the soul of the child with its attribute of original sin derives from its parents at the moment of conception; this is very different from being born with a predilection to sin at some later point, of course.

²⁰⁵⁸ Mary was the mother of Jesus, and is never described as the 'mother of God' in the Bible; nowhere is she mentioned in the Bible as being 'without sin.'

²⁰⁵⁹ Innocent III, in 1201AD.

The degree of Romanist confusion lies exposed: 'Limbo [is the place where] such souls [sic] [as] were friends of God, but, because the Redemption had not yet taken place, they were still suffering the effects of Original Sin. Heaven not being open to them [sic], they were detained in Limbo as not deserving the torments of hell, since they were not guilty of personal sin [sic]; but they had to experience a temporary loss of God....This Limbo is sometimes called the 'Limbo of the Fathers,' that is, the Fathers of the Jewish people, men like Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who were detained there. This is to distinguish it from the Limbo of children, the place where children go who die without baptism.'²⁰⁶⁰

If the Romish doctrine of original sin be correct, then surely Jesus, born of a woman, would have had original sin or be tainted with it, and, as a result, be utterly unable to die, sinless, for the sins of the world. As noted, Rome, trying to avoid this rather obvious difficulty, postulates that His mother, Mary, was born without sin. Besides being complete nonsense, this also fails to avoid the fundamental problem, for Mary, had she had the much-acclaimed 'Immaculate Conception,' would have been tainted by sin, regardless.

Judaism, for its part, has this: '[At the time of Christ], every Gentile child, so soon as born, was to be regarded as unclean by religiously observant Jews.'²⁰⁶¹

This might lead to the conclusion that Judaism harbours some belief in original sin, defined as ab initio sin, before the individual actually sins, but Epstein fleshes out the Jewish view: 'Judaism further denies the existence of original sin, needing a superhuman counterweight, and allows only the free choice to sin, an inevitable concomitant of free will. True, the idea that the sin of Adam had brought death on all mankind is not unknown in Jewish teaching, but the reference is invariably to physical death, and is not to be confused with the spiritual death from which in Christian doctrine none can be saved except through faith in the risen Saviour. Man can therefore achieve his own redemption by penitence, being assured that God Himself is ever-ready in His abundance of loving kindness to receive the penitent sinner and purge him of all iniquity.

Persistence in sin, however, provokes divine judgement and retribution. Obedience, on the other hand, or return to God after offending, carries with it divine favour and reward.'²⁰⁶²

*'Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me,'*²⁰⁶³ has been adduced many times to bolster the notion of original sin before the actual committing of any sin by the individual. The Tanakh translates this verse, *'Indeed I was born with iniquity; with sin my mother conceived me.'*²⁰⁶⁴ This is even more

²⁰⁶⁰ *The Catholic People's Encyclopedia*, Vol. 2, pp.627,628 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

²⁰⁶¹ Edersheim, Alfred, *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, p.62 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

²⁰⁶² Epstein, Isidore, *Judaism*, p.142

²⁰⁶³ Psa 51:5

²⁰⁶⁴ as Psa 51:7

pointed, as the phrase used is '*born with iniquity*.'²⁰⁶⁵ Yet, surprisingly, Judaism does not import the idea of original 'pre-sin' sin.

The problem with the K.J.V. and the Tanakh renditions is that they lose the true intent of the Hebrew translated respectively as '*shapen*' and '*born*.'²⁰⁶⁶ More correctly, it means '*to whirl,*' '*twist,*' or '*writhe*' in pain, especially used of parturient women. In other words: to travail. When David stated that, '*I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me,*' he was simply stating that as his mother had travailed during labour, and that he was of the seed of Adam, he was condemned by the sin in the garden of Eden to die as a mortal.²⁰⁶⁷ David would also sin personally, and during his life did so, with some of these sins recorded in Scripture. He had a human nature, all too easily perverted by Satan to the way of sin. David did not claim sin for himself before he had sinned. Such a contention is ludicrous, especially in light of the emendation and explanation above. Haley comments²⁰⁶⁸ by noting that: 'The...text is simply an Oriental hyperbolical way of saying that [David] had begun to sin at the earliest practicable period.'²⁰⁶⁹

Again, some cite a tract in Psalms as prop to original 'pre-sinning' sin, but the very idea is denied by the text: '*The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies*.'²⁰⁷⁰ The Tanakh has it better, '*The wicked are defiant from birth; the liars go astray from the womb*.'²⁰⁷¹ The meaning is clearly that of personal sin after birth, not of 'pre-sin' sin. '*For the wages of sin is death*,'²⁰⁷² but in the personal context, it has to be one's own sin. Adam's fall brought the overarching penalty, death, but personal sin is necessary to bring down that penalty upon one's own head.

Another text, often wilfully misquoted, is: '*Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin: and so death passed upon all men, in whom all have sinned*.'²⁰⁷³ The final phrase is ascribed the forced and unscriptural meaning of referring to Adam, whereas the correct and received translation patently places the sin on the head of the individual sinner: '*and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned*.'²⁰⁷⁴ Green's Literal Translation has: '*so also death passed to all men, inasmuch as all sinned*.'²⁰⁷⁵ The Greek does not mean '*in whom*.' It imports a root meaning of '*upon*,'²⁰⁷⁶ giving, '*so also death passed upon all men, upon all that sinned*.'²⁰⁷⁷ It was death that passed upon all men, as the penalty of sin; not Adam's original sin.

²⁰⁶⁵ (sublinear emphasis added)

²⁰⁶⁶ Hebrew: chiyl.

²⁰⁶⁷ the only person not to have their mother travail was Jesus Christ.

²⁰⁶⁸ on Psa 51:5

²⁰⁶⁹ Haley, John W., *Alleged Discrepancies of the Bible*, p.161 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

²⁰⁷⁰ Psa 58:3

²⁰⁷¹ as Psa 58:4

²⁰⁷² Rom 6:23

²⁰⁷³ Rom 5:12b (sublinear emphasis added)

²⁰⁷⁴ Rom 5:12c (sublinear emphasis added)

²⁰⁷⁵ Rom 5:12b (sub-linear emphasis added)

²⁰⁷⁶ Greek: epi.

²⁰⁷⁷ Rom 5:12b (corrected translation; sublinear emphasis added)

While at least touching the Judæo-Christian doctrine on physical death passing on all mankind as a result of Adam's sin, this is very different to the Judæo-Christian doctrine on wilful sin after baptism,²⁰⁷⁸ the nature of the freedom allowed man in sinning, and the modus of salvation through redemption by our Lord and Saviour. While man has freedom of choice as a free moral agent, this is an awkward term and concept, and a condition which is heavily prescribed, as the only 'freedom' available under this head is that of rejecting God, *'For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Spirit, And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame,'*²⁰⁷⁹ and, of course, man in this condition is immediately bond-slave²⁰⁸⁰ to sin and Satan,²⁰⁸¹ thus denying any freedom whatsoever. Of those called, not all respond: *'many are called, but few are chosen.'*²⁰⁸² Man must be called, for, *'No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him.'*²⁰⁸³ Man does not come of his own volition and freewill; he is not and cannot be his own prime mover. He cannot choose to be righteous, for it is a gift of God, given to whomsoever God chooses. In all cases, however, the end is certain, known from *'before the foundation of the world,'*²⁰⁸⁴ for God is omniscient, knowing the end from the beginning. And God knows His own.

Despite such overwhelming evidence to the contrary, the commentator Austin wrote: 'All of us sinned in Adam, because we were part of Adam.' The moral objection to such a statement is usually posed in the form of a straightforward question: 'If when Adam fell, all mankind fell with him, why then, when one angel, Lucifer,²⁰⁸⁵ fell into sin, did not all fall?' No convincing response has ever been provided by the advocates of original, 'pre-sinning' sin to this simple question.

Jeremiah and Ezekiel preached the importance of individual responsibility, countering the then popular belief that sin is inherited. Apparently, this notion was prevalent despite that fact that Deuteronomy clearly says, *'The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, neither shall the children be put to death for the fathers: every man shall be put to death for his own sin,'*²⁰⁸⁶ and that the Law's execution is seen in, *'But the children of the murderers he slew not: according unto that which is written in the book of the law of Moses.'*²⁰⁸⁷

The whole matter is summed in Ezekiel: *'But if a man be just, and do that which is lawful and right.... [who] Hath walked in my statutes, and hath kept my judgments, to deal truly; he is just, he is surely to live, saith*

²⁰⁷⁸ q.v. sup.

²⁰⁷⁹ Heb 6:4-6

²⁰⁸⁰ Greek: doulos.

²⁰⁸¹ John 8:34b

²⁰⁸² Mat 22:14

²⁰⁸³ John 6:44a

²⁰⁸⁴ John 17:24c; Eph 1:4a; I Peter 1:20a

²⁰⁸⁵ actually a cherub, before his fall into sin.

²⁰⁸⁶ Deut 24:16

²⁰⁸⁷ II Kings 14:6a

*the Lord God. If he beget a son that is a robber, a shedder of blood....and that doeth not any of these duties.... he shall surely die; his blood shall be upon him. Now, lo, if he beget a son, that seeth all his father's sins which he hath done, and considereth, and doeth not such like....he shall not die for the iniquity of his father, he shall surely live. As for his father, because he cruelly oppressed, spoiled his brother by violence, and did that which is not good among his people, lo, even he shall die in his iniquity. Yet say ye, Why? doth not the son bear the iniquity of the father? When the son hath done that which is lawful and right, and hath kept all my statutes, and hath done them, he shall surely live. The soul [human being] that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.'*²⁰⁸⁸

Judaeo-Christianity has what Aquinas denied: that sin is committed by the individual by imitation, or replication of Adam's transgression, and is not inherited through a series of reproductions or natural generations extending all the way back to Adam. Sin is only found in anyone when the first sin is committed by that person. It is not inherited or imputed either before or at the time of our human birth from Adam through our forebears. Sin is by imitation; not imputation.

A most interesting and enlightening eighth-century description of Judæo-Christian belief and practice has come down through the ages, through translations and differing routes. In part, it reads: 'And when a child has been born to one of them, they give thanks to God, and if, furthermore, it happen to die in childhood, they give thanks to God the more, as for one who has passed through the world without sins.'²⁰⁸⁹ Paul expresses a similar sentiment, '*(For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;)*,'²⁰⁹⁰

Original sin, as a doctrine, which involves all having 'sin from birth' inherited from Adam, or from a father, or a long-forgotten forefather, is utterly alien to Judaeo-Christianity. Man's inheritance from Adam's fall is death—for all die—not 'pre-sin original sin.'

²⁰⁸⁸ Ezek 18:5,9-11,13,14,17-20 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

²⁰⁸⁹ *Apology of Aristides of Athens.*

²⁰⁹⁰ Rom 9:11 (sublinear emphasis added)

Chapter 44

Primal Lie

Many self-professing Christians are no more than deluded followers of one other than Christ. Given that most Christians are only nominally so, Satan, aided by the forces of evil, has had and will have no difficulty whatsoever in the wholesale adoption and conversion of this pliable, antinomian mass to his own purposes.

The peoples of the world are soon to be given a choice. Either they can worship God, or Satan. There are no half measures, despite what some who wrestle with the truth may claim. That there will be a choice is clear from Scripture, but should the personal election be for God, then the unsavoury result will be persecution, torture, loss of property, inability to trade, unemployment,²⁰⁹¹ travel and access restrictions or denial, exile, starvation, and, for many, martyrdom.

Satan has deceived the whole world, *'And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.'*²⁰⁹² This same evil being blinds mankind to the truth, *'In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.'*²⁰⁹³ Again, the world is in thrall of Satan, *'And we know that we are of God, and the whole*

²⁰⁹¹ Barclay, William, *The Plain Man's Guide to Ethics*, p.178:

'One of the problems which confront the Christian at work is precisely the fact that, if he did work as hard, as conscientiously, and as fast as he could, he would almost certainly find that he had caused far more trouble than anything else. Restriction of work is far more common than encouragement of work, and there is here a problem for a Christian which is not easy to solve.'

²⁰⁹² Rev 12:9

²⁰⁹³ II Cor 4:4

*world lieth in wickedness.*²⁰⁹⁴ A spiritual veil has been drawn over mankind, which can only be removed by the true Messiah, *'And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations.'*²⁰⁹⁵

The culmination of this veil will occur with the appearance of the Antichrist.²⁰⁹⁶ *'Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity²⁰⁹⁷ doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way.'*²⁰⁹⁸ *And then shall that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believe not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.'²⁰⁹⁹*

Immortal soul

Central to this delusion, adoption, and conversation is the doctrine of the immortal soul: you shall never die: *'Ye shall be as gods!'*²¹⁰⁰ This is the lie Satan told Adam and Eve, perpetuated in ancient and contemporary religious teaching that the wicked are to suffer eternal punishment in the fires of hell or that dead heroes become gods, all contrary to biblical teaching. The false promise that all are immortal, and possess, within, an immortal soul, or essence, or divine spark, or whatever, is something that has permeated all major world

²⁰⁹⁴ I John 5:19

²⁰⁹⁵ Isa 25:7

²⁰⁹⁶ and the False Prophet.

²⁰⁹⁷ Antichrist is being restrained in part by the archangel Michael, cp. II Thes 2:6-8. The 'mystery of iniquity,' K.J.V. v.7, is translated in the N.I.V. as 'the secret power of lawlessness,' and is at work already.

²⁰⁹⁸ a quite woeful translation in the K.J.V. of root Greek: ginomei and mesos, much better rendered (with added comment and clarification in square brackets): 'until he [the Antichrist] arise [or 'appear in history'] in your midst.'

²⁰⁹⁹ II Thes 2:1-12 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets; sublinear emphasis added); *'And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume [Greek: analisko, meaning 'to expend,' 'use up,' or 'destroy'] with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy [Greek: katargeo, meaning 'render inactive,' or 'inoperable,' as well as 'do away with' or 'put an end to'] with the brightness of his coming: Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.'*

²¹⁰⁰ Gen 3:5c

religions, and is at once pagan and founded on the great deception that occurred in the garden of Eden. The profound lack of comprehension of this fundamental deviation from the truth has so thoroughly affected the entire behaviour and outlook of mankind that it has not only become ingrained in religious teachings throughout the entire world, but in what might be termed pseudo-religious ones as well.

Religious symbolism often exhibits the same hidden sentiment of immortality: 'Although less frequently used in modern times, the peacock was a common Christian symbol of immortality, resurrection, and the [immortal] soul through most of the past one thousand years. Its association with immortality comes from a number of different symbolic and mythical threads. The simplest is that every year the peacock sheds its splendid tail-feathers and then regrows them (the peacock is by no means unique in renewing its plumage, but few birds have such an obvious change). The bird is thus associated with perpetual renewal, and therefore immortality.

There is also a Roman association between the peacock and Juno, the immortal Lady of the Heavens; the Romans felt that the peacock's tail was starry, and because of this and the bird's ostentatious beauty, they placed it in Juno's heavenly realm. Medieval lore also held that the flesh of the peacock would not decay—that the bird was incorruptible, just as certain saints are said to have been. This miraculous supposed preservation was another sign of its immortality. A final linkage is the striking resemblance of the bird's erect tail to any number of long-standing solar symbols. The spread feathers very closely represent a circle of sun rays, and the sun is one of the oldest symbols of immortality and resurrection, dying every night only to be reborn, whole, the next morning. With so many different symbolic attributions to immortality, the peacock is a powerful signifier of the immortal soul [sic] and the resurrection of the body at the end of time.'²¹⁰¹

The immortal soul, in its pagan drapes, can be seen in the writings of Cicero,²¹⁰² in a tract where Scipio Africanus has a dream in which he encounters his deceased father in heaven, and is told the secrets of the afterlife: 'Do, indeed, strive and see that it is not you, but your body, that is mortal; for you are not the man that your human form reveals; but the soul of each man in his real self, not the human figure which the eye can see. Know, therefore, that you are a god, if indeed it is a god that has life, sensation, memory, and presides just as the sovereign God rules the universe; and just as the eternal God moves the universe which is in part perishable, so an eternal soul moves the frail body.'²¹⁰³

The same fundamental concept is found in Hellenistic dualism, where salvation is seen as an escape of the inner soul from its temporary imprisonment in the body and the physical world. This has permeated through many religions, even appearing in the beliefs of the Essenes: 'For their doctrine is this: that bodies are corruptible, and that the matter they are made of is not permanent; but that the souls are immortal, and continue forever; and that they come out of the most subtle air, and are united to their bodies as in prisons, into which

²¹⁰¹ Kenner, T. A., *Symbols and their Hidden Meanings*, pp.134,135 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

²¹⁰² 1st-century BC.

²¹⁰³ Cicero, Marcus Tullius.

they are drawn by a certain natural enticement; but that when they are set free from the bonds of the flesh, they then, as released from a long bondage, rejoice and mount upwards. And this is like the opinion of the Greeks.'

2104

Many professing Christians hold an identical or almost identical belief. In addition, there is the conception of a literal place of eternal punishment called Hell, where Satan and his demons punish sinners and wrongdoers for all eternity. Many are the refinements and variations on this, of course, such as special dispensations for innocent but un-baptised children, as in the Roman Catholic place of Limbo,²¹⁰⁵ and others for those who gave heartily during their life on earth to whichever church organisation they belonged. And, of course, there is always the Roman Purgatory, a sort of half-way house with the ready ability to extract funds from the relatives of the deceased for prayers to secure an eventual admission into heaven.²¹⁰⁶ In the sixteenth-century,²¹⁰⁷ Rome decreed that the faithful few "who dared to assert concerning the nature of the reasonable soul that it is mortal" were to be "punished as heretics." Hell was to be visited on earth to those denying possession of an immortal soul.

Frequently allied to these beliefs is the concept that countless millions, now dead, are forever lost, and are being tormented in hell for all eternity, simply because they did not hear the Christian message, or the evangelist or missionary simply didn't get to them in time.

Further accretions include such things as the de-personification of Satan, seen both in Judaism and in New-Age thinking,²¹⁰⁸ and the ever-popular doctrine of reincarnation, where several 'chances' at being suitably

²¹⁰⁴ Josephus, *Wars of the Jews*, II, 8,11

²¹⁰⁵ meaning, literally, 'on the border'; in the latter part of 2006AD, Pope Benedict XVI abolished the concept of 'Limbo.' While never a formal part of the Roman Catholic Church's doctrine, the existence of Limbo, described as "a place of rest where the souls of the just who died before Christ are retained," was taught throughout the Catholic world.

An international commission of theologians concluded that all children who die do so in the expectation of "the universal salvation of God" and the "mediation of Christ," whether baptised or not.

²¹⁰⁶ to add even more confusion, the Roman priest paid to pray the unfortunate out of Purgatory could, 'legitimately,' take the money and pray for someone else, without telling the provider of funds, who was thus kept wholly in the dark about the theft by deception of his or her money. But that's the way with fraud, is it not?

²¹⁰⁷ in 1513AD

²¹⁰⁸ Brooke, Tal, *When the World Will be One* (with added comment and clarification in square brackets): '[The New Age movement] can syncretize with any faith except [Judæo-]Christianity....In brief, the New Age movement, and its progeny, Gaia, are spiritually correct for a new world order; [Judæo-]Christianity is not.' There is a growing belief, in secular circles, that the New World Order will bring about both a spiritual and a political unity.

Kolakowski, Leszek, *Main Currents of Marxism* (with added comment and clarification in square brackets): 'Marxism has been the greatest fantasy of our [20th] century....The influence that Marxism has achieved, far from being the result of proof of its scientific character, is almost entirely due to its prophetic, fantastic, and irrational elements. Marxism is a doctrine of blind confidence that a paradise of universal satisfaction is awaiting us just around the corner....The self-deification of mankind, to which Marxism gave philosophical expression, has ended in the same way as all such attempts, whether individual or collective: it has revealed itself as the farcical aspect of human bondage.' The same fundamental fallacy (frequently a form of circular reasoning: often termed 'affirming the consequent'; a converse error, also known as 'the fallacy of redundancy') is found in the very foundations of all autosoteric and utopian religions and ideologies. For example, Judaism's autosoterism leads, ineluctably, to self-deification. 'Healing the

'good,' or a series of ever-improving steps toward same, are made available.²¹⁰⁹ Judaism, for instance, has the idea of reincarnation, meaning, literally, 'mending of the world' or 'harmony of the world,'²¹¹⁰ augmented by the 'rolling on' of souls.²¹¹¹ Usually, the grand prize is held to be life eternal in heaven, or in a garden in heaven, or in a revived garden of Eden, or sitting on a cloud, playing a harp, or some other variation of such nonsense.

Pagan roots and accretions

The main common classifications of belief concerning the fate of the 'soul' after death are:

1. Complete annihilation;²¹¹²
2. Survival of the soul for an indefinite period in a world of flimsy shadows;²¹¹³
3. Eternal existence in a moral world of retribution;²¹¹⁴
4. Transmigration;²¹¹⁵
5. Absorption into an infinite or absolute being;²¹¹⁶
6. Survival of the individual in the form of a posthumous influence of his personality and achievement, scarcely more than a metaphorical use of the term 'immortality';²¹¹⁷ and,
7. Merging or diffusion of the psychic energy of the individual into an unseen hypothetical etheric energy.²¹¹⁸

The development of the doctrine of the 'immortal soul' has been taken to the extreme in Kabbalistic Judaism: 'Originally, the unity between God and His final manifestation in the world of human existence, or, to use the Kabbalistic terms, between the En Sof and the Shechinah, as harmonious and complete. There was nothing to disturb the harmonious relationship of God with the world of His creation, or to interfere with the

world,' tikkun olam, is merely an 'ascending path' to self-deification. It is not by any accident that Carl Marx was a Jew. Philosophical cul-de-sacs like these seem to appeal to the Jewish mind.

²¹⁰⁹ the ultimate kaizan, as it were.

²¹¹⁰ Hebrew: tikkun olam.

²¹¹¹ Hebrew: gilgun.

²¹¹² Materialists.

²¹¹³ Aboriginal and Judaic, the latter through the concept of Sheol, the realm of shadows.

²¹¹⁴ so-called Christian and certain idealistic philosophies.

²¹¹⁵ Indic, Upanishads, Egyptian, Platonic, Pythagorean, sporadically among a variety of aborigines, and Judaic in Kabbalism, the latter through the concepts of tikkun olam and gilgun.

²¹¹⁶ Pantheism, Buddhist Nirvana, New Age.

²¹¹⁷ mainly Evolutionists and Positivists.

²¹¹⁸ quasi-Materialistic; *Encyclopedia Americana*, article 'Immortal Soul.'

steady and continuous outpouring of His love over the sons of man. But owing to the sinfulness of man, beginning with Adam's disobedience, man strayed from the primordial source of God. At once, the perfect unity was broken. This breach in the unity spelled ipso facto the appearance of evil in the universe. Thereupon harmony in creation gave way to discord, and the world order was turned into disorder. Since then the Shechinah is said to be in exile.²¹¹⁹ Instead of pervading the whole universe with its immediately beneficent presence, it is to be found only here and there in isolated individuals or communities or special localities, whereas the rest of the world is bereft of the blessings of the Shechinah, with the result that the flow of the Divine Love became hampered and the severity of the judgement began to prevail.

To reunite the Shechinah to the En Sof, and thus restore the impaired original unity and renew thereby the unimpeded flow of Divine Love is the end to which man was created in the world.²¹²⁰ Nor is this task beyond man's capacity and power. Man, in the teaching of the Zohar, is an epitome of the cosmos. In him the 'upper' and 'lower' worlds have their meeting points. His body is a copy of the Adam Kadmon which....represents the world of Sefiroth in their totality and unity.

And as with the human body, so it is with the human soul. In it, too, there is reproduced 'a copy of what is above in the celestial world.'²¹²¹ The soul, according to the Zohar, comprises three elements:

1. Neshamah: (Super-soul), which is the most sublime and divine part of man and corresponds to the first of the three triads of the Sefiroth, representing [the] intellectual world;
2. Ruach: (Spirit), which is the seat of moral qualities, and corresponds to the second of the three triads representing the moral world; and,
3. Nefesh: (Vitality), which is immediately connected with physical life, and corresponds to the third triad representing the material world.

These three elements of the soul [a neo-Platonic notion] are pre-existent in the World of Emanation, each having its source in one of the Sefiroth of its respective triad; and, working in unison, they enable man to fulfil his multifarious duties in life.²¹²² All this means that the power of the Sefiroth exists and is active in man, linking him in body and soul to the Sefiroth and, at the same time, endowing him with a power to influence them and through them, for weal or woe, the whole order of creation.

²¹¹⁹ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of John*, Vol.1, p.69:

'To the Jew, the idea of the Shechinah was very dear. The Shechinah means that which dwells; and it is the word used for the visible presence of God among men.'

²¹²⁰ Zohar, II, 161b

²¹²¹ Zohar II, 142a

²¹²² Patai, Raphael, *The Jewish Mind*, p.494 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'[Jews claim that on the Sabbath they are] conscious of being endowed with an 'additional soul' (m'shama y'tera).'

The restoration of the unity, called Kabbalah Yichud, is a constant process, in which every individual is bidden to participate, and is to be effected through communion with God and ethical and moral perfection.²¹²³

Here is the Kabbalistic soul in man, a 'Super-soul,' working to an end in perfection; the making good of the fall and breach in the garden of Eden. There is no need of Satan here, in the form of the serpent or otherwise, nor of the Saviour, the Son of God, redeeming sinful man from his meet punishment. According to the Zohar, it is man who has the task of repairing the 'disunity,' of reuniting God with His creation. In Judaism, man can achieve his own redemption on merit—in other words, autosoterism. Like all human utopian endeavours, Judaism wildly presumes that it can build a perfect world with imperfect people; that politics is redemptive. But autosoterism cannot cure itself of its own volition or action. 'Everything that humanity individually achieves on this earth is always a piecemeal thing, in good or in evil.'²¹²⁴ Human nature does not heal itself; it lacks the capacity, and the will. Worse, it is subject to an inexorable sink to maximum entropy,²¹²⁵ at an ever-increasing rate, degrading into chaos!

It is hardly surprising that Satan should be written out of this account of the fall of man. The Zohar, from the Chaldean, meaning 'the shining one,'²¹²⁶ namely, Satan, was revealed in the second-century AD, allegedly, in daily occult visions over a thirteen-year period, by a spirit being claiming to be Elijah, to Shimon bar Yochai and his son, who remained buried up to their necks in a cave for the duration of the series of 'revelations.' Satanic evil spirits naturally seek to place blame elsewhere, and the depersonification of the evil one, Satan, has been a constant theme in occult visions and channelled communications down through the ages. In Judaism, he has become the 'evil inclination' in man;²¹²⁷ invisible, non-existent, and capable of being conquered and expurgated by man's 'good inclination.' There is no Judaic equivalent of the constant struggle of the Judæo-Christian against demonic entities and the invisible wicked spirits of Satan's spirit empire, described by Paul: *'For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness'*²¹²⁸ *in high places.'*²¹²⁹ In Judaism, the battle is in man's mind and soul, between man's good and man's evil inclinations and impulses. The Kabbalist text 'Bahir' blasphemously claims that there is in God a principle called "Evil" which lies in the north of God,²¹³⁰ for it claims that tohu is in the north, and tohu means precisely the evil that confuses men until they sin, and that it is the source

²¹²³ Epstein, Isidore, *Judaism*, pp.238,239 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

²¹²⁴ Mann, *Frühling am Rhein Anno 1945*, p.27, cited by Taylor, Frederick, in *Exorcising Hitler, The Occupation and Denazification of Germany*, p.189.

²¹²⁵ Second Law of Thermodynamics: all matter energy (including matter) ultimately sinks to maximum entropy.

²¹²⁶ Chaldean: zhr.

²¹²⁷ Hebrew: jetzer hara, 'evil impulse.'

²¹²⁸ better, 'evil spirits in high places.'

²¹²⁹ Eph 6:12

²¹³⁰ an intentional slight against God's most sacred side, and, cf. *Psa 48:2*, the most sacred side of the altar in the Jerusalem Temple.

of all men's evil impulses. While God is here identified with evil and the very source of it, clearly the Kabbalists' god is the actual source of all evil: Satan.

The reward and resting place of the Judaic tripartite 'Super-soul' with its derivatives is identified by Epstein: 'It is in proportion as man participates in this co-operative activity with the Divine and thereby contributes towards the restoration of the unity that his soul is rewarded or punished in the Hereafter. At the moment of death the three parts of the soul separate from one another, each entering upon the recompense awaiting it commensurate with its deserts. In the case of the just, Neshamah receives the 'kiss of Love' from the Infinite and immediately returns to the source whence it emanates, there to live forever in the pure sparkling reflection of the Divine Light. The Ruach enters Eden where it dons the body it tenanted in the world, so that it may enjoy the lights of Paradise. Nefesh remains in the grave, where, after hovering for a time over the body until it is decomposed, it finally finds rest and peace on earth.

It is otherwise with those whose terrestrial lives were stained with sin. Their Neshamah encounters obstacles hindering its immediate ascent to its rightful place, and until it has reached its proper destination, the Ruach finds the door of Eden closed against it, whilst the Nefesh is doomed to wander hither and thither in the world.

The destiny of every soul is, however, to return to the source whence it emanated. Those who in their terrestrial existence failed to develop that purity and perfection necessary for gaining access to their source in the region above must 'experience' incarnation in another body; even repeat that 'experience' over and over again until they have completed their task on earth and able to return to the heavenly region in a purified form.

These and similar teachings of the Zohar, which purported to disclose the supernal mysteries of existence in general and of Jewish religious life and observance in particular, and interwoven as these were with an elaborate angelology, rich imagery, and fascinating legendary, could not fail to make strong appeal to Jewish intellectuals as well as to the Jewish masses. In an incredibly short time the Zohar captured Jewish minds and hearts and became after the Bible and the Talmud the third sacred source of Jewish inspiration and guidance.... Through [the Zohar's] teachings [the Jews] learned to perceive in their own tragedies a reflection of the cosmic tragedy in which God Himself, so to speak, was involved, leaving them thus in no doubt as to the ultimate issue, and at the same time to apprehend the spiritual agencies they had at their command for resolving the tragedy, and securing healing and blessing both for themselves and the world.'²¹³¹

²¹³¹ Epstein, Isidore, *Judaism*, pp.242,243 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

Reincarnation

'Once the possibility of reincarnation is accepted, then death has a very different meaning.'²¹³² There has been much talk lately about the rights and wrongs of abortion. More than twenty years after the Abortion Law Reform Act came into force in Britain, there are still people who are trying to outlaw the act. Many of these are Christians, a large proportion of whom are Catholics who believe that any killing must be wrong. But seen through the reincarnationist perspective, abortion takes on a new and different meaning.

If we accept that humans possess a soul and that this soul is immortal, then we understand that it cannot be killed. If a foetus is killed before it has a viable life, then the soul will simply pass out of that body into another one. It is the karma of the incoming soul to live in a particular body for a very short time....But to a reincarnationist, it is impossible to kill a person; you can only destroy the body, the very temporary housing of that soul.

Once we accept the idea of reincarnation, physical death becomes far less frightening and final. A belief in rebirth allows us to understand that we never die, but simply shed their physical overcoat once it can no longer serve it well....The belief also makes sense of the idea of the immortality of the soul....

When we consider the possibility of reincarnation, we instantly become less attached to the members of our own families, and to marriage and other intimate partners. We should not be sad when marriage breaks up, or when the love and regard which were once present have died away....We will take responsibility for ourselves, but not for others.

Of course, we will have to be responsible for children and others incapable of looking after themselves. But once children have become independent, we should be able to let them live their own lives, for they are not 'our' children. All we have done, as parents, is to enable their soul to inhabit a body. We have provided the body

²¹³² Baer, Randall N., *Inside the New Age Nightmare*, pp.166,167:

'By being able to self-righteously justify various types of killing, New Age philosophy opens the doors to potential logical Nazi extremes. Using its reincarnation- and *karma*-based philosophy, the New Age readily and easily can justify such acts as abortion, euthanasia, racial sterilization, and even murder. This philosophy asserts that the soul is immortal; therefore, there is really no such thing as death, only an endless "recycling" of the soul into body after reincarnational body—a belief that over half the world's population holds today...."There's no real death anyway, so there are no victims." In this philosophy, suffering is an illusion, death is an illusion, victims are an illusion. By definition, whatever is, is right and perfect for all those involved....

The blatant immorality and ultimate inherent dangers of New Age philosophy are that it can, on its own terms, be a totally logical rationale for the killing of innocents and the justification of injustice of all varieties. This philosophy can go so far as even to justify outright murder.

Likewise, this warped view would assert that the Jews killed in the holocaust "chose" to undergo this experience either as payment of *karmic* debt or as a "soul-learning experience." The perversion of this philosophy can be moulded to incredible extremes....Abortion clinics—more correctly called "neo-holocaust murder mills"—have slaughtered over twenty-five million innocents already. This legalized, sanitized, sterilized neo-holocaust run by professionals in lab coats and operating gowns should alert us all to the very real possibility that such horrors could be extended to other groups of people in the future. To murder innocents is the first huge step down the road toward justifying horrendous abuses of euthanasia....The spirit of the Antichrist certainly is paving the way for even greater Nazi-like atrocities of the Antichrist himself in his false "New World Order." '

—but we have not provided the soul, nor are we responsible for their personality, talents and behaviour in this life.....

A belief in reincarnation has also given me a very different outlook on the family. When one accepts rebirth, such things as genealogy and family trees become nonsense....If children do not turn out as expected, parents should never ask themselves where they have gone wrong, or feel blame or guilt....A belief in reincarnation means that negative emotions such as blame or guilt fly out of the window.'²¹³³

At once, Hodgkinson reveals the profound changes in belief and behaviour which are replete in the adoption of a belief in reincarnation. The consequential effect on beliefs, attitudes, and behaviour is wholly anti-thetic to Judæo-Christian belief concerning:

1. sanctity of life;
2. prohibition on abortion, being an obscene and extreme form of murder of innocents;
3. prohibition of euthanasia, as another form of selective murder;
4. the role of the family as the building-block of society;
5. moral responsibility, both personal and external; and,
6. human mortality, there being nothing whatsoever immortal in or about the human 'soul.'²¹³⁴

Reincarnation, universalism, and transmigration,²¹³⁵ plurality of the 'soul',²¹³⁶ plurality of immortality, a place in heaven, angelology, and so on are all utterly alien to Judæo-Christianity. Of such is the revelation of evil spirits, resulting in spiritual anarchy. To Jews, the salvation of mankind rests and depends to an overwhelming extent upon every person's performance, the Jews' especially, and the initiative for the restoration of the original harmony must come from man himself. Evil is seen as having no independent being of its own. It is merely the negative of 'good,' and hence has to be overcome by force of will on the collective part of mankind in attaining self-perfection, latterly through the power and 'good offices' of the Jews' false-messiah. Modern Jewry is surprisingly open to this suggestion, for the Jews consider that, from the very first, God has laid upon them the unique task of building a universal kingdom of God here on earth through the realisation of righteousness and justice, and the triumph of their moral dealings and good example.

The remarkably close relationship of Kabbalistic Judaism to pantheism is confirmed by Epstein: 'Moses Cordovero,²¹³⁷ whose Pardes²¹³⁸ is the clearest and most rational explanation of the speculative Kabbalah....

²¹³³ Hodgkinson, Liz, *Reincarnation: The Evidence*

²¹³⁴ q.v. inf.

²¹³⁵ Gnostic creeds.

²¹³⁶ neo-Platonism.

²¹³⁷ 1522–1576AD

described the Sefiroth as Kelim²¹³⁹ in which the unchangeable light of the En Sof is present, and through which, by reason of the difference in their qualities, it is reflected in different forms, giving rise to all the changes that take place in the Universe. This is another way of saying that the Infinite is present in every part of the finite, which, in turn, is itself but a phrase or 'mode' of the Infinite, and that, as Cordovero phrases it elsewhere, nothing exists outside God. Here Cordovero gives expression to a view which appears surprisingly like the pantheism taught a century later by Spinoza who, in fact, is said to have avowed his indebtedness for his theory to Cordovero. Cordovero, however, safeguards the theistic position by defining his attitude in the formula: 'God is all reality, but not all reality is God'—an attitude which came to be known in modern philosophy as 'panentheism.'²¹⁴⁰

Here is pantheism in its pagan drapes erupting in Kabbalistic Judaism, but for cover moving slightly towards vagueness in panentheism.²¹⁴¹ This is no more than what would be expected in a religious mysticism derived from satanic spirits.

Sadly, the malaise runs even deeper. Most of the Table Songs²¹⁴² chanted in Jewish households during the Sabbath derive from the Kabbalism of the Safed school. The flavour is given by Epstein: 'Most popular among these is the one with the refrain: 'This day is for Israel a light and rejoicing.' Attributed to Isaac Luria,²¹⁴³ this song gives expression to the real joy of the Sabbath which brings with it the 'gift of a new soul' to the distressed and soothes the sighs of those imprisoned in spirit.'²¹⁴⁴

More of the same basic pagan delusions produce the belief that man's soul, or spirit, can roam free after death, haunting its former residence or friends. This same approach also produces the widely held necromantic belief of being able to make contact with the spirits of the dead: those 'on the other side,' or who are said 'to have crossed over' the mythical river of Styx held to encompass Hades.

Mysticism & 'ascended masters'

Similar delusions also deliver a wide range of beliefs in spirit manipulation and witchcraft. Of course, the lack of objective and rational judgement, on the part of man, aids this profusion. The primitive mind believes that all things are connected, but in magical ways. Because cause and effect are so little understood in primitive societies, and not so primitive ones under the influence of Satan, false connections are attributed between events. In parts of Africa, for example, there is still the belief that if a neighbour happens to walk past your field

²¹³⁸ 'Orchard.'

²¹³⁹ 'Vessels.'

²¹⁴⁰ Epstein, Isidore, *Judaism*, p.244

²¹⁴¹ belief system that the divine, or an eternal cosmic animating force, interpenetrates every part of nature and timelessly extends beyond it.

²¹⁴² Hebrew: Zemiroth.

²¹⁴³ Safed school.

²¹⁴⁴ Epstein, Isidore, *Judaism*, p.248

at the moment your cow gives birth to a deformed calf, it was he who crippled your calf. His guilt, of course, can be tested by searing with a hot iron: if the wound festers, he is guilty.

Such are the fantasies common to pre-modern man, and modern man in modified, updated, and media-friendly pagan and mystical forms. Webs of portent, superstition, and bewitchment are woven between wholly unconnected events, in ways that bear heavily upon man, ensnaring rich and poor alike. Weird explanations and occult rituals are devised to elucidate mysterious happenings, and simultaneously assuage the wrath of the remarkably easily and frequently offended 'gods.' Behaviour is heavily prescribed. Rational thought, especially at the level of primitive man, is almost completely proscribed.

Ancient barbaric tribesmen, often living in chronically primitive and violent societies, with little real knowledge of the world but with a massive surplus of superstition and ignorance, simply cannot be expected to produce anything even approaching a valid belief system. Religions and modern belief structures which hearken back to primitive superstitions are nothing more than repackaged superstitions themselves.

The New Age overlay to all of this is ably identified by McRoberts: 'Adorned in the optimistic praises of unlimited human potential,²¹⁴⁵ [a divine power within], the ancient but ever appealing lie of the Serpent has been reintroduced in the New Age. The mythic themes of the New Age echo the "hidden wisdom" of the primal temptation.

Rather than critically explaining reality, the Eastern occult world view is a philosophical explanation of mystic experience. Beginning with man, the Eastern mystical explanation for the universe is ultimately understood in terms of a cosmic humanism. In other words, man is the centre and source of the universe. This interpretation of mystical experience leads man into a monistic description of reality; all is one. The human consciousness connects the macrocosm (universe) with the microcosm (man) resulting in the personalisation of pantheism's impersonal god in man. This vision of wholeness seduces man into believing in his own inherent divinity, the goal of the satanic lie, "*ye shall be as gods*."²¹⁴⁶

New Age "prophet" and author David Spangler astoundingly agrees with the Luciferic authoring of the New Age world view: "Lucifer works within each of us to bring us to wholeness, each of us in some way is brought to that point which I term the Luciferic initiation."²¹⁴⁷

The confusion of the Creator with creation (pantheism) ultimately provokes Divine judgement.²¹⁴⁸ In his search for "cosmic totality," New Age man ventures into the secret recesses of the human heart. Through the use of Eastern meditative techniques, New Age man finds that he is the reflection of God's glory. However, instead of glorifying the Lord God in whose image he is created, in his fallenness, New Age man chooses to worship the image. This idolatrous tendency of the human condition results in a confusion of the image of God

²¹⁴⁵ divine power within man.

²¹⁴⁶ Gen 3:5

²¹⁴⁷ Spangler, David, *Reflections on the Christ*, p.44

²¹⁴⁸ Rom 1:18,25

within man [sic] with the reality of creation. Brooks Alexander provides astute insight regarding the evil snares of half-truths: "Indeed, without some appearance of reality, the serpent's promise would not have the seductive power that it does. The tragic paradox of our human condition gives this shimmering description much of its verisimilitude: our created nature enables us to reflect the glory of God in a dependent and finite form, but our fallen nature impels us to appropriate the glory of God in an autonomous and infinite form."²¹⁴⁹

Demonic entities, masquerading as Atlantean warriors, revealers of ancient, esoteric wisdom, "ascended masters," "guides," "allies," and "guardians," mimic the same threefold lie of their Master, deluding the minds of the unwary: divine wisdom is a possession of man's inner being, death is not real, and man is a god.²¹⁵⁰ This threefold lie is injected into the human psyche through its gnostic promise of spiritual illumination. Through the manipulation of spiritual laws, the neo-gnostic of the New Age becomes the creator and controller of his own reality. Contrary to empirical evidence, the neo-agnostics of the New Age go "out on a limb" and attempt to erect an elaborate belief system for which there is no foundation other than their own fallen imagination.²¹⁵¹

There will be many 'doctrines of demons' promulgated at the time of the end, for it apparent that once the powers of the Restrainer are restricted by God,²¹⁵² earth-bound demons will be in a position to portray themselves as messengers of light coming from any number of sources. This will extend to claims of their being 'extra-terrestrials,' returned ascended masters, helpful angels from heaven, and so on. The Antichrist, *'whose coming is according to the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders,'*²¹⁵³ will be the dread vertex.

Satan's deceptions & Greek philosophy

It is evident that all of these are founded on nothing more than various mutations of Satan's initial deception of mankind: The Primal Lie, as recorded for all posterity in Genesis: *'And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil,'*²¹⁵⁴ or put another way: *'Eat of the forbidden fruit and you will be immortal. You will live forever, and become gods.'* There is also the suggestion that by eating of the forbidden tree of the knowledge of good and evil, mankind would become gods through the acquisition and use of knowledge, a notion very attractive in modern times where 'eternal life,' through gene-manipulation and body-part replacement brought forward by so-called advances in medical science, man's knowledge, is being openly prognosticated.

²¹⁴⁹ Alexander, Brooks, *Occult Philosophy and Mystical Experience*, p.17

²¹⁵⁰ Gen 3:1-7

²¹⁵¹ McRoberts, Kerry D., *New Age or Old Lie?* pp.77-79 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

²¹⁵² q.v. inf.

²¹⁵³ II Thes 2:9; Greek: kata, translated 'after' in K.J.V. is better rendered 'according to.'

²¹⁵⁴ Gen 3:4,5

Some slightly more subtle later variants of the original aberrant postulation have some immortal element in man, but not of man, sensibly remote, forming a separable, discreet, spiritual, and immortal factor in addition to the mortal frame. And so is found a litany of essences, seeds, germs, vigours, sparks, spirits, souls, atmans, avatars, kas, karmas, and the like.

However, some modern scholars realise that the view of death which has generally prevailed until now is not a biblical one. Indeed, it is the antithesis, being at once pagan and gnostic. Mainstream Christianity has taken a somewhat similar, but slightly different approach to that of gnostic belief which denies the resurrection of the flesh, in that it has included in its creed a belief of the resurrection of the body, while also teaching an immediate salvation of the soul alone in a conscious disembodied state. This is said to be the real person, albeit disembodied.

This, at least in part, is brought out in, 'the hellenization process by which Christianity adopted many Greek [pagan] thought patterns led in a different direction as the eschatological hope came to be expressed in Hellenistic categories. Irenæus said: 'It is manifest that the souls of His disciples also, upon whose account the Lord underwent these things, shall go away in the invisible place allotted to them by God....and there remain until the resurrection, awaiting that event. Then receiving their bodies and rising in their entirety, that is bodily, just as the Lord arose, they shall come into the presence of God.' Irenæus' statement contains the concept of an abode or purgatory in which the soul of the dead remains until the universal resurrection. We should not denounce this as a deviation from biblical teaching [sic!; q.v. inf.], since the point of the assertion is antignostic. Irenæus wanted to reject the Gnostic idea that at the end of this earthly life the soul immediately ascends to its heavenly abode. As the early fathers [sic] fought the pagan idea that a part of the human person is simply immortal, it was important for them to assert that there is no rectilinear ascent to God. Once we die, life is over.'²¹⁵⁵

While the deficiencies in the above tract are very apparent, save for the question of the origin and development of the widely accepted though erroneous concept of an immortal, disembodied soul, they will not be dwelt on in detail here, but dealt with later. Suffice to say meantime that a tract refuting gnostic heresy cannot import more abominable heresy and pagan belief in its support, and still remain completely sound and unassailable.

The immortal, disembodied soul, so beloved of worldly religion and neo-religion, has its plant roots anchored firmly in the Greek musings and philosophising of such as Plato, from where its spores migrated, took root, and flourished in both Judaism and so-called mainstream Christianity, amongst others.

'It is incumbent on us to adore the mysterious dispensations of Providence when we discover that the doctrine of the immortality of the soul is omitted in the Law of Moses; it is darkly insinuated by the prophets

²¹⁵⁵ Braaten / Jensen, *Christian Dogmas*, Vol 2, p.503, section by Professor Hans Swartz (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

[sic!], and during the long period which elapsed between the Egyptian and the Babylonian servitudes, the hopes as well as the fears of the Jews appear to have been confined within the narrow compass of the present life. After Cyrus had permitted the exiled nation to return into the Promised Land, and after Ezra had restored the ancient records of their religion, two celebrated sects, the Sadducees and the Pharisees, insensibly arose at Jerusalem. The former, selected from the more opulent and distinguished ranks of society, were strictly attached to the literal sense of the Mosaic Law, and they piously rejected the immortality of the soul as an opinion that received no countenance from the Divine book, which they revered as the only rule of their faith. To the authority of Scripture the Pharisees added that of tradition, and they accepted, under the name of traditions, tenets from the philosophy of the eastern nations. The doctrines of fate or predestination, of angels and spirits, and of a future state of rewards and punishments were in the number of these new articles of belief; and as the Pharisees, by the austerity of their manners, had drawn into their party the body of the Jewish people, the immortality of the soul became the prevailing sentiment of the synagogue, under the reign of the Asmonæan princes and pontiffs. The temper of the Jews was incapable of contenting itself with such a cold and languid assent as might satisfy the mind of a Polytheist; and as soon as they admitted the idea of a future state they embraced it with the zeal which has always formed the characteristic of the nation. Their zeal, however, added nothing to its evidence, or even probability.²¹⁵⁶

Lazarus was not a deliquium.²¹⁵⁷ He was allowed to die and to lie in his grave for four days.²¹⁵⁸ The number of days is hugely significant. A common belief among the Jews of the time was that after death, the 'disembodied soul' of the person hovered over the body for three days, in the hope of some sign of revival.²¹⁵⁹ That period lapsing, the 'soul' departed, never to return again. By allowing four days to pass, Jesus removed any possibility of the Jews' claiming that the body revived of its own volition and that the disembodied soul returned to inhabit the newly revived mortal body, or that the soul returned, reviving the body.

But there is a further reason why Christ did this, and why He raised Lazarus from the dead. Shortly afterwards, He, too, would be dead, and would rise again, this time after the passage of three full days and nights. Lazarus was still alive at the time of Christ's death and resurrection, so the chief priests, the Pharisees, and all the other accusers of Jesus found themselves debarred from denying that a resurrection from the dead was ever possible. They were confronted with living proof that it was: Lazarus, in their very midst! The Pharisees and the high priests were made perfectly aware of the miracle Jesus had done,²¹⁶⁰ and thus were debarred from denying the miracle and from claiming that a resurrection from the dead was utterly impossible.

²¹⁵⁶ Gibbon, Edward, *Gibbon on Christianity*, pp.20,21 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

²¹⁵⁷ viz., not merely 'apparently dead.'

²¹⁵⁸ John 11:17

²¹⁵⁹ q.v. sup.

²¹⁶⁰ John 11:46,47

There is also a telling affirmation, made to Christ by Martha: '*I know that he [Lazarus] shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day,*'²¹⁶¹ which gives the clearest indication of the belief of the followers of Christ during His time on earth. '*Shall rise again,*'²¹⁶² means '*to raise,*' and appears in the future tense; '*resurrection,*'²¹⁶³ means '*a rising from the dead;*' and '*last,*'²¹⁶⁴ as in '*last day,*' means the '*extreme,*' the '*uttermost,*' the '*last in time or place.*' As such, it could not possibly mean a resurrection to heaven immediately or soon after death. Even the aberrant Jewish belief of the time would not permit that. Lazarus had been dead for four days, and, in that belief, his 'disembodied soul' would have left but the day before, never to return. The current 'mainstream' Christian belief, equally aberrant, dependent upon taxonomy, would have his immortal soul depart either immediately or on the first morning after death, at sunrise.²¹⁶⁵ Rather, the '*extreme*' or eschatological day that Martha referred to was at the end, when all other than the already immortal 'elect' will be raised, mortal, to face the final assize at the Great White Throne Judgement, at the end of the Millennium of rest.

As a result, it can be deduced that the early church, crystallising around Christ at the time of His sojourn on earth, did not believe in an immortal soul, neither did they believe in going to heaven after death. Those were pagan beliefs. The nascent church, just as Judæo-Christians today, believe what Martha stated, and as further revealed in the pages of Holy Scripture.

While Greek philosophy did not invent the immortal, disembodied soul, its particular variant was in considering the soul to be totally indestructible, even when it was found to be 'incorrigibly evil.' This unique feature was pounced upon by authoritarian, hierarchical religious organisations as it opened up the possibility of portraying divine retribution on the aberrant soul in the everlasting pain and torment of the fires of hell, and, in so doing, introduced the heady prospect of exercising control over mankind through abject fear of this dreadful and never-ending penalty. In this endeavour, many religious tendencies came to the early conclusion that 'fear equates to funds,' assuming, of course, that it were possible first to convince the gullible that the high-priests of paganism held the keys of heaven, and the imperium over which soul went where. Prior to this, both the Egyptian and Babylonian concepts of dualism had been structured around the 'good' soul attaining immortality, but with the 'bad' being destroyed forever. This earlier version, however, was found to be potentially a lot less lucrative, and, as a consequence of this rather fundamental deficiency, quickly fell out of favour.

What Satan has succeeded in doing, from the very first, is moulding his evil deception to fit the deficiencies of human nature. The 'unsaved' welcomes the news that he possesses an immortal soul, for, in his delusion, it panders to human vanity, and removes concern about eternal destruction. If more than one attempt at

²¹⁶¹ John 11:24b; Greek: *echatos*, '*last day,*' means '*furthest day*' or '*final day.*'

²¹⁶² Greek: *anistemi*.

²¹⁶³ Greek: *anastasis*.

²¹⁶⁴ Greek: *eschatos*.

²¹⁶⁵ this is why, as with the ancient pagans, Roman Catholic cemeteries are so arranged that, if possible, graves are aligned to face the first rays of the rising sun.

immortality is patched onto this, through reincarnation, so much the better, for there is then no need to get it right first time: there can always be a reprise: 'once more with feeling.'

The manifold 'plug-and-play' worldly religions which are merely the satanically-inspired product of man's wild imaginings recognised and immediately seized the opportunity, and then proceeded to build on that 'sure foundation' with any and all of the cash-generating gambits available: 'made-to-measure' indulgences, both individual and plenary, tithes, gifts, offerings, funds for prayers for the dead, funds for praying the dead out of purgatory, funds for praying the dead into purgatory, and many more. In these aberrant views there would appear to be much 'shuttling' involved for the average 'immortal soul.'

Rebuttal

Protest against the popular notion that the dead survive as conscious souls in heaven is made by Richardson: 'The Bible writers, holding fast to the conviction that the created order owes its existence to the wisdom and love of God and is therefore essentially good, could not conceive of life after death as a disembodied existence (as millions of sincere believers now do) (*'we shall not be found naked'*),²¹⁶⁶ but as a renewal under conditions of the intimate unity of body and soul which was human life as they knew it.²¹⁶⁷ Hence death was thought of as the death of the whole man, and such phrases as 'freedom from death,' imperishability or immortality could only properly be used to describe what is meant by the phrase eternal or living God *'who only has immortality'*.²¹⁶⁸ Man does not possess within himself the quality of deathlessness, but must, if he is to overcome the destructive power of death, receive it as a gift of God who *'raised Christ from the dead,'* and put death aside like a covering garment.²¹⁶⁹ It is through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ that this possibility for man²¹⁷⁰ has been brought to life and the hope confirmed that the corruption²¹⁷¹ which is a universal feature of human life shall be effectively overcome.'²¹⁷²

The use of the word 'soul,' when it should be a reference to 'breath' or 'physical being,' as in the above, is a constant failing, and one which merely serves to add further confusion. When read as 'breath' in the foregoing tracts, the matter at once becomes a deal more transparent, if still deficient. There is a mortal resurrection, the second resurrection,²¹⁷³ to judgement before the Great White Throne; and there is an immortal first

²¹⁶⁶ II Cor 5:3

²¹⁶⁷ cf. inf.

²¹⁶⁸ I Tim 6:16

²¹⁶⁹ I Cor 15:53,54

²¹⁷⁰ II Tim 1:10

²¹⁷¹ Rom 11:7,8

²¹⁷² Richardson, Alan, *A Theological Word Book of the Bible*, pp.111,112

²¹⁷³ q.v. sup.

resurrection for the 'elect.'²¹⁷⁴ Immortality, described in the biblically-correct foreview, is at once conditional, and a gift of God. It is neither inherent in nor intrinsic to mortal man.

The fundamental confusion about life after death that has so permeated mainstream Christianity is described, in part, by Althause: 'The hope of the early church centred on the resurrection of the Last Day. It is this which first calls the dead into eternal life.'²¹⁷⁵ This resurrection happens to the man and not only to the body. Paul speaks of the resurrection not '*of the body*,' but '*of the dead*.' This understanding of the resurrection implicitly understands death as also affecting the whole man....Thus the original biblical concepts have been replaced by ideas from Hellenistic, Gnostic dualism. The New Testament idea of the resurrection which affects the whole man has had to give way to the immortality of the soul. The Last Day also loses its significance, for souls have received all that is decisively important long before this. Eschatological tension is no longer strongly directed to the day of Jesus' Coming. The difference between this and the Hope of the New Testament is very great.'²¹⁷⁶

Often cited by proponents of an immortal existence in heaven immediately upon death are the words of Christ on the cross: '*And he*²¹⁷⁷ *said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.*²¹⁷⁸ *And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto you, Today thou shalt be with me in paradise.*'²¹⁷⁹ This is explained by Vaughan: '[Jesus, on the cross, hanging between two malefactors, said to one of them] in the words, as of a Prince, an Arbiter, and a Judge, "*Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in Paradise.*" Today shalt thou be my companion in those realms of the....dead, from whence there shall be also [for the saved], in due season, a resurrection of light and life and immortality.'²¹⁸⁰

'In this response, "*Today thou wilt be with me in paradise.*" [Jesus] was speaking to a Jew, whose idea would be that the spirits of the righteous resided in that part of Hades (the grave) reserved for them until the Resurrection.'²¹⁸¹ Christ's answer was to the thief's question, since the answer meets the question, obviously, for it must. The question concerned admission to Christ's kingdom when He came into it. Christ is likened in the parable to the noblemen who took a long journey to receive a kingdom, and to return: '*He said therefore, A certain nobleman went into a far country, to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come. But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us. And when it came to pass,*

²¹⁷⁴ q.v. sup.

²¹⁷⁵ I Cor chpt. 15; Phlp 3:21

²¹⁷⁶ Althause, Dr. Paul, *The Theology of Martin Luther*, pp.413,414

²¹⁷⁷ one of the two malefactors.

²¹⁷⁸ the thief's so-called conversion or, correctly translated from the Greek: *leistes*, the robber's so-called conversion on the cross took place under the Old Testament. There was no new covenant until Christ had died, and even then it was to fructify, in stages, over a protracted period; '*But the Holy Spirit was not yet given; because that Jesus was not glorified,*' John 7:39b.

²¹⁷⁹ Luke 23:42,43

²¹⁸⁰ Vaughan, C. J., *Christ the Light of the World*, p.243 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

²¹⁸¹ Edersheim, Alfred, *Jesus the Messiah*, p.887 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

when he was returned, having received the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be called to him.'

²¹⁸² The far country implies a long time in transit, as does, '*Occupy till I come.*'

Christ's kingdom is not of this age, but it is of the coming age: the Millennium and beyond. He had to return to heaven—going to receive the kingdom—and He will return soon to set it up here on earth. So the thief, a Jew, asked to be included in that coming kingdom. But what was in the thief's mind?

Edersheim has this on the matter: 'Fully to understand it, we ought to realise what would be the Jewish ideas of the 'penitent thief,' and what would be his understanding of the words of Christ. Broadly, one would say, that as a Jew he would expect that his 'death would be the expiation of his sins.' Thoughts of need of forgiveness through the Messiah would not therefore come to him. But the words of Christ must have supplied all this. Again, when Christ spoke of 'Paradise,' His hearer would naturally understand that part of Hades²¹⁸³ in which the spirits of the righteous [sic] dwelt till the Resurrection. On both these points there are so many passages in Rabbinic writings that it is needless to quote....Indeed, the prayer: let my death be the expiation of my sins, is still in the Jewish office for the dying, and the underlying dogma is firmly rooted in Jewish belief. The words of our Lord, so far from encouraging this belief, would teach him that admission to Paradise was to be granted by Christ. It is scarcely necessary to add that Christ's words in no way encouraged the realistic conceptions which Judaism attached to Paradise. In biblical Hebrew, the word is used for a choice garden.²¹⁸⁴ But in the Septuagint and the Apocrypha the word is already used in our sense of paradise [sic]. Lastly, nothing which our Lord had said to the 'penitent thief' about being 'today' with Him in Paradise, is in any way inconsistent with, but rather confirms, the doctrine of the Descent into Hades.'²¹⁸⁵

Abstracting the valid comments contained in the foregoing, and relating it back to the earlier statement, the following points emerge:

1. The 'penitent thief' wanted to be included in Christ's kingdom, when the time came that He would come into it;
2. Christ's reply was confirmatory, but restricted—the thief would die and be buried;
3. The thief knew that he would be in his grave that very evening, for he was to die, as was the other thief;
4. Christ, too, was in His grave before sunset that very day. All three were in the grave that very day;

²¹⁸² Luke 19:12f.

²¹⁸³ viz., the grave.

²¹⁸⁴ Eccl 2:5; Cant. 4:13; Neh 2:6-8

²¹⁸⁵ Edersheim, Alfred, *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, p.887, Footnote #54 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

5. The Greek word used for '*Paradise*,'²¹⁸⁶ means a '*park*,' '*garden*' or '*garden of Eden*.' In a sense they were in the '*park*' or '*garden*'—in the grave, in a tomb, underground, but, if that prefatory connection were valid, it was merely the forerunning type;

6. The comma after '*today*,'²¹⁸⁷ appears to be misplaced—there were no commas or punctuation in the Greek manuscripts—the correct version reading: '*Verily I say unto thee today, thou shalt be with me in Paradise*.' This refers in the instance of the thief to the grave,²¹⁸⁸ but also accords with the biblical record on the resurrection of the 'elect' at the second-coming of Christ; and,

7. The antitype will come to pass only on the Second Coming of Christ / the Great White Throne Judgement.

Despite manifest wantings in the immortal soul doctrine, some have sought biblical support and authority for an 'immortal element' in man, brought about by the infusion of the Holy Spirit into the spirit of man,²¹⁸⁹ resulting in the creation of an immortal spark or essence. This is usually based on an amalgam of, '*except a man be born*'²¹⁹⁰ *of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God*,²¹⁹¹ and, '*But if ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his*,'²¹⁹² or other similar 'conjunctions.'

The word here translated '*dwell*,'²¹⁹³ means '*to occupy*' or '*reside*,' and does not connote the importation of immortality; it merely describes the infusion of the Holy Spirit, or Holy Power, into the mortal person. This power is of Christ, not of man, and has no commonality with mortal, sinning man. When the man lame from birth was miraculously healed by Peter and John after the coming of the Holy Spirit to the Christian church at Pentecost 30AD, the power was not theirs, or of them, as is apparent from Acts: '*And a certain man lame from his mother's womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms of them that entered into the temple; Who seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple asked an alms*.'

²¹⁸⁶ Greek: paradeisos.

²¹⁸⁷ Luke 23:43b

²¹⁸⁸ on the basis of the very scant information available in Scripture, it appears unlikely that the thief, or robber, would be included in the 'elect,' but he might conceivably have a part in the antitype.

²¹⁸⁹ Prov 20:27, '*The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord, searching all the inward parts of the belly*,' where '*spirit*,' Hebrew: neshamah, means '*human breath, every breathing thing, spirit of man*'—cp. Isa 42:5c (with added comment and clarification in square brackets), '*he that giveth breath [Hebrew: neshamah] unto the people upon it, and spirit [Hebrew: ruach, '*wind*,' '*breath*,' or '*mind*,' and in this context, '*mind*'] to them that walk therein*'; and '*candle*,' Hebrew: nyr, also means '*lamp*,' '*light*.' There is nothing immortal in the spirit of man, and no immortal soul, q.v. inf.; 'breathing,' oxygen exchange, forms part of the metabolism, viz., all the chemical processes that occur in a living organism, resulting in energy production and growth; also cp. Job 7:9,10,14:21,16:22; Psalms 146:4; Ecclesiastes 9:5,6,10; Isaiah 38:18; Hebrew 9:27.

²¹⁹⁰ sometimes rendered, '*begotten*.'

²¹⁹¹ John 3:5

²¹⁹² Romans 7:9

²¹⁹³ Greek: oikeo.

And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him with John, said Look on us. And he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something of them. Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk....And when they had set them in their midst, they asked, By what power, or by what name, have ye done this? Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel, If we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole; Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole.²¹⁹⁴ There was no mention of impregnation of the human spirit²¹⁹⁵ with the Holy Spirit. Peter's answer was simple and to the point: it was the name and the power of Jesus Christ that cured the man lame from birth.

Another mistranslation bears on this immortal notion: '*We know that whosoever is born of God*²¹⁹⁶ *sin- neth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not.*'²¹⁹⁷ The phrase '*but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself*' should be translated, '*but the One keeps him who was born of God.*' As such, it forms an expounding statement leading on from the opening phrase, and most certainly is not the introduction of the doctrine of an immortal essence in mortal man.

Even the words of Christ in Luke are read by some as a reference to an immortal soul: '*For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it*'²¹⁹⁸—the contention being that the saved '*life*'²¹⁹⁹ meaning '*mortal breath*,' is actually immortal, and thus an immortal soul. This is despite the almost universal, and correct interpretation of this text as meaning that if during this life one opts for safety by denying Christ during times of persecution unto death, then the following life will be lost. For those of such short-sighted 'safety tendency,' the lost life will be the mortal one on the Day of Judgement, and

²¹⁹⁴ Acts 3:2-6,4:7-10 (sublinear emphasis added)

²¹⁹⁵ the 'death of self' does not mean the destruction of individuality and character, neither is the complete reduction of personality a Judæo-Christian objective. By way of illustration, the inspired writers of Scripture all wrote in their own style, using their own phraseology, expressing their own personalities. The Greek of Luke, for example, differs from that of, say, John, or Mark, or Matthew, or Paul. They were not reduced to mindless automatons, broken in their human spirit. To the contrary, that is a Satanic device with nothing to do with Judæo-Christianity. The confusion of many on this fundamental point is what led to much suffering, especially for children, during the 'hegemony' of the Laodicean Church era.

Daniell, David, *Tyndale's New Testament*, p.xviii:

'The New Testament is written in koiné Greek, only Luke 1:1-4 is written in classical Greek. There is a great difference between the Greek of the four gospels, and between them and the Hebrew mind of Paul writing in philosophical, theological Greek, to say nothing of the special effects of the epistle to the Hebrews or of Revelation.'

This shows that the writers of the sacred canon, in the original Greek autographs, expressed their own style, language, and format. In short, their own personality was impressed upon the very words of God. Given this, it is unlikely in the extreme that Judæo-Christian belief and practice would ever have tried to eviscerate the personalities of the members of the church.

²¹⁹⁶ viz., born immortal.

²¹⁹⁷ I John 5:18

²¹⁹⁸ Luke 9:24

²¹⁹⁹ Greek: psuche.

that mortal life will be lost in the lake of fire. Those not denying Christ and losing their mortal lives will be saved when, *'the dead in Christ shall be raised incorruptible'*—a miraculous transformation indeed, but without any hint or suggestion of an immortal soul bound up in the previously martyred being.

The same 'loss' and 'gain' is seen in Matthew, *'For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?'*²²⁰⁰ (where 'soul' is from the Greek meaning mortal 'breath of life' or 'animating spirit'.²²⁰¹), and in Luke: *'For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away?'*²²⁰² The loss of 'himself,' his whole mortal being, is in view, not the loss of any supposed immortality. The only loss can be that which ends and is gone: mortal life.

Some adduce the words of Christ in John in support of an immortal soul in man: *'The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not: but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God. Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods? If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken: Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?'*²²⁰³ The Jews ignored what Christ did, and concentrated on what He said. Christ's answer took the form of an a minore ad maius, from the lesser to the greater, based on a reference to Psalms which deals not with mankind, but with Hebrew judges because of their position of interpreters of divine Law and justice.²²⁰⁴ Some sat in Moses' seat, and were in elevated positions. In going behind the veil, the high priest represented the Messiah on the Day of Atonement. They were all appointed to these divine offices and institutions by God. In the poetic language of the Psalms, as they were appointed by God, they were God's delegates, and therefore the Scripture says they were as gods: 'diminutive-g' gods, relative to the common people: *'I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the most High. But ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes.'*²²⁰⁵ But though these men held lofty positions, they would all die. Even God's representatives in judgement must one day die and face judgement themselves: *'And it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgement.'*²²⁰⁶ There is no immortal soul either explicit or implicit in these words. To be as 'diminutive-g' gods relative to the common people in poetical writings is not to be immortal.

Claims of an immortal soul are also founded on, *'For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison; Which sometimes were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls*

²²⁰⁰ Mat 16:26; also cf. Mark 8:36, where Greek: psuche is used.

²²⁰¹ Greek: psuche,

²²⁰² Luke 9:25

²²⁰³ John 10:33-36 (sublinear emphasis added)

²²⁰⁴ Psa 82:6

²²⁰⁵ Psa 82:6,7

²²⁰⁶ Heb 9:27

were saved by water. The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), by the resurrection of Jesus Christ: Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him.²²⁰⁷ The claim is that after Christ was placed in the tomb, His 'soul,' disembodied or otherwise, went into either hell or purgatory, or perhaps both, and preached to the demons and the poor unfortunates He found.

In response, it is meet to quote but a brief excerpt: "*By which also he went and preached*" connotes the agency of the Holy Spirit if we retain the A.V. translation, '*by the Spirit*.'²²⁰⁸ In this view, maintaining the continuity between verses eighteen and nineteen, the same Holy Spirit²²⁰⁹ which raised Christ from the dead had enabled Him to preach to the men of Noah's day through Noah himself. While this interpretation fits the context and is legitimate by twentieth-century standards, it does require some juggling of one's natural understanding of the original text. The alternative interpretation is to understand that before the resurrection someone 'made alive' the human spirit of Jesus so that in this form He preached to the spirits in Hades. This interpretation has problems too; for example, the content of the preaching is supposed to be an announcement of victory rather than the preaching of the gospel message, but the wrong word is used.²²¹⁰ Also, according to Peter,²²¹¹ the gospel is preached to the dead, and the word there definitely means '*preach the gospel*' or '*evangelise*.'^{2212 2213}

The Greek in verse nineteen²²¹⁴ means, '*to proclaim in a manner which must be listened to and obeyed*.' This fits with the sinning world before the time of Christ—such as in the time of Noah, when the entire world was destroyed save eight people—but it sits ill at ease, putting it mildly, with the notion that Christ when dead went in spirit to preach to 'tormented souls' in purgatory or hell. There is no purgatory and no lake of fire for human destruction yet, and Christ was dead for three days and three nights. He went nowhere; His body was in the tomb. The '*preaching unto the spirits in prison*,' was effected long previous to the crucifixion, not after it. These people were dead, figuratively, in their sins: '*How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein*.'²²¹⁵ Christ preached to them when they were alive and living on earth, but in sin, figuratively '*dead*,' and '*in prison*.' So '*he went and preached*'²²¹⁶ is past tense, referring back to Christ's preaching, animated and propelled by the Power of God, the Holy Spirit, before His death.

Yet another text frequently quoted in support of an immortal soul, despite its patent antipathy, is found in Matthew: '*And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is*

²²⁰⁷ | Peter 3:18-22 (sublinear emphasis added)

²²⁰⁸ | Peter 3:18

²²⁰⁹ Power of God.

²²¹⁰ Greek: kerysso; '*to proclaim in a manner which must be listened to and obeyed*.'

²²¹¹ | Peter 4:6

²²¹² Greek: euangelizomai.

²²¹³ *The Parallel Bible Commentary*

²²¹⁴ | Peter 3:19; kerysso, q.v. sup.

²²¹⁵ Rom 6:2

²²¹⁶ | Peter 3:19

*able to destroy body and soul in hell.*²²¹⁷ But if the 'soul' be immortal, then it cannot possibly be capable of destruction in hell. Despite such fundamental wanting, this text continues to be paraded in support of the immortal, and hence indestructible, soul. Often superimposed on this misconception is another, that the person '*able to destroy body and soul in hell*,' is the Devil. Perhaps a little of the blame for the latter lies with the K.J.V. translation, for the word rendered '*hell*,' is the Greek for '*the lake of fire*.'²²¹⁸ Also, the translation '*soul*'²²¹⁹ is misleading, actually meaning '*breath*.' He who is '*able to destroy body and breath in the lake of fire*,' is Christ, and what He destroys is the incorrigibly wicked—forever. In so doing, He destroys the '*body*,' the mortal body, and the '*breath*,' signifying life, for on the sixth day of Creation the Word breathed life into man, and he became a living being. Once these two, the '*body*' and the '*breath*,' are destroyed in the second death, all trace of the wicked will be expunged forever. '*Them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the breath*,' are the wicked of this world, who are not to be feared by the Christian, for they have no control over the physical resurrection to judgement and the second, and final, death. Indeed, the wicked have been consigned to it from the very beginning. By their wicked works they have left themselves exposed to the second death, and will suffer complete and utter annihilation. The word '*destroy*'²²²⁰ patently imports the unavoidable concept of mortality. Final destruction, a complete annihilation of the wicked, while a constant theme throughout Scripture, is alien to both Greek philosophy and 'mainstream' Christianity, so-called.

*'There remaineth therefore a rest*²²²¹ *to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest,*²²²² *he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his. Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest,*²²²³ *lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief. For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and open unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.*'²²²⁴

For those who embrace the pagan belief in an immortal soul in man, the phrase '*dividing asunder of soul and spirit*' is problematic, for man's immortal soul and spirit are the same or of the same genre. There are many who hold that the reference to the '*spirit*' is to the resurrected immortal being, but then it becomes pointless, for anyone can discern between mortal and immortal states. Also, the other bodily references—'*joints and marrow*'—are decidedly human, mortal ones.

²²¹⁷ Mat 10:28

²²¹⁸ Greek: geenna, '*gehenna*'; cp. Tophet, '*unclean*,' refers to Ben-hinnom, Gehenna, and '*the valley of Slaughter*.'

²²¹⁹ Greek: psuche.

²²²⁰ Greek: psuychen apolesia.

²²²¹ Greek: sabbatismoi, '*Sabbath*.'

²²²² Greek: katapausis.

²²²³ Greek: katapausis.

²²²⁴ Heb 4:9-13

The interpretation which accords with the phraseology used, and its sense, is that which assigns the meaning of the spirit in man to the word '*spirit*.' The spirit in mortal man is his mind and mind-set; working two-ways, allowing God to interrogate man's mind, thoughts, and ways,²²²⁵ and '*a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart*.' When God's Holy Spirit is added to man, he is able to discern the word of God.²²²⁶

But that does import a cost, in the opposition of a personified world of evil, comprising Satan and his devils: '*Put on the whole armour of God that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places*.'²²²⁷ There is no 'revolving door' of reincarnation, as made abundantly clear in Hebrews, '*And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment*.'²²²⁸ In believing the satanic lie of some form of inherent immortality, and, as a result, sinning, death passed on all mankind, and separated mankind from the Lord. And without the blood sacrifice of Christ we would all perish in our sins. The soul is corporeal, in its compass of body and mind. Mortal man dies: he does not contain any immortal element whatsoever. Death means death. Death is death.

Immortality

The word '*immortality*' is found only rarely in the Bible, on five occasions, with a sixth if the word '*immortal*' is added, this being typical: '*For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory*.'²²²⁹ Here the word '*immortality*,' from the Greek also meaning '*deathlessness*,'²²³⁰ is set in stark counterpoint to the '*mortal*' body, from the Greek meaning '*to die*,' or '*to be liable to death*.'²²³¹ An equivalent or parallel term, '*incorruptibility*,' from the Greek meaning '*absence of decay*,'²²³² is also found counterpoised by Paul.²²³³ Most certainly, in all of this, there is not even the remotest suggestion of an 'immortal soul' inherent in mortal man.

Despite this, the 'subtle' introduction of the eternal soul and other damnable heresies into the visible Christian church happened early, as can be seen from the many admonitions in Paul's Epistles. Athenagoras,

²²²⁵ Prov 18:14,20:27

²²²⁶ Prov 1:23; cp. I Thes 5:23b, '*and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless until the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ*,' which exhibits three Greek words translated spirit: pneuma, meaning breath; soul: psyche, meaning the animating force; and body: soma, meaning a living or dead body, with the triumvirate / subset not going to heaven upon death to live an immortal life as many aberrantly suppose, but awaiting Christ's Second Coming.

²²²⁷ Eph 6:10-12; better '*evil spirits in high places*.'

²²²⁸ Heb 9:27

²²²⁹ I Cor 15:53,54

²²³⁰ Greek: athanasia.

²²³¹ Greek: thnetos.

²²³² Greek: aphtharsia.

²²³³ I Cor 15:53,54

an Athenian philosopher, became converted to what he thought was Christianity in the latter part of the second-century, and wrote, 'God made man of an immortal soul and a body'; 'the soul [is] incorruptible'; 'men [possess] an immortal soul and rational judgement'; and introduced the concept of an 'immortal nature [in man]'.²²³⁴ Given that Athenagoras was a student of Plato, it is all too apparent where his philosophising on the 'immortal soul' originated.

Tertullian put the matter even more boldly: 'Some things are known even by nature: the immortality of the soul, for instance, is held by many; the knowledge of God is possessed by all. I will use, therefore, the opinion of Plato when asserting "Every soul is immortal." We so accept the soul's immortality as to believe it lost, not in the sense of destruction but of punishment, that is, in Gehenna....If any one supposes that the destruction of soul and flesh in Gehenna refers to an annihilation and end of both substances, as if they were to be consumed, not punished, let him remember that the fire of Gehenna is announced to be eternal, for eternal punishment, and let him recognise that eternity of killing is more to be feared than anything temporal which man could inflict.'²²³⁵ 'Since the soul is simple, not composite, it cannot be dissolved or cease to be.'²²³⁶ This is simply a repetition of Plato's aberrant musings.

The prevalence in mainstream, western, Christian religions of the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, in the sense of its essential and endless permanence, is due in no small measure to the influence of Augustine, who, being familiar with the writings of the Greek philosophers, accorded the pre-eminence to Plato: 'The human soul is truly affirmed to be immortal....it is said to be immortal because in some way it does not cease to live and feel....Death will be eternal; since the soul, through not having God, will not be able to live, nor by dying to escape the pains of the body....The soul can suffer pain and cannot die. Here is found a thing which, since it has sense of pain, is immortal.'²²³⁷

All this supposed immortality in man, irrespective of taxonomy or garb, is confusion, and of Satan, but it has caused literally billions of people to be deceived, including virtually all of mankind now alive. Since first uttered, it has also caused millions of tortured deaths down through the ages in the name of religion, and in the name of the false god of this world: Satan.

²²³⁴ Athenagoris, *The Resurrection of the Dead* (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

²²³⁵ Tertullian, *On the Resurrection of the Flesh*, chpts. 3,35; confusion over the import of the 'eternal fire of Gehenna,' or, as it is frequently termed, the 'lake of fire,' is common. The reason for the eternal (better, 'age-ending') nature of the 'lake of fire' is simply that Satan and his demons will be there consigned to the 'age end of the age ends,' and the 'lake of fire' will maintain until then. With two exceptions—the Antichrist and False Prophet are both consigned to the flames, but kept alive in torment for the duration of the Millennium of rest, q.v. sup.—all incorrigible mortals thrown into the 'lake of fire,' on the other hand, die immediately.

²²³⁶ Tertullian, *On the Soul*, chpt. 14

²²³⁷ Augustine, *City of God*, xiii.2, xxi.3

Not found

Beet concluded: 'The phrase 'the soul immortal,' so frequent and conspicuous in the writings of Plato, we have not found in pre-Christian literature outside the influence of Greek philosophy; nor have we found it in Christian literature until the latter part of the second-century. We have noticed that all the earliest Christian writers who use this phrase were familiar with the teaching of Plato; that one of these, Tertullian, expressly refers both phrase and doctrine to him; and that the early Christian [sic] writers never support this doctrine by appeals to the Bible, but only by arguments similar to those of Plato. We have learnt that by this phrase Plato and the earliest Christian writers who use it asserted the endless and essential permanence of all human souls, and appealed to this doctrine in proof of retribution beyond the grave. But we have failed to find any trace of this doctrine in the Bible....The hope of immortality, however, rests, in the New Testament, not on the nature of the soul, but on "the promise of life in Christ Jesus."' ²²³⁸

Imported immortality?

But despite all, for some genuine inquirers the question still remains, at least in part: Is there any immortality imported or given to humans who repent, are baptised, and receive the gift of the Holy Spirit? Indeed, there are many who contend that this is so, and it is not only the 'born again' deluded, for many sincere Christians, seeking after biblical truth, have come to the conclusion or the feeling that the conjoining of the Holy Spirit with the spirit of man or the indwelling of the Holy Spirit results in an immortal 'something,' whether it be an essence, or recording, or whatever, and that it is this immortal part that allows a resurrection to eternal life.

The biblical passage often quoted in this context is from the epistle of Paul to the Romans, chapter eight, reproduced hereunder, for convenience in referencing. In addition, a near-full commentary and exposition is attempted, even where this gives rise to an excursion beyond the set itinerary: *'There is therefore now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us. Who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you,*

²²³⁸ Beet, Joseph Agar, *The Immortality of the Soul: A Protest*

*the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you. Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may also be glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, Because the creature itself shall also be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.'*²²³⁹

Election

The apostle begins with one signal privilege of true Christians, and describes the character of those to whom it belongs. That '[t]here is no condemnation to them which are in Jesus Christ,' is a statement of triumph. Admittedly, sin is remaining, disturbing, and vexing, but, through the blood sacrifice of Christ, not ruining or damning. It is the unspeakable privilege and comfort of all those '*that are in Christ Jesus,*' that there is now '*no condemnation to them.*' Paul does not say, 'There is no accusation against them,' for that there patently is—from the chief accuser, the Devil,²²⁴⁰ from the beginning, and from his demons, and subsequently from his many willing workers—but the accusation is thrown out, and the indictment quashed, as seen elsewhere: '*And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; Blotting out the handwriting*²²⁴¹ *of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross.*'²²⁴²

²²³⁹ Rom 8:1-25

²²⁴⁰ Greek: *diabolos*, '*traducer,*' *accuser,*' and '*slanderer.*'²²⁴⁰

²²⁴¹ Greek: *cheirographon*, '*legal document in the form of an accounting record or bill of account.*'

²²⁴² Col 2:13,14

In the East, a bond was cancelled by being nailed to a post. Our bond of guilt, under the Law, was cancelled by Christ, by nailing it to His cross. Our sins were forgiven, through Christ taking them on His own head, and suffering the penalty of the Law: death. Thus the '*handwriting of ordinances*' is the bond of accusation and judgement against all mankind, based on transgression of the Law: sin. By the removal of the accusing handwriting, the indictment, our sin is blotted out, our trespasses forgiven. So it is our penalty under the Law, the death penalty, which was nailed to the cross, and not the Law.

'Paul speaks of Jesus '*blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us.*'²²⁴³ Now the word that Paul used for '*handwriting*' literally means a '*holograph*.'²²⁴⁴ It goes on to mean a '*signature*,' and then a '*written agreement*.' But it came to mean technically a '*written agreement acknowledging a debt*,' a '*certificate of debt*,' a '*bond*.'.....This was a document which acknowledges a debt that had to be paid. It was that that Jesus wiped out for us. Let us remember the literal meaning of the Greek translated '*blotting out*': it means '*to wipe out*.'²²⁴⁵ In New Testament times documents were written on papyrus. The ink was made of soot, mixed with gum and diluted with water. The characteristic of this ink is that it has no acid in it and therefore does not bite into the paper. It will last a very long time and will retain its colour, but if, soon after it is written, a wet sponge was passed over the surface of the papyrus, the writing could be sponged off as completely as writing might be sponged from a slate. Now the interesting thing is this—a commoner word for cancelling a certificate of debt was chiazein. Chiazein means to write the Greek letter chi, which was the same shape as the capital 'X,' right across the document.....But Paul does not say that Jesus Christ 'crossed out'²²⁴⁶ the record of our debt; he says that he '*wiped it out*.'²²⁴⁷ If you 'cross a thing out,' beneath the cross, the record still remains visible for anyone to read, but if you '*wipe it out*,' the record is gone, obliterated forever. It is as if God, for Jesus' sake, not only 'crossed out' our debt, but '*wiped it out*.' There is many a man who can forgive, but who never really forgets the injury that was done to him; but God not only forgives but wipes out the very memory of the debt....God's forgiveness is that supreme forgiveness which can forgive and forget.'²²⁴⁸

Paul does not say, 'There is nothing in them that deserves condemnation,' for that there is, and they see it, and own it, and mourn over it, and condemn themselves for it; but it shall not be their ruin. He does not say, 'There is no cross, no affliction, to them, nor no displeasure in the affliction,' but there is no condemnation. The upright may be chastened of the Lord, but not condemned with the carnal world.

²²⁴³ Col 2:14

²²⁴⁴ Greek: cheiographos.

²²⁴⁵ Greek: exalphein.

²²⁴⁶ Greek: chiazein.

²²⁴⁷ Greek: exalephein.

²²⁴⁸ Barclay, William, *A New Testament Word Book*, pp.47,48

It is the undoubted character of all of those who are in Christ Jesus, as to be freed from condemnation, that, *'they walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.'*²²⁴⁹ The character is given off by their course and their way. They are led by the Holy Spirit, guided by the Holy Spirit, informed by the Holy Spirit, and energised by the Holy Spirit. They are not carnally minded. The concerns of the flesh hold no infatuation for them, or sway over them, for they are but nothing. No provision is made for them. The driver is not human greed, vanity, lust, or any of the other and myriad failings of the unreconstructed mind of man; for all these are carnal.

This great truth, thus laid down, is illustrated in the following verses excerpted from Romans chapter eight, amongst others, showing how the 'elect' come by this great privilege, and how they answer to the character of the Spirit:

1. The first question addressed is how came the 'elect' by these privileges, the privileges of justification, that *'there is no condemnation to us,'* the privilege of sanctification, that *'we walk after the Spirit, and not after the flesh,'* which is no less our privilege than it is our duty. That the *'law could not do it,'* is patent. It can neither justify nor sanctify, neither free us from guilt, nor from the power of sin, having neither the promises either of pardon or grace. The Law made nothing perfect: *'It was weak.'*²²⁵⁰ Some attempt was made toward these blessed ends, but it could not accomplish them. Yet that weakness was not through any defect in the Law in itself, but *'through the flesh,'* by which we became incapable of keeping the Law. That the ceremonial Law could never take away sin is sure, *'For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.'* *'The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus does it.'*²²⁵¹ From thence we receive both a pardon and a new nature, and release from the Law of sin and death through Christ having paid the penalty in our stead; that is, both from the guilt and power of sin; from the curse of the Law, and the conduct of the flesh. The 'elect' are pardoned, and have a new hope, looking forward to the actual realisation of the New Covenant;²²⁵² a better covenant with better promises; an everlasting covenant. *'For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only be-*

²²⁴⁹ Rom 8:1

²²⁵⁰ Heb 7:19a

²²⁵¹ Heb 10:4

²²⁵² Jer. Bk. 1, p.45 (slightly paraphrased):

'The New Covenant itself is made with the nation. The religion remains the religion of Israel, but with this crucial difference: Formerly it was a national religion, the national religion of the Israelites, the people of the covenant. Now it is a world religion, and while formerly, Gentile proselytes had been few in number, they were now graft into Israel on a wholesale basis. This still remains as Israel, for the promises of the New Covenant still vest in Israel. God and Israel are still the contracting parties. The national restrictions have been surmounted. The step from nationalism to universalism was immense. It must be borne in mind that it was an unconditional national covenant that God made with Abraham.

*gotten Son of God.*²²⁵³ As Paul has it, '*God sending his own Son,*' is the very foundation of this release from sin and the penalty thereof. Christ came to do what the Law could never deliver. This is expounded in Hebrews, '*For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? Because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins. But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins. Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not, but a body thou hast prepared me: In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God. Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offerings for sin thou wouldst not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law; Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.*'²²⁵⁴ Paraphrasing verse three for added clarity, '*God, sending his only begotten Son, in the likeness of sinful flesh, and a sacrifice for sin, condemned sin in the flesh, which the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh.*'²²⁵⁵ This was the '*once for all,*' the sole '*sacrifice for sin,*' meeting with the complete approbation of God. Judæo-Christians do not need to offer sin offerings. Judæo-Christians are prohibited from doing so;

2. The second question is exactly how Christ appeared: '*in the likeness of sinful flesh.*' Not sinful, for He was holy, harmless, undefiled; but in the likeness of that flesh which was sinful. He took upon Himself that nature which had been corrupted, through sin, though being perfectly abstracted from the corruption of it. His being circumcised, redeemed, baptised by John the Baptist, '*suffer[ing] it to be so for now,*' speaks the likeness of sinful flesh. The bitings of the fiery serpents were cured by looking steadfastly upon a serpent of brass, which had the shape, though free from the venom, of the serpents that bit the children of Israel; this a foretelling of Christ, as confirmed by Christ Himself in John, '*And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up.*'²²⁵⁶ It was great condescension, that He who was God should be made in the likeness of flesh; but much greater, that He who was holy, should be made in the likeness of sinful flesh;

²²⁵³ John 3:16-18

²²⁵⁴ Heb 10:1-10

²²⁵⁵ Rom 8:3 (paraphrased; with a comma after '*Son,*' as the best Greek copies have it).

²²⁵⁶ John 3:14; the brazen serpent, or serpent of brass, or bronze—depending on the particular translation adopted—was eventually destroyed by King Hezekiah, as seen from II Kings 18:4b, '*and brake in pieces the brasen serpent that Moses had made: for unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it: and he called it Nehushtan.*' This was but a recrudescence of primitive and pagan serpent worship on the part of the Israelites: ophiolatry.

3. Thirdly, what was done by this appearance of His: for *'Sin was condemned,'* that is, God did therein more than ever manifest His hatred of sin; and not only so, for all that are Christ's, both the damning and domineering power of sin is broken and taken out of the way. He that is *'condemned,'* can neither *'accuse,'* nor *'rule';* his testimony is null, and likewise is his authority. Thus by Christ sin is condemned; though it live and remain for now, its life in the saints, the *'elect,'* is taken out of the way: nullified. Paul explains further, *'And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.'*²²⁵⁷ And so, being so made, when He was condemned, sin was condemned, *'in the flesh of Christ.'* So was satisfaction made to divine justice, and a way made for the salvation of the sinner;

4. Fourthly, the investigation of the happy effect upon the converted and imbued: *'that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us.'* Both in the justification and sanctification of the *'elect'* the righteousness of the Law is fulfilled. A righteousness of satisfaction for the breach of the Law is fulfilled by the imputation of Christ's complete and perfect righteousness, which answers the utmost demands of the Law, fulfilling the Law, to its ultimate. As Christ said, *'Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.'*²²⁵⁸ The Greek word for *'fulfil'*²²⁵⁹ means *'to fill up,' 'to fill to the full,'* or *'to complete.'* It does not mean *'destroy'* or *'do away with.'* The fulfilling of the Law, the *'royal law,'* the Law of love, is written on the hearts of the *'elect.'* That it is the fulfilling of the Law is confirmed in, *'Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.'*²²⁶⁰ Though the righteousness of the Law is not fulfilled by us, yet, by dint of the Holy Spirit, it is fulfilled in us, for our faith is counted unto righteousness. Those of *'us who walk not'* in the ways of the carnal, act from spiritual and not carnal principles. But as for others, those wilfully rejecting the only means of salvation open to man, the righteousness of the Law will be fulfilled upon them, in their destruction;

5. Fifthly, how does the *'elect'* answer to this character? By looking to the mind, for those after the flesh mind the things of the flesh; those after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. By examining what is minded, what is deemed important, what attracts and compels attention, whether it be the things of the flesh, or the things of the Spirit.

²²⁵⁷ II Cor 5:18-21

²²⁵⁸ Mat 5:17; Eph 4:10, *'He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.'* The Greek: *plerose ta panta*, literally means, *'fill the all-things.'* *Plerose* means to fill by diffusing a thing throughout, e.g. as by filling a room with smoke; also to flourish abundantly, as by filling the sky with stars or furnishing a garden with plants. It is derived from a word which has the significance of filling a vessel or a hollow place.

²²⁵⁹ Greek: *pleroo*.

²²⁶⁰ Rom 13:10

Carnal pleasure, worldly profit and honour, the things of sense and immediacy, are the things of the flesh, which all the unregenerate mind. The favour of God, the welfare of fellow beings, an outpouring concern and love for others, generosity, concern for matters eternal, and all the rest like, are the things and concerns of those of the Spirit. The man is as the mind is, for the mind is the forge of thought, *'For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he.'*

²²⁶¹ The question can be put thus: Which way do the thoughts move with most pleasure? On what do they dwell with most satisfaction? The mind is the seat of wisdom: which way go the projects and contrivances? Is there a *'savour[ing of] the things of the flesh.'*?²²⁶² For most certainly it does matter what is savoured; what truths, what comforts, are relished; and what are held most agreeable. In order to caution against carnal-mindedness, Paul shows the great misery and malignity of it, comparing it with the unspeakable excellence and comfort of spiritual-mindedness;

6. Sixthly, *'The wages of sin is death,'* and, likewise, *'to be carnally minded is death.'* This is eternal death, the second death. *'Now she that liveth in [carnal] pleasure is dead while she liveth,'* as stated elsewhere by Paul.²²⁶³ There is no future whatsoever in those ways, for the devotees therein are of their father, Satan, the Devil. The unregenerate mind^{2264 2265} is enmity toward God, and *'they that are in the flesh cannot please God,'*²²⁶⁶ and,

7. Lastly, for the 'elect,' however, the Spirit is life, and life eternal beyond this mortal realm, because of righteousness, *'if it be that the Spirit of God dwell in you.'*²²⁶⁷

Fundamental to understanding the biblical doctrine of election is to define the term. What does the word "Election" mean? Election *'signifies to single out, to select, to choose, to take one and leave another. Election means that God has singled out certain ones to be the objects of His saving grace, while others are left to suffer the just punishment of their sins. It means that before the foundation of the world, God chose out of the mass of*

²²⁶¹ Prov 23:7

²²⁶² Mat 16:23 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

²²⁶³ I Tim 5:6 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

²²⁶⁴ II Cor 4:4, shows that the god of this world is Satan; unregenerate man is in bondage to Satan, the god of this world. He is, therefore, incompetent to evaluate the truth of God.

²²⁶⁵ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol.1, p.350 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets): 'After all, there are advantages in being a beggar; a man [is] rid of all the responsibility of working and of making a living.

There are advantages in being an invalid.

There are people who, in actual fact, do not wish their chains to be broken. W.B. Yeats tells of Lionel Johnson, the scholar and poet. Johnson was an alcoholic. He had, as he said himself, "a craving that made every atom of his body cry out." But, when it was suggested that should undergo treatment to overcome this craving, his answer quite frankly was: "I do not want to be cured."

There are not a few people who in their heart of hearts do not dislike their weakness; and there are many people, who, if they were honest, would have to say that they do not wish to lose their sins.'

²²⁶⁶ Rom 8:8b

²²⁶⁷ Rom 8:9b

our fallen humanity a certain number and predestinated them to be conformed to the image of His Son.^{'2268}

Scriptural evidence for election is abundant:

1. *'Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name.'*²²⁶⁹
2. *'According as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world.'*²²⁷⁰
3. *'Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will.'*²²⁷¹
4. *'Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you.'*²²⁷²
5. *'I have chosen you out of the world,'*²²⁷³
6. *'The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his will, and see that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth.'*²²⁷⁴
7. *'For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.'*²²⁷⁵
8. *'Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.'*²²⁷⁶
9. *'God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation.'*²²⁷⁷
10. *'Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience.'*²²⁷⁸

²²⁶⁸ ex Sound Doctrine net; Pink, Arthur Walkington, *Attributes of God; The Doctrine of Sanctification: Discerning Real and False Notions of Holiness.*

²²⁶⁹ Acts 15:14

²²⁷⁰ Eph 1:4

²²⁷¹ Eph 1:5

²²⁷² John 15:16

²²⁷³ John 15:19; *Bible Readings for the Home Circle*, p.121:

'Why does all the world unite to hate the true Christian?

'If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.' John 15:19.'

²²⁷⁴ Acts 22:14

²²⁷⁵ Rom 8:29

²²⁷⁶ Rom 8:30

²²⁷⁷ II Thes 2:13

11. *'But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.'*²²⁷⁹

12. *'Thou whom I have taken from the ends of the earth, and called thee from the chief men thereof, and said unto thee, Thou art my servant; I have chosen thee, and not cast thee away.'*²²⁸⁰ This passage shows God's distinguishing love.

13. *'All that the Father giveth me shall come to me.'*²²⁸¹

14. *'No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him.'*²²⁸²

15. *'And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the LORD: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.'*²²⁸³

16. *'Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.'*²²⁸⁴

17. *'(For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;),'*²²⁸⁵ and,

18. *'For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.'*²²⁸⁶

These passages and others show that God elects individuals to salvation. The election is a personal election, not general. No other interpretation can be put on the texts that embody the doctrine of election.

Signs of election

The doctrine of election should cause no one who hears the gospel to despair or be uncertain as to their state and standing before the Lord. The signs of an elect person may be listed.

1. The elect have given themselves completely to the Lord: *'All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me.'*²²⁸⁷

²²⁷⁸ I Peter 1:2

²²⁷⁹ I Peter 2:9

²²⁸⁰ Isaiah 41:9

²²⁸¹ John 6:37

²²⁸² John 6:44

²²⁸³ Acts 13:48

²²⁸⁴ Rom 11:15

²²⁸⁵ Rom 9:11

²²⁸⁶ Eph 2:10

2. The elect are characterized by gospel obedience, including obedience to the Law: Peter speaks of Christians as, *'elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience.'*²²⁸⁸

3. The elect continue to grow in grace and holiness: *'Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord,'*²²⁸⁹ and,

4. The elect remain faithful to the doctrines of grace and persevere in the sphere of faith: They are able to say at the end of life, *'I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.'*²²⁹⁰

Indwelling Spirit

And here is the nub: exactly what does the indwelling of the Spirit import, insofar as immortality or any element thereof in mortal life is concerned? In Romans chapter eight, the Spirit is variously called: The Spirit of God, the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, and, by implication and correlation, the Holy Spirit.

Now to the verses which cause controversy: *'But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you. Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may also be glorified together.'*²²⁹¹

In broaching this subject, there is need of some definition, and, in the first instance, a definition of the Holy Spirit, for there is doubt among some as to what it is. While it is not the third member of the Triune or Trinity, the matter is not helped by the habit of the K.J.V. of referring to the Holy Spirit as the Holy Ghost, personalised with *'he,'* as is *'wisdom'* in Proverbs, this last presumably from the Trinitarian connection rather than from the gender of the word itself. Holy Ghost is a quite woeful translation from the Greek meaning *'a curr-*

²²⁸⁷ John 6:37

²²⁸⁸ I Pet. 1:2

²²⁸⁹ Heb 12:14

²²⁹⁰ II Tim. 4:7

²²⁹¹ Rom 8:9-16

ent of air,' 'a breath,' 'a breeze,' and, by implication, 'a spirit.'²²⁹² Even Holy Spirit, while a deal closer, in today's spiritualist-oriented world does not impart the correct meaning to most readers. Unfortunately, 'ghosts' and 'spirits' conjure up strange imaginings of matters occult to many.

The Holy Spirit is, in reality, the Breath of God, the very Power of God. When it is perceived in terms of this last, Holy Power, it becomes more real and understandable to most people. It is this very same that is referred to by Paul in Romans: *'Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God.'*²²⁹³

In addition, there is need to crystallise a definition of the '*spirit of man*.' Some hold that this is either immortal from the beginning, or becomes immortal upon impregnation by the Holy Spirit. This concept leads, in turn, to the litany of the begotten, the born again, the born from on high, the born of the Spirit, the slain in the Spirit, the slain in Jesus, and such like. In point: *'But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Spirit teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.'*²²⁹⁴

The phrases, '*the spirit of the world*,' '*man's wisdom*,' '*what knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him*,' all attest to one: that the spirit of man is man's thought, mind, intellect. Mortal man dies and returns to dust, and in that day his very thoughts perish, *'His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish.'*²²⁹⁵ Carnal and mortal man has a mortal spirit of man: his mind, or intellect. The thoughts thereof die with him. The spirit of man is mortal.

But what once the Holy Power is conferred? Does this render immortal the mortal spirit in man, or any part thereof? This is a most important subject, because if the 'divine essence' in man is believed, or any of its variants, mankind is placed back in the old bind of Satan, having been deluded, as happened in the garden of Eden, into believing that mortals have, in however small a way, some inherent immortal element, or some immortal element that can be imported.²²⁹⁶ As this belief separates mankind from God, and binds us to Satan, it is essential that the doctrine be correctly discerned.

The core text is: *'But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.'*²²⁹⁷ Para-

²²⁹² Greek: pneuma.

²²⁹³ Rom 15:19 (sublinear emphasis added)

²²⁹⁴ I Cor 2:10-14

²²⁹⁵ Psa 146:4

²²⁹⁶ e.g., by eating the forbidden fruit.

²²⁹⁷ Rom 8:11

phrasing this, 'If the Power of God that raised up Jesus from the dead cohabits in you, God shall also vitalise your mortal body by His Power.' If there is a key word in the verse, it is 'quicken.' This word is translated from the Greek meaning 'to vitalise.'²²⁹⁸ In turn, this word is derived from the Greek meaning 'a live being, an animal.'²²⁹⁹ In context, it does not import connotations of immortality. Rather the opposite, in fact, for live animals are wholly mortal; here it speaks of 'vitalis[ing a] mortal body.'

As is well known, the more modern versions of a claimed 'immortal element' in the so-called 'born again Christian' make much play between 'begotten' and 'born,' even though they are translations of the same Greek word, which actually means 'only born.'²³⁰⁰ The ploy adopted is to introduce differentiation in the various biblical texts where the word occurs, and, by so doing, either to infer the notion that on baptism the believer is imbued or impregnated with some measure of immortal Spirit, however little, and that this grows over time, as does a seed into a plant, or as a foetus develops in the womb, and by the end of the mortal life, or gestation as it were, the entire is fit and complete for transformation to the eternal plane, or alternatively, that the recipient of baptism in its 'born again' form is saved from the beginning and for all time, and has the very Spirit of God within him as part of him. The spoor of this strangely dualistic 'begotten-born' notion as it first took hold and later developed in many of the so-called 'churches of God' and its 'spin-outs' can be seen from the following illustrations:

1. A nineteenth-century statement of beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventists²³⁰¹ contained the following: 'The new birth comprises the entire change necessary to fit us for the kingdom of God, and consists of two parts: first, a moral change, wrought by conversion and a Christian life; second, a physical change at the Second Coming of Christ, whereby, if dead, we are raised incorruptible, and if living, are changed to immortality in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye';
2. This was reiterated before 'The Great War' in a yearbook,²³⁰² and in a statement on doctrine,²³⁰³ but was omitted in subsequent statements;²³⁰⁴
3. The matter of development or mutation is discussed by Nickels: 'William C. Long in April 1893, wrote in the [Bible] Advocate: "We are begotten of God; we are born of the Spirit. These two events do not occur at the same time. We are begotten at conversion; we are born at the resurrection"....this....was defended by the church for many years. In 1955, the Denver Group Ministerial Council identified new birth and conversion as synonymous

²²⁹⁸ Greek: zoopoieo.

²²⁹⁹ Greek: zoon.

²³⁰⁰ Greek: monogenes.

²³⁰¹ published 1872AD

²³⁰² 1912AD

²³⁰³ 1914AD

²³⁰⁴ 1931AD, 1980AD

terms. The 1974 doctrinal statement S.T.P. finally adopted the position: "Conversion, also called the new birth, is the process by which one is changed from his old, sinful life into a new creature in Christ";²³⁰⁵

4. The same author continues the historical record: 'Indeed, the time of the new birth has been a contentious issue for some time and is mentioned as such, along with other doctrines at the 1929 General Conference of the Church of God at Stanberry. The time of the new birth was an issue at that conference, at which time it seems to have been 'dumped' by the major branch of the Church of God.'²³⁰⁶

5. The groupings known as the Russellites,²³⁰⁷ who laterally fell under the influence of Rutherford, and adopted the name 'Jehovah's Witnesses',²³⁰⁸ had various beliefs over this period, but after the death of Russell,²³⁰⁹ many doctrinal changes were introduced, throwing the organisation into turmoil and resulting in the formation of a number of large splinter groups. The splinter groups generally clung to Russell's doctrine of the mortality of the soul, but the rump demurred, thus forming the Jehovah's Witnesses, with many divergent doctrines, including that of the 'upper class born again Christian'²³¹⁰ ultimately residing in heaven, with the rump residing on earth.

6. Russellites, Seventh-day Adventists, Church of God Seventh-day, and many other 'spin-outs,' all maintain a differentiation between '*begotten*' and '*born*,' claiming the ability to discern which applies where. Russell probably came up with the most 'original' distinction where he wrote: 'The Greek word gennao and its derivatives, sometimes translated '*begotten*' and sometime '*born*,' really contains both ideas, and should be translated by either one of these two English words, according to the sense of the passage in which it occurs. The two ideas, begetting and birth, are always in the word, so that if the one is stated, the other is always implied, as birth is the natural consequence of begetting, and begetting the natural antecedent to birth. When the active agent with which gennao is associated is a male, it should be translated '*begotten*;' when a female, '*born*.'^{2311 2312}

This is trite nonsense. In this view, the Holy Spirit (feminine), which is the Power of God, has a different result from God acting Himself (masculine), that is, acting with His Power (feminine). The confusion engendered by the desire to imbue the Sacred Word with man's imagined meanings is plain to see. Naturally, there is no such differentiation in Greek, where the word means '*born*' or '*re-generated*',²³¹³ with the necessary distinction

²³⁰⁵ Nickels, R. C., *Bible Doctrine*, pp.11;13

²³⁰⁶ Nickels, R. C., *A History of the Seventh Day Church of God*, p.222 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

²³⁰⁷ in 1844AD

²³⁰⁸ in 1931AD

²³⁰⁹ in 1916AD

²³¹⁰ a reference to the 144,000 from the twelve tribes, cf. Revelation chpt. 7.

²³¹¹ thus I John 2:29,3:9,4:7,5:1,18, gennao should be '*begotten*,' because God (masculine) is the active agent.

²³¹² Russell, C. T., *Studies in the Scriptures*, Series 1, 'The Plan of the Ages,' p.278

²³¹³ Greek: gennao.

maintained between *'born of God'* in the fleshly, mortal, still sinning sense through receipt of the Holy Spirit and *'born of God'* or *'born anew'* of the Spirit in the soon-coming kingdom of God as a sinless immortal being. John's first epistle readership could so distinguish.

While convulsions were taking place, largely in the U.S.A., but also elsewhere, in both Scotland and England there were church groupings which adhered to the straightforward meaning and import of *'born of the Spirit.'* Morgan, confirming the existence of sabbatarian beliefs in Scotland in the early part of the twentieth-century, states: 'It was clearly understood that man's destiny was to be born into the family of God.'²³¹⁴

The birth at the resurrection, immortal, from the previous and wholly mortal condition, was well understood, as that *'new birth'* was held correctly to occur at the resurrection, and not in any way, shape, or form at baptism. The words of Christ are patently clear and leave no doubt in the matter: *'That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.'*²³¹⁵ *The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.'*²³¹⁶ Those *'born of the Spirit'* are spirit beings. Those claiming to be *'born again of the Spirit,'* living here and now, are still mortal, and deluded. The absurdity of their claim is for all to see, and touch. Peter uses the phrases, *'begotten again to a lively hope,'* and, *'born again incorruptible,'*²³¹⁷ coming from the Greek, meaning *'to thoroughly change the mind of one, so that he lives a new life, one conformed to the will of God.'*²³¹⁸ The first usage is in a mortal sense, but the latter is in a resurrected, immortal sense, for sinning, mortal man is unable to live a life conforming to God's will.

But there is even more, for the *'elect,'* comprising the aggregate of the dead-in-Christ and the *'elect'* alive at the time of the Second Coming, will most certainly not be raised in a mortal body, confirmed by Paul, *'In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.'*²³¹⁹ This conversion to immortality will only happen at the Parousia.²³²⁰

The indwelling of Jesus Christ, through the power of the Holy Spirit in the Judæo-Christian believer is described in a sermon by Jones: 'This is one truth [amongst myriad] that makes Christianity unique and distinctive in its pre-eminence over all the other religions of the world today. Consider any of them, whichever one you choose, and you will discover that since the founder or founders of that religion have died, none of the followers have had any experiential knowledge of such indwelling on the part of their leader, or leaders. Any such continued presence, or experience, would be utterly impossible. It would be unthinkable. All of those other religious

²³¹⁴ Morgan, J., *Church of God in Scotland*, p.1

²³¹⁵ Greek: anōthen, 'from the top,' 'from above'; i.e., in context, *'anew.'*

²³¹⁶ John 3:6-8

²³¹⁷ I Peter 1:3,23

²³¹⁸ Greek: anagennao; according to Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon.

²³¹⁹ I Cor 15:52,53

²³²⁰ *'arrival,' 'presence';* that in the air.

leaders and would-be prophets are now dead, and in their graves are awaiting the judgement of God. But not so with Christianity! Christianity lives because Christ lives....now He lives in the heart of every true believer.'²³²¹

Finney expounds on this fundamental truth: 'The Spirit of Christ, then, or the real deity of Christ, dwells in the truly spiritual believer. But this fact needs to be spiritually apprehended, and kept distinctly and continually in view. Christ not only in heaven, but Christ within us, as really and truly inhabiting our bodies as we do, as really in us as we are in ourselves, is the teaching of the Bible, and must be spiritually apprehended by a divine, personal, and inward revelation, to secure our abiding in Him. We need not only the real presence of Christ within us, but we need His manifested presence to sustain us in hours of conflict....Yes, it is wonderful to have within our hearts as Christians the personal and abiding presence of Jesus Christ, the Son of the Living God. Let us, therefore, testify to this truth with all assurance and boldness. With the Apostle [Paul] may we ever feel ready and glad to bear our witness: "*We know that he abideth in us.*"

The Apostle [Paul] tells us how the indwelling of Christ as our heavenly guest actually takes place in the hearts of the true believers, "*Hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the spirit which he hath given us.*" Through the work of the Holy Spirit, Christ now dwells in the hearts of Christians. In "*the days of his flesh,*"²³²² when He lived in a human body, He chose to be limited in the scope of His ministry. In other words, practically, it was out of the question for Him to be in more than one place at a given time. But after our Lord ascended into heaven, the Holy Spirit came to earth at Pentecost and filled the hearts of all the believers gathered together in prayer. Because of infilling by the Holy Spirit, the lives of those early believers were transformed, so that they had personal piety and power such as they had never known before. Also the Scriptures clearly reveal, when they experienced this blessed infilling, they became conscious of Christ's indwelling presence....[but they were human, not spirit beings, and they still fell in sin like all humans, save for One].

Today many professing Christians are living without power, victory, and joy. The reason seems to be simply this: they have not yet fully yielded themselves to God in glad obedience to His will. They have not yet admitted the living Christ to their hearts through the infilling of the Spirit....Surely they cannot testify with the Apostle Paul: "*I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.*"²³²³

Today, we need desperately to rediscover the difference between these two stages in Christian experience. If we are ever going to produce the sort of believers suited for our day and time, we all need to realise that there is a vast difference between accepting Jesus as Saviour....with only enough religion to make them

²³²¹ Jones, Howard O., *The Indwelling Christ*, sermon in 1957AD (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

²³²² Heb 5:7

²³²³ Gal 2:20

feel restless and wretched....and [those] knowing Him as our indwelling guest: *"Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."*^{2324 2325}

Christ's mortal resurrection

When Christ was raised from the grave, after the crucifixion and burial, He was raised mortal, as Christ's own recorded words in Luke: *'Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. And when he had thus spoken, he shewed them his hands and his feet.'*²³²⁶ The disciples thought that they were seeing a spirit, but this was quickly dismissed, *'Saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon. And they told what things were done in the way, and how he was known of them in breaking of bread. And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit. And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? And why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: Handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. And when he had thus spoken, he shewed them his hands and his feet. And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat? And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. And he took it, and did eat before them.'*²³²⁷ Christ said that He was not a spirit, for He had what a spirit lacks: flesh and bones. He ate fish, honeycomb, and bread, just as a mortal, for He was mortal.²³²⁸

Earlier, Christ had prophesied His death and resurrection three days later in John: *'Then answered the Jews and said unto him, What sign shewest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things? Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days? But he spake of the temple of his body. When therefore he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them; and they believed the scripture, and the word which Jesus had said.'*²³²⁹ Given that the 'temple' reference was to His mortal body, which was to be destroyed by the Jews and others, likewise it's raising up was a reference to the resurrection of His mortal body.

The derivation of the 'sign' that the Jews here demanded of Christ as proof of His being the Messiah is based on an old Jewish tradition flowing from their interpretation of Malachi.²³³⁰ The Jews expected their

²³²⁴ Phlp 1:6

²³²⁵ Finney, Charles G., *Sanctification* (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

²³²⁶ Luke 24:39,40

²³²⁷ Luke 24:34-43

²³²⁸ comp. appearances of Word / Christ in table sup. for further detail.

²³²⁹ John 2:18-22 (sublinear emphasis added)

²³³⁰ Mal 3:1

Messiah to come to the then Second Temple, and give them a wondrous and miraculous sign by way of proof of His divine powers, in order that they should immediately recognise Him, and flock to Him. They recognised that Christ was fulfilling Scripture in cleansing the Temple²³³¹ of its moneychangers and extortion, and so they looked for a final, confirming proof, to their eyes, in some wonderful miracle. He did give proof, by way of a wonderful miracle, but they were too blind to see it for what it was: confirmation of key prophecies contained in the Scriptures. Only after His crucifixion and resurrection did His own disciples realise the import of what He had said, and manage to link it back to the prophecies in the Bible.

This was not an isolated incident. Christ gave forewarning of the self-same sign in Matthew, *'But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's²³³² belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.'*²³³³ Here Christ gave notice that the debased state of the people at that time precluded any 'sign' other than that of the prophet

²³³¹ Barclay, William, *Ethics in a Permissive Society*, pp.158,159 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'[T]he record of the cleansing of the Temple by Jesus [is found in] (Mat 21:12,13; Mark 11:15,16; Luke 19:45,46; John 2:13-17) [John 2 actually refers to an earlier event, near the start of His ministry]. Here [are] the only incidents in the New Testament where we find Jesus moved to violence; [they] must have been incident[s] of special significance. Jesus drove out of the temple courts the changers of money and the sellers of sacrificial victims. At the Passover time the temple tax was paid. The temple tax was about half a shekel. It does not sound much, but it has to be remembered that the average day's pay in Palestine in the time of Jesus amounted to about four new pence; and this means that the temple tax represented about two days' pay—a quite considerable sum. Since it was the ambition of every Jew to keep one Passover in Jerusalem [this is a much more recent Jewish modification—in Jesus' time, annual attendance was the norm, q.v. sup. 'the small Passover' 'fall-back'], the city was crowded with Jews who had come from all over the world. Since they came from all over the world, they brought all kinds of currency—Roman, Greek, Egyptian, Tyrian, Phoenician. For all normal purposes, all the coinages were equally acceptable. But the temple tax had to be paid [Mat 17:24-27 sets the rate at half a 'stater' (in Greek); a 'stater' or didrachma being payment for two] either in shekels of the sanctuary or Galilean half-shekels. This was because these were the only two coins which did not have a king's head on them. To the Jew, a coin with a king's head on it was a graven image, especially if the king was deified. So the temple authorities had set up stalls in the temple where the other currencies could be changed into the right currency in which to pay the tax. It was, on the face of it, a convenient arrangement, but, for every coin changed, the changers made a charge equivalent to about one new penny, and if the transaction involved the giving of change, another new penny was charged. So a pilgrim might well be charged an extra two pence to enable him to pay his tax in the right currency—and remember that two new pence was about half a day's wage for a working man. It was blatant exploitation of simple people.

As for the sellers of pigeons [usually bought by the poor], they had, if anything, an even better ramp. A man might bring his own pigeons to the temple to sacrifice, birds which he had bought outside. But every animal for sacrifice had to be without blemish and so there were temple inspectors, and if the animal had been bought outside the temple, they would certainly find a flaw in it and direct the worshipper to the temple stalls where victims which had already been examined were for sale. Again it seems a convenient arrangement, but outside the temple a pair of pigeons could cost as little as one new penny, and inside the temple they could cost as much as seventy-five new pence [over five weeks' wages!]. Again, it was sheer conscienceless exploitation, and exploitation practiced in the name of religion. Jesus was moved to the use of force. He whipped the sellers [actually the tables, and the animals to disperse them; not the persons of the sellers], put the animals out of the temple and overturned the tables of the money-changers. And what moved Him to this violence was the sight of deliberate and highly profitable exploitation of people's credulity or trustfulness, or, worse, by the exploitation of their need, and that incurs the wrath of Jesus—and it still happens.'

²³³² viz., great fish.

²³³³ Mat 12:39,40

Jonah. They would still have their '*sign*,' of course, but their religious and moral condition would render it ineffective, so far as they were concerned. They would not recognise it, just as many today fail to recognise His mortal resurrection.

A text quoted by some in claimed support of an immortal resurrection from the grave by Christ is found in Romans: '*Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.*'²³³⁴ The key word in this tract is '*declared*,' taken by some to imply a declaration of the then fact of an immortal resurrection. The Greek here translated '*declared*,' actually means '*appointed*,' or '*marked out by unmistakable signs*.'²³³⁵ Green's Literal Translation renders verse four, '*Who was marked out the Son of God in power, according to the Spirit of Holiness, by resurrection of the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord*,' again confirming the '*sign*.' Thus it is Christ, appointed or marked out by unmistakable signs, to be the Son of God by a resurrection from the dead, that is in the purview. The unmistakable signs given were:

1. His resurrection after three days and three nights in the grave; and,
2. His body suffering no corruption.²³³⁶

In Romans there is a straightforward statement of fact made by Paul.²³³⁷ Christ is the only person who could have been the Messiah by dint of His complying with these two markers: He did rise after three days and three nights, and His body suffered no corruption. For the latter to rank as '*an unmistakable sign*,' it had to be seen; it had to be patent. In other words, people had to see Christ risen in His mortal body and, in addition, that it had suffered no corruption. If Christ had risen from the grave immortal, then no one would have been able to have seen His mortal body, corrupted or otherwise, and therefore would have been unable to witness to His physical resurrection with a body that had not suffered corruption.

To witness to something, one has to see it. To be able to witness that the mortal body of Christ had not suffered corruption after death, they had to see that self-same mortal body raised up after death, and see that it had suffered no corruption.

These were the '*key*' signs of the Messiah upon His death: three days and three nights and a mortal-body resurrection. That is why Christ had to show Himself to His disciples, had to let them, and others, touch Him, handle Him, in order that they might know of a certainty that He was raised flesh-and-blood, and His body

²³³⁴ Rom 1:3,4 (sublinear emphasis added)

²³³⁵ Greek: horizo.

²³³⁶ stated by David, Psa 16:10, '*For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer they Holy One to see corruption.*' '*Hell*,' Hebrew: sheol, means '*grave*;' and '*soul*,' Hebrew: nephesh, means '*being*,' '*person*,' or '*body*.' The word is used widely in meaning in the O.T., including '*man*,' '*mind*,' '*lust*,' and '*mortality*.'

²³³⁷ Rom 1:3,4

had not corrupted, and, as a result, that He was the Messiah. That is why Christ said to the disciples, *'Behold my hands and my feet; that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. And when he had thus spoken, he shewed them his hands and his feet.'*²³³⁸

Reverting back to Romans, *'Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; And marked out by unmistakable signs to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead,*²³³⁹ it is apparent at what point Christ actually became the immortal Son of God: on His ascension forty days later to heaven. He was appointed to that position by fulfilling the two key signs, above, and He was elevated to it from the mount of Olives forty days later, when He ascended to heaven, to sit at the right hand of God the Father. All the while He had a mortal body, He called himself the Son of man, and John the Baptist and others declared Him to be the Son of God, *'And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God.'*²³⁴⁰ Matthew records this same name at the time of Jesus' baptism in the River Jordan by John the Baptist, in the following terms: *'And, lo, a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.'*²³⁴¹ And, again, it is stated in John.²³⁴² When Christ ascended to heaven, He took on an immortal body, and became the immortal Son of God.

Paul makes an interesting statement in Corinthians, *'For I delivered unto you that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures: And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: After that he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain until this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that he was seen of James; then of all the apostles. And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time. For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.'*²³⁴³

Paul's phrase, *'as of one born out of due time,'* indicates that when he saw Christ on the road to Damascus, Christ was in His mortal state. Had Paul seen Christ risen in His mortal state at any point during the forty days prior to His ascension to heaven, he would not have used this phrase. Christ had to be in His mortal state to afford Paul his apostleship, for an apostle had to be witness to Christ's mortal resurrection. The fact that Paul so differentiates strongly implies that the witness of 'The Christ risen' afforded to the other apostles was of Christ in the same state, mortal, to that appearing to Paul on the road to Damascus after Christ's ascension to heaven, but that Paul's witness was later than the others: *'born out of due time.'*

²³³⁸ Luke 24:39,40 (sublinear emphasis added)

²³³⁹ Rom 1:3,4 (sublinear emphasis added; 'declared' replaced by 'marked out by unmistakable signs')

²³⁴⁰ e.g., John 1:34

²³⁴¹ Mat 3:17

²³⁴² John 3:16-18

²³⁴³ I Cor 15:3-9 (sublinear emphasis added)

Despite this, some would point to John as 'proof' that Christ was immortal upon His resurrection, as it is claimed that only an immortal being could materialise inside a locked room: *'Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut when the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and said unto them, Peace be unto you.'*²³⁴⁴ However, there are a number of examples in the Bible where mortal, flesh-and-blood men were materialised away from one location, and materialised in another, all the while remaining mortal. There are the 'translations'²³⁴⁵ of Enoch and Elijah, and another example is found in Acts, *'And when they²³⁴⁶ were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing. But Philip was found at Azotus: and passing through he preached in all the cities, till he came to Cæsarea.'*²³⁴⁷ Philip was mortal throughout this entire event, and remained so until his natural death.

From these it is evident that purely physical, spatial relocation—'dematerialising' from one place, 're-materialising' in another—while all the while maintaining a mortal state of flesh-and-blood, is not only possible, it has actually happened, and that more than once. Accordingly, the contention that the materialisation of Christ in a locked room proves that He could only have been raised from the grave as a spirit being falls.

The resurrection of our Lord and Master, Jesus Christ, from the grave after His death in our stead by crucifixion, was in His uncorrupted flesh-and-blood body: so says Scripture. Those who proclaim an immortal resurrection from the grave for Christ, however unwittingly, actually deny the only Messiah, and the only name in which man can be saved. The penalty for this is grave indeed, as can be seen from Matthew: *'But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.'*²³⁴⁸

Still there are some who would cling to a vain hope of even the most remote implication of an immortal resurrection from the grave by citing the words of Christ in John, *'Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? Whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away. Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master. Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not;²³⁴⁹ for I am not yet ascended to my Father:²³⁵⁰ but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.'*²³⁵¹

At once the confusion is such vain hope is both patent and paramount. The words say nothing of immortality; rather the opposite. Christ's phrase, *'Touch me not,'* comes from the Greek meaning *'to cling or take*

²³⁴⁴ John 20:19

²³⁴⁵ physical transportation to another physical place.

²³⁴⁶ Philip and the man of Ethiopia.

²³⁴⁷ Acts 8:39,40

²³⁴⁸ Mat 10:33

²³⁴⁹ Greek: haptomai, viz., do not 'cling to' or 'adhere to' Me; cp. Acts 16:15, Greek: parabiazomai, 'constrained' or 'compel by force.'

²³⁵⁰ viz., do not handle me to see whether I am still clothed with a body; there is no need of such an examination.

²³⁵¹ John 20:15-17

hold of. Christ told Mary to refrain or stop clinging to Him, with the prohibition in the Greek present tense, for even by so doing she could not keep Him there with her. Christ's destination was to *'ascend unto my Father.'* The correct translation, therefore, does not import a prohibition on touching, for such would be wholly inconsistent with the almost contemporaneous, *'And they came and held him by the feet and worshipped him,'*²³⁵² but on holding with intent to restrain. Had Christ been a spirit being, then it would have been impossible to hold all or any part of Him.

Concerning *'Touch me not,'* in John:²³⁵³ It is suggested that the Greek is really a mistranslation of an Aramaic original.²³⁵⁴ Jesus of course would speak in Aramaic,²³⁵⁵ and not in Greek; and what John gives us is a translation into Greek of what Jesus said. It is suggested that what Jesus really said was: *'Hold me not; but before I ascend to my Father go to my brethren and say to them.'* It would be as if Jesus said: "Do not spend so long in worshipping me in the joy of your new discovery. Go and tell the good news to the rest of the disciples." It may well be that here we have the explanation. The Greek imperative is a present imperative, and strictly speaking ought to mean: *"Stop touching [or holding] me."* It may be that Jesus was saying to Mary: "Don't go on clutching me selfishly to yourself. In a short time I am going back to my Father. I want to meet my disciples as often as possible before then. Go and tell them the good news that none of the time that we and they should have together should be wasted." That would make excellent sense, and that in fact is what Mary did.²³⁵⁶

Many Christians hold that the Wave Sheaf during Passover, in the Feast of Unleavened Bread, being waved on a Sunday, represents Christ's ascent to heaven and appearing before the Father that Sunday morning in presentation. It is claimed that this is why Christ said, *'for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.'*²³⁵⁷ It follows, in this argument, that Christ was immortal for almost all of His time on earth after His resurrection, being mortal merely for a brief period early that Sunday morning, and possibly intermittently thereafter.

While this may appear cogent to some, it does not explain either the preceding or later patently mortal 'touch and feel' incidents. Certainly, Christ was the firstfruits from the dead,²³⁵⁸ but this view does not properly address what the Wave Sheaf ceremony represents. It is waved up and down, to all four points of the globe, and, as such, signifies both Christ's ascension and His return. The reason it is waved on a Sunday is simply that Christ had risen and thus had fulfilled the promises and conditions concerning the Messiah, including the sign of Jonas,²³⁵⁹ and had been manifested in so doing by appearing to His followers and disciples. A ritual which

²³⁵² Mat 28:9c

²³⁵³ John 20:17a

²³⁵⁴ but no proof of this has ever been produced; it is merely an unbacked assertion.

²³⁵⁵ and Hebrew.

²³⁵⁶ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of John*, Vol.2, pp.270,271 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

²³⁵⁷ John 20:17

²³⁵⁸ I Cor 15:20;23

²³⁵⁹ or Jonah, q.v. Mat 12:39,40

signifies major events of departure and return cannot vest all or any of its religious significance in an assumed one-way 'trip' to heaven on that Sunday morning for the purpose of presentation before the Father. No such trip took place.²³⁶⁰

Tomb

The sequence of events at the tomb that morning has been analysed and set in plain form by Haley:²³⁶¹ 'Owing to the condensed and somewhat fragmentary nature of these several narratives, and their neglect of strict chronological sequence, they present some difficulties and apparent discrepancies. There is, however, not the least doubt that, if we knew all the circumstances of the case, those which we now know would be seen to fit perfectly into their appropriate places in the narrative. Moreover, it is to be remarked that no one of the sacred writers gives, or intends to give, all the circumstances. Each selects those particulars which seemed to him [sic]²³⁶² most important, passing by intermediate incidents.

The following summary of the case is given by Robinson,²³⁶³ "At early dawn on the first day of the week, the women who had attended on Jesus, namely, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, Joanna, Salome, and others²³⁶⁴ went out with spices to the sepulchre, in order further to embalm the Lord's body. They inquire among themselves, who should remove for them the stone which closed the sepulchre. On their arrival they find the stone already taken away; for there had been an earthquake, and an angel had descended and rolled away the stone, and sat upon it, so that the keepers became as dead men for terror. The Lord had risen. The women, knowing nothing of all this, are amazed; they enter the tomb, and find not the body of the Lord, and are greatly perplexed. At this time, Mary Magdalene, impressed with the idea that the body had been stolen away, leaves the sepulchre and the other women, and runs to the city to tell Peter and John.²³⁶⁵ The rest remain in the tomb, and immediately two angels appear, who announce unto them that Jesus was risen from the dead, and gives them a charge in His name for the apostles. They go out quickly from the sepulchre, and proceed in haste to the city to make this known to the disciples. On the way, Jesus meets them, permits them to embrace His feet,²³⁶⁶ and renews the same charge to the apostles. The women relate these things to the disciples; but their words seem to them as idle tales; and they believe them not.

²³⁶⁰ comp. 'wavesheaf' significance, sup.

²³⁶¹ Mat 28:1-10; Mark 16:1-14; Luke 24:1-12; John 20:1-18

²³⁶² it is divinely inspired writing, and so selected by God.

²³⁶³ Footnote: from *Bibliotheca Sacra*, pp.187,188, February, 1845AD

²³⁶⁴ Footnote: there were two distinct parties of women, and this relieves several difficulties.

²³⁶⁵ Footnote: Peter and John appear to have lodged that night in a place separate from the other apostles. Griesberg thinks that the apostles at this time were scattered throughout the city among those who were friendly to their cause—q.v. *Bibliotheca Sacra*, p.172 note.

²³⁶⁶ having just previously appeared to Mary Magdalene, q.v. inf.

In the interim, Peter and John had run to the sepulchre; and entering in had found it empty;²³⁶⁷ but the orderly arrangement of the grave-clothes and of the napkin convinced John that the body had not been removed by violence or by friends; and the germ of a belief arises in his mind that the Lord had risen. The two returned to the city. Mary Magdalene, who had again followed them to the sepulchre, remained standing and weeping before it; and looking in she saw two angels sitting. Turning around, she sees Jesus, who gives to her a solemn charge for His disciples."

It will be seen that this summary comprises nearly every incident mentioned by the four evangelists. Ebrard²³⁶⁸ concurs substantially in the view here given.²³⁶⁹

From, *'Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils,'*²³⁷⁰ it is evident that the *'Touch me not'* incident involving Mary Magdalene actually preceded the *'held [physically] by the feet and worshipped him'* incident involving the other women. Two trains of events involving contact with the risen Christ were underway in broad parallel.

Henry gives the following explanation: *'The further instructions Christ gave her,'*²³⁷¹ *"Touch me not, [but go carry the news] to the disciples."*

First, He diverts [Mary Magdalene] from the expectation of familiar society and conversation with Him at this time; *"Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended."* Mary was so transported with the sight of her dear Master that she forgot herself, and that state of glory into which she was now entering, and was ready to express her joy by affectionate embraces of him, which Christ here forbids at this time.

"Touch me not" thus at all, for *"I am to ascend to heaven."* He bid the disciples touch Him, for the confirmation of their faith; He allowed the women to take hold of His feet, and worship Him;²³⁷² but Mary, supposing that He was risen, as Lazarus was, to live among them constantly, and converse with them freely as He had done, upon that presumption was about to take hold of His hand with her usual freedom; this mistake Christ rectified; she must believe Him, and adore Him, as exalted, but must not expect to be familiar with Him as formerly. He forbids her to dote upon His bodily presence, to set her heart on that, or expect the continuance of

²³⁶⁷ John arrived at the sepulchre before Peter, but did not enter the sepulchre first, allowing Peter to enter, only then following him, q.v. John 20:4-6, possibly owing to John being of a priestly family, although disenfranchised through the machinations of Anias and company, q.v. sup. This would also explain his presence in the 'mock-trial' of Christ before Caiaphas, q.v. John 18:15f., with Peter restricted to standing outside. Support, of a sort, for this is found in Collins, Andrew, *Twenty-First Century Grail—The Quest for a Legend*, p.39, citing Green-Armytage, A. H. N., *John Who Saw – A Layman's Essay on the Authorship of the Fourth Gospel*, p.69 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'Additional evidence that John might have been a priest comes from the testament of Polycrates of Samos, [']bishop['] of Ephesus, who thrived in the last decade of the second century. He wrote....'John also, he who leaned upon the Lord's breast, who became a priest wearing the *petalon* and was a witness and a teacher, he sleeps at Ephesus.'

²³⁶⁸ Footnote: Ebrard, J. H. A., *Gospel History*, pp.447,448

²³⁶⁹ Haley, John W., *Alleged Discrepancies of the Bible*, pp.327-329

²³⁷⁰ Mark 16:9

²³⁷¹ John 20:17

²³⁷² cp. Mat 28:9

that, and leads her to the spiritual converse and communion which she should have with Him after He was 'ascended to His Father:' for the greatest [sic] joy of His resurrection was that it was a step toward His ascension. Mary thought, now that her Master was risen, He would presently set up a temporal kingdom, such as they had long promised themselves. "No," says Christ, "*touch me not*," with any such thought; think not to lay hold on me, so as to detain me here; for though "*I am not yet ascended, go to my brethren, [and] tell them, I am to ascend*." As before His death, so now after His resurrection, He still harps upon this, that He was going away, was no more in the world; and therefore they must look higher than His bodily presence, look further than the present state of things.

"*Touch me not*," do not stay to touch me now, stay not now to make any further enquiries, or give any further expressions of joy, "*for I am not yet ascended*." I shall not presently depart....the best service thou canst do now, is, to carry the tidings to the disciples; lose no time therefore, but go away with all speed....Mary must not stay to talk, but must carry His message; for it was a day of good tidings, which she must not engross the comfort of, but hand it to others.

Secondly, He directs her [as to] what message to carry to His disciples; but go to my brethren and tell them, not only am I risen, she could have told them that of herself, for she had seen Him, but that I ascend.'²³⁷³

The contention of many that Christ actually rose on Sunday morning is incorrect, as He would then not have been in the grave for '*three days and three nights*,' and, consequently, would not have been the Messiah. This misplaced belief stems in large measure from a punctuation error in the K.J.V. rendition, '*Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils*.'²³⁷⁴ This is also inconsistent with the train of events, and should have been rendered with the comma placed thus: '*Now when Jesus was risen, early the first day of the week he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils*.'

Christ no immortal soul

Others have claimed to find an implication of an immortal soul in the words of Christ quoted earlier, '*Then answered the Jews and said unto him, What sign shewest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things? Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days? But he spake of the temple of his body. When therefore he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them; and they believed the scripture, and the word which Jesus had said*.'²³⁷⁵ The contention is that as Christ had said that He would raise Himself up, then there must have been something of Christ, other than

²³⁷³ Henry's Commentary, p.703 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

²³⁷⁴ Mark 16:9

²³⁷⁵ John 2:18-22 (sublinear emphasis added)

His dead body, for Him to have been able to do so. However, the second emphasised phrase, in the K.J.V., is not an accurate translation from the Greek. The opening phrase of verse twenty-two by Green²³⁷⁶ has it: *'Then when He was raised from the dead.'*²³⁷⁷ This is passive: He was raised by another. Christ did not raise Himself. He was the Messiah, and so He had to be raised after three days. His rising was founded on His both fulfilling the position of and being the Messiah, and in this way, metaphorically, He did raise Himself, but under authority, *'I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.'*²³⁷⁸ Another performed the actual miracle of raising Him from the dead: the Father.

Still others cite, *'And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth,'*²³⁷⁹ this allied to Luke's the 'parable of the pounds.'²³⁸⁰ The deficiencies in such a conjunction are patent. The parable of the pounds was given by Christ because some thought that the kingdom was to appear immediately: *'And as they heard these things, he added and spake a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear.'*²³⁸¹ The subject of the parable itself is given: *'He said therefore, A certain noblemen went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return.'*²³⁸² From the content of the parable itself, and the foregoing, it is clear that Christ was speaking of His then forthcoming ascension, *'A certain noblemen went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom,'* followed by His Second Coming, *'and to return,'* at which point He will reward His servants, signified by the seven servants not yet giving account of their stewardship, representing the seven eras of the church.²³⁸³ There is nothing here concerning a precursory visit to heaven and a return to earth, for the parable addresses the misconception of a then immediately arriving kingdom of God.²³⁸⁴

That Christ was pre-authorised to judge and execute judgement on all the earth is clear from John: *'For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man.'*²³⁸⁵ Christ did not have to ascend to heaven to receive that authority, and then return to be manifest to His followers, and neither did He do so in connection with the verse

²³⁷⁶ Green's Literal Translation.

²³⁷⁷ John 2:22a

²³⁷⁸ John 10:18

²³⁷⁹ Mat 28:18

²³⁸⁰ Luke 19:11-28

²³⁸¹ Luke 19:11

²³⁸² Luke 19:12

²³⁸³ first three servants identify the results of three years' of Christ's ministry to that date.

²³⁸⁴ Mat 28:18, above, leads on to Mat 28:19,20, *'Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.'* From this it can be seen that Christ's words in Mat 28:18 are a pronouncement of victory, Latin: mundus regium Christi, by the risen Saviour. *'All power,'* Greek: exousia, meaning *'authority,'* had been secured by dint of this, and this forms the basis of authority for the Great Commission, as it is frequently known, appearing in Mat 28:19,20.

²³⁸⁵ John 5:22,27

first cited.²³⁸⁶ There is absolutely nothing here of a 'suppressed' and prior trip to heaven, or an immortal Christ prior to His ascension, for such a conclusion being simply woefully poor exegesis. Immortality after the resurrection of a false-messiah is found in Babylonian fable where Semiramis, the wife of Nimrod, claimed that her son Horus, by another, was but Nimrod reincarnated as an immortal being. Nothing of such is found in the Bible.

The reason why Christ had to be resurrected in flesh-and-blood, that is, mortal form, in addition to signifying that he was the Messiah, was to show that there is no inherent immortality flowing from the indwelling, or co-habiting of the Holy Spirit in a mortal being, a Spirit which Christ had in superabundance and utterly without measure during His earthly life. It needed a separate miracle of God the Father in 30AD for Jesus Christ to resume His former immortal state. And, likewise, it will need a separate miracle, this time through Jesus Christ, at the time of the end, for the election to take on immortality.²³⁸⁷

Now the full meaning and import of the indwelling of *'the Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God'*²³⁸⁸ becomes apparent, for those so imbued exhibit the outward signs of the indwelling of the Spirit for all who care to see: the self-same outward signs discussed in some detail above. Thus we can pray, *'Our Father.'* It is thus that we can cry, *'Our Father!'* And with confidence, *'Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in times of need.'*²³⁸⁹

Once immortality is conferred on God's 'elect,' the firstfruits, at the time of Christ's Second Coming, they will have been elevated to membership of the family of God. At that time, the 'dead-in-Christ' will be resurrected immortal from their graves, and those still alive will be changed, in the twinkling of an eye: *'In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.'*²³⁹⁰ But before then, those of the election still alive will be mortal, with no inherent immortal element whatsoever.

And, finally, to lay one further point of profound misunderstanding to rest, concerning the nature of Jesus Christ: He did not possess two natures—one divine and one human. There was no 'battle' between these inner natures when He was on earth. He was created mortal, like all humans,²³⁹¹ and He had a human nature. He was, *'made like unto his brethren.'*²³⁹²

²³⁸⁶ Mat 28:18

²³⁸⁷ concerning the deep and important significance bound up in the Jewish Seder rite of Afikomen, involving a half-piece of matza which is broken in the early stages of the Seder and set aside to be eaten as a dessert after the meal. This is a travesty; Jesus' body did not have a bone broken, as prophesied; cf. Ex 12:46b; John 19:36c

Wikipedia:

'But it seems more likely that Afikomen comes from the Greek verb afikomenos meaning 'the coming one' or 'he has come,' giving it a strong messianic feel. This illuminates Jesus's claims to his disciples at the last supper.'

²³⁸⁸ Rom 8:16

²³⁸⁹ Heb 4:16

²³⁹⁰ I Cor 15:52

²³⁹¹ Heb 2:14

²³⁹² Heb 2:17a

'[Christ] must partake of [human] nature, or He could not feel for the fallen. He must Himself have been "tempted in all points," or He could not be "a merciful and faithful high Priest to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." "We have not an High Priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but who was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."'2393

The difference in the instance of Christ was His superabundance of faith and the Holy Spirit which so bolstered His human nature as to render Him incapable of sin. If He had had a supplementary divine nature—the dual nature of Christ theory being termed 'hypostatic union'²³⁹⁴ ²³⁹⁵—then He could not have experienced life, temptation, and death as do normal mortals, and then He would have been asking His followers to do what He did not do, for mortal man does not possess a supplementary divine nature. A perverse twist of the single nature of Christ is found in the apostate doctrine of Monophysism which holds that Jesus Christ had only a single, divine nature, while His human aspect was merely for appearance's sake. The privations in this are all too apparent: He could not have been tempted; man is being asked to replicate divine nature while only possessing human nature—an impossible task; Christ's mortal body was a fraud; and so forth. Even the apostate council of Chalcedon²³⁹⁶ threw out and banned this utterly repugnant doctrine.

Summary

'[Christ's] ministry is final, and the covenant it dedicates eternal.'²³⁹⁷ We are redeemed through His death, and raised immortal through His resurrection and ascension.

²³⁹³ Vaughan, C. J., *Christ the Light of the World*, pp.246,247 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

²³⁹⁴ McQuarrie, John, *Jesus Christ in Modern Thought*, pp.13,14:

'Coming back to Karl Barth, I think he is pressing the limits, if not overstepping them, when, discussing the traditional view that in Jesus Christ there concur two 'natures' (Barth prefers to speak of two 'essences,' but in each case it is the Greek word physis that is intended), he holds that these natures 'participate' in each other, and that this participation is asymmetrical, for, as his (sic) divine essence is that which is originally proper to him, and his human is only adopted by him and assumed to it....the determination of his divine essence is to his human, and the determination of his human essence from his divine,' [Barth, Karl, *Church Dogmatics*, IV/2], I find myself asking, "How does Barth, or any theologian of finite intelligence, know his?"'

²³⁹⁵ Phil 2:6,7; Greek: kenoo, translated 'of no reputation' actually means 'to empty' or 'to make void.' When He emptied Himself of His immortality and divine nature, He became capable of dying for our sins through overcoming sin. It's actually a bit more complex, however, for while He willingly divested Himself of His immortality through being Jehovah, and came to earth as a human being, with a human nature, but with a superabundance of the Holy Spirit that kept Him from sinning there is a bit more:

After His death and resurrection, having paid the penalty of our sins, and given an earnest of our own resurrection to a place in the kingdom through His resurrection as the Firstfruit in accordance with Scripture, He was addressed by Thomas as 'my Lord and My God' (John 20:28). At that point He was still a human being, having been resurrected in the same body that had died, but by then He had qualified by fulfilling the provisions of Scripture, and so was God—incarnate, dead, and resurrected—at that point, prior to the ascension. After the ascension, He sat down at the right hand of the Father, etc.

²³⁹⁶ in 451AD

²³⁹⁷ Davidson., Prof. A. B., *Hebrews*, p.25 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

Chapter 45

Marriage, Divorce, & Re-marriage

The history of marriage and marriage rites is convoluted. It has been subjected to great manipulation and misrepresentation since it was instituted by God,²³⁹⁸ with quite extraordinary forces brought against it: social, legal and institutional.

Denying marriage

'[Denying marriage], a doctrine excoriated [by Paul],²³⁹⁹ has its roots in ascetism and montanism. Of the discouragement of marriage altogether for the clergy, of the pretence of a higher law of purity than the apostles themselves had observed, there is no very serious advance in this direction that can be traced before the Nicene age....It is true that in the third century....as seen in Hippolytus....we find a good deal of dislike to marriage after ordination,²⁴⁰⁰ and the council of Elvira²⁴⁰¹ actually forbids the use of marriage to the clergy. But this was only a local council in Spain, and its opposition to the general feeling of the churches is shown by the rejection of a similar proposal at Nicæa, by the unrebuked prevalence of marriage among the clergy of the next age, and by its actual requirement from the parish priests of the eastern church to this day. On this question, Rome is the

²³⁹⁸ Gen 2:18f.

²³⁹⁹ I Tim 4:1-3

²⁴⁰⁰ only in the apostate / pagan church.

²⁴⁰¹ c.306AD

dissenter....Before the Nicene age, there was no public vow and no formal admission [of perpetual virginity].²⁴⁰² The corporate Montanism of the Nicene age is in the main of Coptic origin.²⁴⁰³ Most of the early monks bear Coptic names. It is worth asking whether some of the earliest Christian monasteries may not have been heath-en monasteries converted wholesale to Christianity, but continuing their old rule of life with little or no change. This, however, is a question which must be left to Coptic scholars....The first ascetic community of which we have definite knowledge was formed at the end of the third century by Hieracas at Leontopolis in Egypt. It was formed partly for study, but even more for the practice of asceticism.²⁴⁰⁴

Through time this transmuted to another and somewhat strange Romish prohibition on marriage: 'In medieval times a person who had received Extreme Unction was expected to die. If he recovered he had to live as one dead. He was not allowed to marry nor to alter his will'²⁴⁰⁵

Rendering marriage

'Initially, no formal legal or religious ceremonies were required for a Roman marriage. A man and a woman who established a household were considered married. However, the requirement of marriage became increasingly codified during the course of the Republic and the Empire and were particularly reformed by Augustus. Originally, only patricians could marry. The system changed²⁴⁰⁶ with the granting of marriage rights to all Roman citizens. Initially, certain restrictions were placed on who could marry—forbidding marriages between members of different social classes or marriages to freedmen, for instance—but eventually these strictures were loosened....[I]n response to a dwindling birth rate among [Romans], the law²⁴⁰⁷ induced unmarried, divorced, or widowed Romans to marry, threatening to inflict severe punishments if they did not. The law²⁴⁰⁸ stipulated further restrictions. Together the laws made certain inheritances difficult to secure for unmarried persons or childless couples, while rewarding others for children, especially those with three or more offspring. Augustus' laws were kept in force by his successors in the first century AD and endured in spirit until the fourth century.

The legal termination of a marriage was rare during the early Republic but became more common from the first century BC, particularly since marriages were used frequently to solidify political alliances. A marriage could be ended simply by mutual consent, or by the repudium of one spouse. Under Augustus' divorce law,²⁴⁰⁹

²⁴⁰² Koch, H., *Virgines Christi*

²⁴⁰³ from Egypt.

²⁴⁰⁴ Gwatkin, Henry Melvill, *Early Church History to AD 313*, Vol. 1, pp.245-247, including footnotes (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

²⁴⁰⁵ Weatherhead, Leslie D., *Psychology, Religion, and Healing*, pp.93,94

²⁴⁰⁶ in 445BC

²⁴⁰⁷ Latin: Lex Julia de maritandis ordinibus, introduced by Augustus in 18BC.

²⁴⁰⁸ Latin: Lex Papia Poppæa, introduced in 9AD.

²⁴⁰⁹ Latin: Lex Julia de adulteriis coercendis.

more formal procedures were introduced. Faced with adultery, a husband would divorce his wife and then bring charges before a special court. He had sixty days to present his argument, while others could put forth evidence for a period of four months. After that time, the adulteress could no longer be prosecuted. The punishment for adultery could include the loss of a dowry or even, under Constantine, death.

Roman law did not recognise adultery by a male spouse. However, under Augustus' reforms, the charge of stuprum (rape or sexual misconduct) could result in stern punishment. The [so-called] Christian emperors, particularly Constantine, placed restrictions and penalties on divorce and Justinian forbade it, although his ban was reversed soon after his death.²⁴¹⁰

'The history of the development of the marriage situation amongst the Romans is the history of tragedy. The whole of Roman [pagan] religion and society was originally founded on the home. The basis of the Roman commonwealth was the father's power;²⁴¹¹ the father had literally the power of life and death over his family.... To the Roman the home was everything....[and t]he Roman [wife] took her full part in life. "Marriage," said Modestinus, the Latin jurist, "is a life-long fellowship of all divine and human rights." Prostitutes, of course, there were, but they were held in contempt and to associate with them was dishonourable.... So high was the standard of Roman morality that for the first five hundred years of the Roman commonwealth there was not one single recorded case of divorce. The first man to divorce his wife was Spurius Carvilius Ruga,²⁴¹² and he did so because she was childless and he desired a child.

Then there came the Greeks. In the military and the imperial sense Rome conquered Greece; but in the moral and the social sense Greece conquered Rome. By the second century BC, Greek morals had begun to infiltrate into Rome, and the descent was catastrophic. Divorce became as common as marriage.... A Roman orator, Metellus Numidicus, made an extraordinary speech: "If, Romans, it were possible to love without wives, we would be free from trouble; but since it is the law of nature that we can neither live pleasantly with them, nor at all without them, we must take thought for the continuance of the race rather than for our own brief pleasure." Marriage had become nothing more than an unfortunate necessity.

To such a pass did things come that special taxes were levied on the unmarried, and the unmarried were prohibited from entering into inheritances. Special privileges were given to those who had children, for children were regarded as a disaster. The very law was manipulated in an attempt to rescue the necessary institution of marriage.

²⁴¹⁰ Bunson, Matthew, *Encyclopedia of the Roman Empire*, pp.263,264 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

²⁴¹¹ Latin: patria potestas.

²⁴¹² in 234BC

There lay the Roman tragedy, what Lecky called “that outburst of ungovernable and almost frantic depravity which followed upon contact with the Greeks.” Again it is easy to see with what a shock the ancient world must have heard the demands of Christian chastity.’²⁴¹³

‘In a Greek marriage we find two people marrying for fellowship of life.²⁴¹⁴ Aristotle believed that in true marriage a husband and wife shared everything in life.²⁴¹⁵

But in so many cases there was a formality in marriage which kept it from being the true fellowship it ought to be; the status and upbringing of women were all against it....The wife was always there, but there were areas of her husband’s life from which she was largely excluded.

The result of this was inevitable. The husband sought his satisfaction outside his marriage. The basic fact of the Greek situation was that there was no discredit whatever in sexual relations outside of marriage. In the speech ‘Against Neæra,’ attributed to Demosthenes,²⁴¹⁶ it is laid down as the merest commonplace, the routine of life: ‘We keep mistresses for pleasure; we keep prostitutes for the day-to-day needs of the body; we keep wives to bear our legitimate children and to be the faithful guardians of our homes.’ Here is the Greek way of life.

[T]he Greeks nonetheless regarded it as a matter of course for a husband to have sexual relationships outside marriage....

He might turn to the temples of the gods and there he might find the priestesses who were sacred prostitutes, and to have intercourse with them was nothing less than an act of worship. The custom of having such sacred courtesans attached to the temples came from the East. In Greece, the most notorious example of it was the temple of Aphrodite,²⁴¹⁷ the goddess of love, at Corinth. To that temple a thousand sacred prostitutes were attached....

One further salient fact must be noted. For divorce no legal process of any kind was necessary other than the dismissing of the wife in the presence of witnesses, and since the woman could not take legal action at all, she could not divorce her husband at all. Divorce was compulsory for adultery and [in parallel with Judaism] common for childlessness. In the end, divorce became to all intents and purposes a matter of caprice.’²⁴¹⁸

²⁴¹³ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol. 1, pp.156,157 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

²⁴¹⁴ Greek: pros biou koinonian.

²⁴¹⁵ Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 8.12

²⁴¹⁶ *Against Neæra*, 122 (1386AD).

²⁴¹⁷ known to the Romans as Virgo, the goddess of love in the evening, the goddess of war in the morning.

²⁴¹⁸ Barclay, William, *The Plain Man’s Guide to Ethics*, pp.120,121,123,126 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

Prevailing Jewish perversions

[In Jewish law a] woman could only divorce her husband if he became a leper, or an apostate, or if he ravished a virgin. Otherwise a woman had no rights whatever and no redress, other than that the marriage dowry must be repaid if she was divorced. The law said, "A woman may be divorced with or without her will; a man only with his will." The Mosaic law said, *'When a man hath taken a wife and married her, and it come to pass that she find no favour in his eyes because he hath found some uncleanness in her, then let him write her a bill of divorcement, and give it into her hand, and send her out of his house.'*²⁴¹⁹ The bill of divorce had to be signed before two witnesses and ran, "Let this be from me thy writ of divorce and letter of dismissal and deed of liberation, that thou mayest marry whatsoever man thou wilt." Divorce was as simple and easy as that. The matter turned on the interpretation of the phrase *'some uncleanness'* in the Mosaic regulation. There were two schools of thought. The school of Shammai said that that meant adultery, and adultery alone. The school of Hillel said that it could mean "if she spoiled a dish of food; if she spun in the street; if she talked to a strange man; if she was guilty of speaking disrespectfully of her husband's relations in his hearing; if she was a brawling woman," which was defined as a woman whose voice could be heard in the next house. Rabbi Akiba went so far as to say that a man could divorce his wife if he found a woman who was fairer than she. Human nature being what it is, it was the school of Hillel which prevailed, so that, in the time of Jesus, things were so bad that women refused to marry at all, and family life was in danger. Jesus lays down the sanctity of the marriage bond.²⁴²⁰ The saying is repeated in Matthew²⁴²¹ where adultery²⁴²² is made the sole exception to the universal rule. We sometimes think that our generation is bad, but Jesus lived in a generation when things were every bit as bad. If we destroy family life, we destroy the very basis of the Christian life; and Jesus here lays down the law which men will only relax at their peril.²⁴²³

The tragedy [of the then prevailing view] was that....the marriage bond was often lightly held, and divorce on the most trivial ground was tragically common. Overall, the Jewish view of divorce was singularly lacking. 'The question of divorce was something about which there was no unanimity among the Jews; and the question of the Pharisees was deliberately designed to involve Jesus in controversy.'²⁴²⁴

No nation had ever had a higher view of marriage than the [Israelites] had, [and the Jews had] their own accretions to and manipulations of this standard. To the Jews, marriage was a sacred duty. To remain unmarried after the age of twenty, except in order to concentrate upon the study of the Law, was to break a positive commandment, the commandment to *"be fruitful and multiply."* He who had no children "slew his own posterity,"

²⁴¹⁹ Deut 24:1

²⁴²⁰ Luke 16:18

²⁴²¹ Mat 5:31,32

²⁴²² actually, gross sexual perversion, q.v. inf.

²⁴²³ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Luke*, pp.219,220 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

²⁴²⁴ Mat 19:1-9

and “lessened the image of God upon earth.” “When husband and wife are worthy, the glory of God is with them.”

Marriage was not to be entered into carelessly or lightly. Josephus outlines the Jewish approach to marriage, based on the Mosaic teaching.²⁴²⁵ A man must marry a virgin of good parentage. He must never corrupt another man’s wife; he must not marry a woman who has been a slave or a harlot....

The Jewish laws of marriage and of purity aimed very high. Ideally, divorce was hated. God had said, “*I hate putting away*.”²⁴²⁶ It was said that the very altar wept tears when a man divorced the wife of his youth.... The Jewish term for marriage means ‘sanctification’ or ‘consecration.’²⁴²⁷ It is used to describe something which is dedicated to God as God’s exclusive and peculiar possession. Anything which is absolutely given and totally surrendered to God is kiddushin. This means that in marriage the husband is dedicated and consecrated to the wife, and the wife is dedicated and consecrated to the husband. The one becomes the exclusive possession of the other, as much as an offering and a sacrifice become the exclusive possession of God.

Beyond all doubt the ideal is that marriage should be an indissoluble union between two people, and that marriage should be entered into as a total union of two personalities, not designed to make one act possible [procreation], but designed to make all life a satisfying and mutually completing fellowship.

But the ideal and the actuality did not go hand in hand. In the situation there were two dangerous and damaging elements.

First, in the eyes of Jewish law, a woman was a thing. She was the possession of her father, or of her husband as the case might be; and therefore, she had, technically, no legal rights at all [other than certain property rights in certain circumstances of heredity]. Most Jewish marriages were arranged either by the parents or by professional matchmakers. A girl might be engaged to be married in childhood, and was often engaged to be married to a man whom she had never seen. There was this safeguard—that when she came to the age of twelve she could repudiate her father’s choice of husband. But in matters of divorce the general law was that the entire initiative must lie with the husband. [Again, t]he [Jewish] law ran: “A woman may be divorced with or without her consent, but a man can be divorced only with his consent.” The woman could never initiate the process of divorce; she could not divorce, she had to be divorced. There were certain safeguards. If a man divorced his wife, on any other grounds than those of flagrant immorality, he must return her dowry, and this must have been a barrier to irresponsible divorce. The courts might put pressure on a man to divorce his wife, in the case, for instance, of refusal to consummate the marriage, or impotence, or of proved inability to support her properly. A wife could force her husband to divorce her if he contracted a loathsome disease, such as leprosy, or if he was a tanner, which involved the gathering of dog’s dung, or if he proposed to make her leave the Holy

²⁴²⁵ Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, 4.8.23

²⁴²⁶ Mal 2:16

²⁴²⁷ Hebrew: kiddushin.

Land. But, by and large, the law was that the woman had no legal rights, and the right to divorce lay entirely with the husband.

Second, the ease of the process was fatal. That process was founded on the passage in the Mosaic Law to which Jesus' questioners referred: *'When a man hath taken a wife, and married her, and it come to pass that she find no favour in his eyes, because he hath found some uncleanness in her, then let him write her a bill of divorcement, and give it in her hand, and send her out of his house.'*²⁴²⁸ The bill of divorcement was a simple, one-sentence statement that the husband dismissed his wife.

Clearly, one of the great problems of Jewish divorce lies with the Mosaic enactment. That enactment states that a man may divorce his wife, *"if she find no favour in his eyes, because he hath found some uncleanness in her."* The question clearly is—how is the phrase *'some uncleanness'* to be interpreted? On this question the Jewish Rabbis were violently divided, and it was in this question that Jesus' questioners wished to involve him.

To complete this picture, certain further facts must be added. It is relevant to note that under Rabbinic law divorce was compulsory for two reasons. It was compulsory for adultery.²⁴²⁹ "A woman who had committed adultery must be divorced." Second, divorce was compulsory for sterility. The object of marriage was the procreation of children; and if after ten years a couple were still childless, then divorce was compulsory. In this case the woman might remarry, but the same regulation governed the second marriage.

Two further interesting Jewish regulations in regard to divorce must be added. First, desertion was never a cause for divorce. If there was desertion, death must be proved. The only relaxation was that whereas all other facts need the corroboration of two witnesses in Jewish law, one witness was enough to prove the death of a partner in marriage who had vanished and not come back.

Second, strangely enough, insanity was not a ground of divorce. If a wife became insane, the husband could not divorce her, for, if she was divorced, she would have no protector in her helplessness. There is a certain poignant mercy in that regulation. If the husband became insane, divorce was impossible, for in that case he was incapable of writing a bill of divorcement, and without such a bill, initiated by him, there could be no divorce.

The Rabbis had many sayings about unhappy marriages. "Among those who will never behold the face of Gehinnom is he who has had a bad wife." Such a man is saved from hell because he has expiated his sins on earth! "Among those whose life is not life is the man who is ruled by his wife." "A bad wife is like leprosy to

²⁴²⁸ Deut 24:1

²⁴²⁹ in God's Law, the penalty for proven adultery is death.

her husband. What is the remedy? Let him divorce her and be cured of his leprosy.” It was even laid down: “If a man has a bad wife, it is a religious duty to divorce her.”²⁴³⁰

‘Ideally, the Jew abhorred divorce. The voice of God had said, “*I hate divorce.*”²⁴³¹ The Rabbis had the loveliest [if not wholly accurate, on all occasions] sayings. “We find that God is long-suffering to every sin except the sin of unchastity.” “Unchastity causes the glory of God to depart.” “Every Jew must surrender his life rather than commit idolatry, murder or adultery.” “The very altar sheds tears when a man divorces a wife of his youth.” The tragedy was that the practice fell so far short of the ideal.’²⁴³²

‘We have now seen the situation of sexual morality into which [Judæo-]Christianity came, and [it] confronted that situation with an uncompromising demand for purity. Immorality and all impurity are not even to be named among Christians. There must be no filthiness. An immoral or impure man has no share in the kingdom of Christ and God.’^{2433 2434}

Modern attacks

‘It is not too much to say that there is from some quarters a deliberate attack on the accepted standards of morality in the sexual sphere. The B.M.A. published a book entitled *Getting Married*.²⁴³⁵ In it the sentence occurred: ‘Chastity is outmoded, and should no longer be taught to young people.’ True, public reaction was so hostile that the book had to be withdrawn, but the significant fact is that it did get itself published, and in the first place with the approval of the British Medical Association.’²⁴³⁶

‘Freud has written: ‘We believe that civilization has been built up by sacrifice in gratification of the primitive impulses, and that it is to a great extent for ever being recreated as each individual repeats the sacrifice of his instinctive pleasures for the common good.’ That is to say, it is precisely the disciplined control of impulse and instinct which makes a man a man and not an animal. It was this disciplined control which built up civilized society and on which civilized society depends. If there is a general refusal to continue this discipline, if the satisfaction of the primitive instincts comes to be regarded as right, then the breakdown of society may be anticipated. John H. Court says that the historian J. D. Unwin studied eighty-eight different civilizations, and from the study discerned the following pattern: ‘Every civilization is established and consolidated by observing a strict moral code, is maintained while this strict code is kept, and decays when sexual licence is allowed....Any

²⁴³⁰ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol.2, pp.215-220,223,227,230 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

²⁴³¹ Mal 2:16

²⁴³² Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol. 1, p.151 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

²⁴³³ Eph 5:3-20

²⁴³⁴ Barclay, William, *The Plain Man’s Guide to Ethics*, pp.136,137 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

²⁴³⁵ Eustace Chesser, Eustace, and de Kok, Winifred, *Getting Married*, published in 1959AD

²⁴³⁶ Barclay, William, *The Plain Man’s Guide to Ethics*, p.145

human society is free to choose either to display great energy or to enjoy sexual freedom; the evidence is that it cannot do both for more than one generation.' It may well be that the lesson of history is that the loosening of sexual standards threatens the welfare of not only the individual, but also of the nation.'²⁴³⁷

Basic Judæo-Christian doctrine

'There are at least three specifically religious pledges....[one of which is]....the marriage vow which is taken as we shall answer for it to God. The state of modern society makes it clear that the marriage vow is lightly taken and lightly broken....but it is the basic truth to say that the marriage pledge is taken for better or for worse, and it is not to be broken by caprice, or when for a time it may be difficult to keep it.'²⁴³⁸

The marriage of a man and a woman is described in Genesis in the following terms: '*And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.*'²⁴³⁹

The first marriage ceremony occurred in the garden of Eden: '*And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man.*'²⁴⁴⁰ God, He who has the personage of the Word, performed it, and sanctified it.²⁴⁴¹ The binding nature of marriage was later referred to by the Word made flesh, Jesus Christ: '*And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female. And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.*'²⁴⁴²

Putting these two accounts of the first marriage ceremony together, it is obvious that in the account seen in Genesis, Adam was repeating a statement given to him by the Word: '*Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.*' The critical phrase is: '*What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.*' From this it is clear that it is God, and not man, who joins husband and wife together. It is called holy wedlock, or holy matrimony, for the simple reason that it is a divine institution, ordained by God. It is not a human institution, or a secular one, or a civil one, or a political one, or a church one, or even a man-made legal one: it is a divine institution of God.

²⁴³⁷ Barclay, William, *The Plain Man's Guide to Ethics*, p.153

²⁴³⁸ Barclay, William, *The Plain Man's Guide to Ethics*, p.24 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

²⁴³⁹ Gen 2:23,24 (sublinear emphasis added); they became one flesh, literally, and consummated it in sexual union thereupon: '*and brought her unto the man.*'

²⁴⁴⁰ Gen 2:21,22

²⁴⁴¹ cf. inf. for consummation.

²⁴⁴² Mat 19:4-6 (sublinear emphasis added)

The scope of this joining together is evident from: *'If a man find a damsel that is a virgin, which is not betrothed, and lay hold on her, and lie with her, and they be found; Then the man that lay with her shall give unto the damsel's father fifty shekels of silver, and she shall be his wife; because he hath humbled her, he may not put her away all his days.'*²⁴⁴³ Here is a marriage by forced consummation, and it holds good for the entire lifetime of the two people involved. It is the physical act of intercourse, the consummation, which inaugurates and seals a marriage. Another instance of this binding nature is found in, *'If a man has carnal relations with a woman who is a slave and has been designated for another man,²⁴⁴⁴ but has not been redeemed or given her freedom, there shall be an inquisition; they shall not, however, be put to death, since she has not been freed. But he must bring to the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, as his guilt offering to the Lord, a ram of guilt offering. With the ram of guilt offering the priest shall make expiation for him before the Lord for the sin that he committed; and the sin that he committed will be forgiven him.'*²⁴⁴⁵ The K.J.V. has the 'inquisition' phrase as 'she shall be scourged,' but this appears to be based on a rabbinical interpretation rather than a translation. The sin was one of trespass against another man's rights. In light of the permanence of a forced union, above, there can be no suggestion that the marriage in view here, one with consent, could be reduced, or was void from the beginning, even though it lacked prior tripartite agreement.

Marriage covenant

'The Greek word for a covenant between two people is suntheke, which, in secular Greek, is the word everywhere used for a marriage covenant, or an agreement between persons or states. The actual marriage covenant, however, involves God, for it is He who joins two people together, and it is to God that marriage vows, such as they are nowadays, are directed. So although the form of covenant between the parties to a marriage in the secular Greek world would be suntheke (which always describes an agreement made on equal terms), the contract imports or is over-arched by a spiritual dimension reflecting the Millennial relationship between Christ and His church, resulting in the New Testament's use of the word diatheke—meaning a 'will,' that is, a unilateral contract not made on equal terms with an implied right to annul or change—and never in the use of suntheke. Humans cannot alter or annul the marriage diatheke, since it is founded in God's will, unless it be done in strict accordance with God's Law.'²⁴⁴⁶ 'Only God is authorized to determine the grounds of a dissolving marriage. [Bar this it is indefeasible;] it cannot be dissolved by human decrees.'²⁴⁴⁷

²⁴⁴³ Deut 22:28,29

²⁴⁴⁴ i.e., his property.

²⁴⁴⁵ Lev 19:20-22

²⁴⁴⁶ Barclay, William, *New Testament Words*, p.65

²⁴⁴⁷ Sproul, R. C., *Essential Truths of the Christian Faith*, p.267 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets).

Fornication before marriage

Undisclosed 'fornication before marriage'²⁴⁴⁸ is a reason or just cause for divorce. *'But if this thing be true, and the tokens of virginity be not found for the damsel: Then they shall bring out the damsel to the door of her father's house, and the men of her city shall stone her with stones that she die: because she hath wrought folly on Israel, to play the whore in her father's house: so shalt thou put evil away from among you.'*²⁴⁴⁹ The damsel, found not to be a virgin, had liaised with another, and, in the eyes of God, was married to that man. She had committed adultery, brought shame on her house and family, and lied to her betrothed. Stoning to death was punishment for whoredom and adultery. However, a man is married without any possibility of divorce if he has 'wronged' his wife by falsely accusing her of not being a virgin before marriage to him, or, in the case of rape in open fields, or countryside, where, despite her cries, there was no one to help.²⁴⁵⁰

*'It has been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement: But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery.'*²⁴⁵¹ This is a reference back to the old Mosaic permission:²⁴⁵² *'When a man hath taken a wife, and married her, and it come to pass that she find no favour in her eyes, because he hath found some uncleanness²⁴⁵³ in her: then let him give her a bill of divorcement, and giveth it in her hand, and send her out of his house. And when she is departed out of his house, she²⁴⁵⁴ may go and be another man's wife.'*²⁴⁵⁵ The third highlighted tract is better rendered: *'and he give*

²⁴⁴⁸ q.v. inf. for further discussion on the meaning of the term.

²⁴⁴⁹ Deut 22:20,21

²⁴⁵⁰ cf. Deut 22:19-29; in Judæo-Christianity, children were protected too. Exposures and similar tamperings with life were utterly forbidden, and fatherhood was removed from a pagan species of ownership to a holy trust. By contrast, everywhere in the pagan world life was held cheaply, and one of the best-attested vices of antiquity was the limitation of families by abortion or exposure. The majority of exposed children were girls who, during the time of the Roman Empire, were commonly picked up by baby farmers and reared to fill the brothels of the big cities. Barclay, William, *The Plain Man's Guide to Ethics*, pp.55,56:

'Seneca (*On Anger*, 1.15.2) writes: 'Mad dogs we knock on the head; the fierce and savage ox we slay; sickly sheep we put to the knife to keep them from infecting the flock; unnatural progeny we destroy; we drown even children who at birth are weakly and abnormal. It is not anger but reason that separates the harmful from the sound.'....

What happened to the children who were exposed? Many, of course, simply died. In Rome they were usually exposed at the Lactarian Pillar and in the Velabrum. They were collected for various purposes. Sometimes a wealthy woman who would not herself accept the trouble of bearing a child would take one away (Juvenal, *Satires*, 6.602-609). Often the boys were trained up to be gladiators; often the girls were nourished up to stock the brothels of Rome....For some children there was an even worse fate. They were collected by professional beggars who deliberately maimed them and then used them to solicit alms in the street. Seneca describes the wretched children with their shortened limbs, their broken joints, and their curved backs who had thus been deliberately maimed (Seneca, *Controversiae*, 10.4). The elder Pliny has a still more terrible picture of those who hunt for 'the brains and marrow' of infants for magical and nefarious purposes (Pliny, *Natural History*, 28.2).'

²⁴⁵¹ Mat 5:31,32

²⁴⁵² q.v. inf.

²⁴⁵³ Hebrew: *ervah*, 'defective discharge,' discovered on nudity, not detectable otherwise.

²⁴⁵⁴ being inviolate, for 'and it come to pass' does not appear in the original Hebrew.

²⁴⁵⁵ Deut 24:1,2 (sublinear emphasis added)

her a bill of divorcement.' There is no causative sense in this part of the passage, neither is there a commandment to divorce, implicitly underlying Christ's admonition, being the obvious remedy.

The 'normal' custom in the ancient Near East was for a man to verbally divorce his wife. The Arab custom was to say "*I divorce you*" three times, and thus the divorce was consummated without any legal protection of any kind. In contrast, the ancient Israelites insisted on a writing of divorcement or legal certificate of divorce. This writing gave legal protection to both parties. Christ explained that this concession given by Moses was not intended to be taken as licence, and had only been uttered for this singular reason: '*Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so.*'²⁴⁵⁶

In rabbinical Judaism, Moses' statement had been variously interpreted from meaning adultery, by Shammai, to the trivial matters of personal preference, by Hillel. Both of these were profoundly in error.²⁴⁵⁷ The Hebrew translated '*uncleanness*'²⁴⁵⁸ means, in context, '*defective discharge*.' Had the '*uncleanness*' been adultery, it would have been punishable by death; had it been suspicion of same then there was recourse to the '*waters of jealousy*,'²⁴⁵⁹ so it could not be as Shammai had it. Neither was it to be for the trivial, or for changing taste, as interpreted by Hillel. This merely introduced whimsical licence leading to a rapid moral decline in society. The school of Hillel erred in allowing divorce for every cause imaginable. But to the contrary, '*defective discharge*' was something considerable, for it could preclude the issue of progeny. In essence, the Mosaic concession was a permission, not a precept, for the protection of both parties, and only necessary owing to the wayward nature of Israelite society at the time.

Moses suffered '*putting away*' for a specific reason—'*the hardness of their hearts*'—and Christ, the Lawgiver, explained to the Pharisees that '*from the beginning it was not so.*' In other words, it was but temporary. The only legitimate exception for divorce allowed by Christ is what is translated as, '*the cause of fornication*,' meaning sexual unfaithfulness.²⁴⁶⁰ Ryrie²⁴⁶¹ notes that, in his view, '*fornication*' may be adultery prior to or after marriage, as well as unfaithfulness during the period of betrothal. The extent to which this view holds good in light of scriptural statements will be discussed later. The same Scriptures make it clear that sexual unfaithfulness gives legitimate grounds for divorce. However, the legitimacy of divorce does not automatically import or establish a legitimacy of re-marriage. That one must divorce an unfaithful wife (or husband, if taken

²⁴⁵⁶ Mat 19:8

²⁴⁵⁷ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol.2, p.107:

'Many are too weak to admit their error.'

²⁴⁵⁸ Hebrew: ervah.

²⁴⁵⁹ Num 5:11-31

²⁴⁶⁰ q.v. inf.

²⁴⁶¹ Ryrie, Charles Caldwell, *The Ryrie Study Bible*

beyond the bounds of the Law) is nowhere directly commanded in the New Testament canon. On the contrary, there are examples of forgiveness being extended to the erring party or adulterous offender.²⁴⁶²

Some maintain that sexual involvement alone does not constitute a marriage in the sight of God, citing the example of Judah and Tamar, who were widower and widow at the time of their sexual union. Though the temporary union produced twin sons, Pharez and Zara, it is claimed that it resulted in no permanent marriage. Tamar was actually Judah's daughter-in-law, and the arrangements and convolutions surrounding that family were complex indeed,²⁴⁶³ involving Er, Onan, and Shelah, with Tamar being mistaken by Judah for a harlot by the way, and conceiving by him, and Judah not giving her to Shelah according to the Law, but taking her unto himself, *'And Judah acknowledged them [proofs of evidence] and said, She hath been more righteous than I; because that I gave her not to Shelah my son. And he knew her again no more.'*²⁴⁶⁴ In light of this, it is evident that such a train of events cannot provide solid ground for the contention that sexual involvement alone does not constitute a marriage in the sight of God: rather, this represents a belated acceptance of the Law by Judah in his admission that he should have given Tamar to his next-in-line son, Shelah, and not to have taken her unto himself.

It should be patent from what has been led that marriage in the eyes of God occurs at the first heterosexual consummation. It is not for the dissolute. It follows, logically, that there is, in fact, no such thing as premarital sex.²⁴⁶⁵ The Law mandates that the sexual union of two virgins produces a marriage, with exception being made in cases of forced intercourse with a betrothed virgin, in rape: *'But if a man find a betrothed damsel in the field, and the man force her, and lie with her: then the man only that lay with her shall die: But unto the damsel thou shalt do nothing; there is in the damsel no sin worthy of death: for as when a man riseth against his neighbour, and slayeth him, even so is this matter: For he found her in the field, and the betrothed damsel cried, and there was none to save her.'*²⁴⁶⁶ The same would apply to a married woman as to that of the betrothed.

Some hold that betrothal is thus marriage, and that first sexual union does not constitute or establish a marriage, but such a view is aberrant. The claim is usually founded on a deviant translation of, *'Lot went out, and spoke to his sons-in-law, who were pledged to marry his daughters.'*²⁴⁶⁷ The contention is that even the pledge to marry rendered the males involved *'sons-in-law,'* and, given that they were *'sons-in-law,'* the marriages had already occurred. The Tanakh and the K.J.V. have different renderings, the Tanakh's being: *'So Lot*

²⁴⁶² Hos 3:1; Gen 38:26; John 8:3-11; a man cannot return to his divorced wife who has become the adulterous wife of another. How, then, can Israel, the wife adulterous with many lovers (foreign idols and pagan gods), return to God? Her lust has been insatiable, but punishment has left her still shameless, still claiming God as the companion of her youth and deprecating His anger, while continuing persistently in her sin. But with God all things are possible of resolution.

²⁴⁶³ Gen 38:1-30

²⁴⁶⁴ Gen 38:26 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

²⁴⁶⁵ cf. inf. for quasi-form.

²⁴⁶⁶ Deut 22:25-27

²⁴⁶⁷ Gen 19:14

went out and spoke to his sons-in-law, who had married his daughters.²⁴⁶⁸ The Hebrew word here translated 'married',²⁴⁶⁹ meaning 'to take,' in context is clearly a reference to marriage and sexual union; not to a pledge. In other contexts, laqach can mean less than sexual union, as with Abimalech and Sarah, 'And God came to Abimalech in a dream by night, and said to him, Behold, thou art but a dead man, for the woman which thou hast taken; for she is a man's wife. But Abimalech had not come near her: and he said, Lord, wilt thou also slay a righteous nation? Said he [Abram] not unto me, She is my sister? And she, even she herself said, He is my brother: in the integrity of mine heart and innocency of my hands have I done this. And God said unto him in a dream, Yea, I know that thou didst this in the integrity of thy heart; for I also withheld thee from sinning against me: therefore suffered I thee not to touch her. Now therefore restore this man his wife; for he is a prophet, and he shall pray for thee, and thou shalt live: and if thou restore her not, know thou that thou shalt surely die, thou, and all that are thine.'²⁴⁷⁰ God kept Abimalech and Sarah from coming together in marriage, that is, sexual union, and in context the meaning of 'thou hast taken' is clear: spatial relocation and proximity, and, quite possibly, some form of betrothal or, perhaps better, 'pre-betrothal,' as could be inferred from the above.²⁴⁷¹ Despite his intent, Abimalech could not marry Sarah for she was the wife of Abram, and God prevented any possibility of an illegal union. It was the 'suffered I thee not to touch her' that prevented it. The illegal union would have been sexual union. Had Abimalech kept Sarah as a wife, then he would have suffered the penalty of death.

The position of an unbetrothed virgin in circumstances of rape is the subject of '*If a man find a damsel that is a virgin, which is not betrothed, and lay hold on her, and lie with her, and they be found; Then the man that lay with her shall give unto the damsel's father fifty shekels of silver, and she shall be his wife; because he hath humbled her, he may not put her away all his days.*'²⁴⁷² [H]e hath humbled her'²⁴⁷³ is better translated 'in return for torturing her.' Here, the validity of the marriage is confirmed, as the uniting of the flesh, even in the case of forced rape, produces an indissoluble union.

The Greek word translated '*fornication*'²⁴⁷⁴ in the New Testament means harlotry, adultery, prostitution, unchastity, fornication, and incest, as well as multiple or gross adultery: in summary, illicit sexual intercourse. This covers virtually every type of sexual sin, whereas the Greek word translated '*adultery*' in the New Testa-

²⁴⁶⁸ Tanakh; (sublinear emphasis added)

²⁴⁶⁹ Hebrew: laqach.

²⁴⁷⁰ Gen 20:3-7 (sublinear emphasis added)

²⁴⁷¹ Hebrew: yaad, 'betrothal'; Hebrew for 'pledge,' variously about, arabown, arubbah, and chabal. The betrothal, a promise before God, holds good, and has implications in the case of rape, as has been seen. It is a promise to marry, certainly, but it is not consummated marriage.

²⁴⁷² Deut 22:28,29 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

²⁴⁷³ Hebrew: takhat asher innah.

²⁴⁷⁴ Greek: porneia, from the root word pernemi meaning 'to sell,' or 'offer one's body';

Barclay, William, *New Testament Words*, 'Porneia: 'love,' if it can be called that at all, for it is false love, is love at a price, love metered for time; in other words, a barter, a trade, love for sale, like a base commodity.'

ment is a different word.²⁴⁷⁵ So is there a question of multiplicity of sin required for an infraction of the Law sufficient to lead to a bill of divorcement?

The content of Christ's words can now be addressed: *'And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication,²⁴⁷⁶ and shall marry another, committeth adultery; and whoso marrieth her*

²⁴⁷⁵ Greek: moicheuo, moicheia, and moichao.

²⁴⁷⁶ Greek: porneia; *Bereans' Angelfire* (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'The root of much, if not most of the confusion on this subject circles around the word "fornication." The divorce groups generally limit this term to premarital relations. This limitation is absolutely groundless. The more we look into the English (fornication), Greek (porneia) and Hebrew (Zanah), the more we conclusively find:

1. That fornication in all three languages includes all sexual unchastity.

2. It is used principally (in preference to 'adultery' in the Scriptures for the after marriage infidelity of a wife.

Take the trouble to do this: check through all the Scriptural uses in the Old Testament. of 'zanah' (fornication) and 'naaph' (adultery). This can most easily be done in the Englishman's Hebrew Concordance: pp.389,1344 (zanah & taznuth, a derivative), and p.782 (naaph). It can also be done with Strong's or Young's, but not so easily. And check these passages in the Greek of the Septuagint and note that the Septuagint consistently translates zanah by porneia, and naaph by moicheia.

This is one aspect of the subject in which, the more we look into it, the more overwhelming the evidence becomes. If we think this matter is important enough to be concerned about as to fellowship, then let us at least take the time and trouble to thoroughly search it out for ourselves, and get the full picture.

The elaborate case that is built upon the word 'porneia' (fornication) to escape the obvious and simple meaning of Matt. 5:32, 19:9 falls completely to the ground when the words and their uses are examined. English, Greek & Hebrew all agree, and the Septuagint and the quotations from the Old Testament in the New Testament tie the Hebrew and Greek inseparably together.

'Porneia' (fornication: zanah) includes all sexual sin, including adultery, in English, Greek and Hebrew. "Moicheia" (adultery: naaph) is a more limited term. As soon as we get a true picture of the Scriptural use of these words in connection with this very matter (marital unfaithfulness), we see very clearly why it was much more fitting and expressive and natural for Jesus to use fornication instead of adultery. Jesus uses it in exactly the same sense and meaning that God repeatedly uses it in Ezekiel chpts. 16,23; Jeremiah chpt. 3, etc.

Merriam-Websters' Third New International Unabridged (accepted as the basic authority everywhere) defines 'fornication' as:

1. Human sexual intercourse other than between a man and his wife.

2. Sexual intercourse between a spouse and an unmarried person.

3. Sexual intercourse between unmarried people.

Note that the definition on which this theory depends as the only meaning of the word is third in order, after two other meanings which destroy the theory. And Hebrew and Greek and Bible usage agree perfectly with this.

In Ezekiel chpts. 16,23, God uses the word for fornication (zanah) 40 times concerning Israel's unfaithfulness to him, and the word for adultery (naaph) only six times. In these chapters, and in Jeremiah chpt. 3, both words are used for the same offence (which in this case is a woman, Israel, playing the whore against her husband, God), as will be seen from Ezek. 23:43, where both words occur. This clearly shows the fallacy of this article's argument built on an artificial definition of 'fornication' as exclusively non-marital intercourse.

Notice that after she was "old in adulteries" (moicheia), they committed whoredom (porneia) with her, and she with them. Read these two chapters through carefully, and note the continuous and repeated use of zanah (porneia in the Septuagint) for Israel's relations with the Assyrians and Babylonians. In Ezekiel chpt. 16, note:

v. 8: "Thou becamest mine (God's)."

v. 20. "Thy sons and thy daughters whom thou hast borne unto me."

Then, after this:

v. 22. "Thy whoredoms" (porneia).

v. 25. "Multiplied thy whoredoms" (porneia).

v. 28. "Played the whore" (porneia).

v. 29. "Multiplied thy fornication" (porneia).

And so on through the chapter, repeatedly using porneia of a married woman.

The Septuagint in these chapters translates consistently, using moicheia for naaph (adultery), and porneia for zanah (fornication). It is inescapable from these two chapters that both words are used for the same offence: a wife's

unfaithfulness. Note that Strong's says that in Old Testament usage, zanah (the Hebrew equivalent of porneia) more often refers to adultery, less often to "simple" fornication. Why the two words?

In the light of these chapters, and in the use of the words generally in the Scriptures and in ordinary language (Hebrew & Greek), and in their basic root meanings in these languages and in English (all consistent), it is perfectly clear why Christ used porneia (fornication) and not moicheia (adultery) in Matt. 5:32,19:9.

This is why: Porneia (fornication, harlotry, whoredom) strongly carries the connotation of a continuous way of life and character. Moicheia (adultery), on the other hand, connotes single acts, and does not necessarily carry the atmosphere of continuance or character. Distinguished, then, in this sense, Christ appears to be saying, by his choice of words, that single acts of unfaithfulness (moicheia), while a terrible abomination and possibly having terrible consequences for the rest of life that cannot be reversed, can be forgiven by the partner if there is true repentance and forsaking; but that fornication (porneia, harlotry, whoredom) as a fixed way of life makes continuation of a marriage impossible, however loving, Christ-like and forgiving a partner may be.

The way of Christ is always for forgiveness and reconciliation where that is possible, and where there is repentance, regardless of how bad a sin may be. The way of Christ, as so faithfully expounded in this matter by brethren Thomas and Roberts and those who followed them, provides a healthy solution to an intolerable condition of corruption, but it is also merciful to temporary weakness and folly.

I believe this is also why, in Ezekiel chpts. 16,23, God almost exclusively uses zanah (fornication) instead of adultery, though He uses the latter also in the same context and for the same offence.

A proper understanding of the meaning and Scriptural uses of adultery/moicheia/naaph and fornication/porneia/zanah completely destroys the false theory built on a false meaning, and beautifully exemplifies the Truth as brethren Thomas and Roberts believed it.

It will be noted with deep interest that brother Roberts covers this distinction between temporary failure and permanent addiction very beautifully in his remarks on divorce (#8). I had not seen the force of this until someone in controversy grossly misinterpreted him to make him say that one sin by the wife irreparably broke the marriage and there could be no reconciliation. If someone had not just happened to ask him this question in 1888AD, we would not have this record of his reply, and it would have been difficult to defend him against this terrible accusation.

I would suggest that you go through your Bibles and mark all places where naaph and zanah occur in Hebrew, and moicheia and porneia in Greek. It will give a sound understanding of the true Scriptural use of these words, and show clearly why Christ used porneia and what He meant.

Naaph (& derivatives) are always translated adultery (and the derivatives): never anything else (one exception—'*break wedlock*'—same meaning). And every time adultery occurs in the O.T., it is naaph in the original (one exception: Prov. 6:26 [this is incorrect; the phrase is '*whorish woman*' from Hebrew: zanah, which corresponds with Ezek 16:30, which has the same word, zanah, and the same phrase '*whorish woman*.' Prov 6:26b '*adulteress*' is a woeful translation of the Hebrew: iysh, which is male, meaning '*a man*'!]). The Septuagint always translates naaph by moicheia. And where the N.T. quotes from the O.T., it always uses moicheia for naaph (as thou shalt not commit adultery).

Zanah (& derivatives) are always translated fornication, whoredom, harlotry (& derivatives): never anything else. And every time fornication occurs in the O.T., it is zanah in the original. The Septuagint always translates zanah by porneia. And when the N.T. quotes from the O.T. it always uses porneia for zanah (as Rahab the harlot).

Likewise, in the N.T., moicheia is always translated adultery, and adultery in the (A.V.) is always moicheia in the original. And porneia is always translated fornication, whoredom, harlotry; and fornication in the A.V. is always porneia in the original.

So we have an unvarying and unbroken chain of usage in English, Greek, Hebrew, O.T., N.T. & the Septuagint version: ADULTERY / moicheia / naaph.

FORNICATION / porneia / zanah.

Gesenius (the most widely quoted authority on Hebrew) defines zanah: "To commit fornication, whether married or unmarried."

Henry Browne: Dictionary of Scriptural words in Hebrew, Greek and English:

"NAAPH / moicheia / adultery."

"ZANAH / porneia / fornication."

Davies' Hebrew Lexicon: ZANAH: "fornication" -- used of a married woman, of an unmarried woman, of religious apostasy or unfaithfulness to God, regarded as whoredom or adultery since the covenant between the Eternal and His people Israel was compared to a marriage union."

Robinson Greek-English Lexicon: PORNEIA: "Fornication, lewdness: used of adultery, of incest, and generally of all such intercourse as Mosaic Law interdicted."

*which is put away doth commit adultery.*²⁴⁷⁷ This can be compared with, *'It has been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement: But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery.'*²⁴⁷⁸

The cause of the putting away was not premarital sex—for such a thing does not obtain, save in the case of the forcible rape of a betrothed virgin, as already observed—but adultery, or other illicit sexual practice. If the woman had had sexual intercourse with another before her so-called 'marriage,' then she was married to her first partner, and living in sin with her second partner. Upon this becoming discovered, the second partner had to issue her with a bill of divorcement, or else he would be living in an adulterous relationship.

Reversion

Since a marriage is fully formed by the two becoming one flesh after an exchange of vows constituting a covenant, an act of lust²⁴⁷⁹ doesn't end it. There has to be an equivalent physical act in order to end marriage since consummation is what fully joins it.²⁴⁸⁰

Now there is a reversion in the Law introduced by Christ, as seen from, *'The Pharisees also came unto him, tempting him, and saying unto him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause? And he*

I quote these "authorities", not as final arbiters, but to show that the very limited meaning of porneia and its Hebrew equivalent zanah, upon which this theory depends, is quite unsupported from any direction, and is contrary to the universal understanding of the very meaning of the words.

It is sometimes argued that since Jesus used two different words (porneia for fornication and moicheia for adultery) in the same verse, that he therefore means two different things.

I have shown the complete groundlessness of this argument based on porneia, which is so vital to this theory, and of which it makes so much. I have shown that the word Christ used is the exact equivalent of the word God overwhelmingly used of His unfaithful erring "wife" Israel. I have shown why porneia here is more appropriate than adultery would be, for it connotes a way of life.

A further point to make it even stronger. For simplicity, I have spoken throughout of Christ "using" porneia, meaning that this is the word we find in the Greek of the gospels. However, it is absolutely clear that Jesus spoke Hebrew. It is common to speak of the Palestinian language of that time as 'Aramaic', but it is spoken of as 'Hebrew' in Luke 23:38, John 5:2, Acts 21:40, etc. That Jesus spoke in Hebrew is clear from the fact that several times his actual words are quoted, and then translated, as: *'talitha cumi; ephphatha; eloi, eloi, lama sabachthani.'* When he spoke to Paul from heaven, it was 'in the Hebrew tongue' (Acts 26:14).

So Jesus actually did not use porneia at all, but the Hebrew zanah: Exactly the same word as God did in Ezekiel chpts.16,23 concerning His erring wife Israel. This does not change the picture any, it just binds the bonds even stronger, for zanah we have far more copious usage than porneia.'

²⁴⁷⁷ Mat 19:9

²⁴⁷⁸ Mat 5:31,32

²⁴⁷⁹ Mat 5:28

²⁴⁸⁰ Gen 2:24; in the W.C.G., the Tkach administration watered down the teaching by saying, 'If someone acts like an unbeliever, the victimized party who still believes can get a lawful divorce'; indeed, out of feelings of kindness, many have sought to find biblical reasons to allow such second chances at marital success. But once that first step is taken, there seems no end to the reasons that are eventually given to permit divorce. Consider, for example, the teaching of the W.C.G. In its *Special Policy Statement* of April 20, 1993AD where the W.C.G. reaches the incredible conclusion that divorce is acceptable "....if either party informs the church in the earliest months of the marriage that he or she regrets his or her marriage!"

answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female. And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. They say unto him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away? He saith unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so. And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication,²⁴⁸¹ and shall marry another, committeth adultery; and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.'²⁴⁸² This reversion, however, is completely in accord with, 'For I detest divorce, saith the Lord, the God of Israel.'²⁴⁸³

The reversion in the Judæo-Christian dispensation is very clear: the two joined as one are so joined in the eyes of the Lord for their entire lives together. The only incidences of dissolution, or release, or divorce are:

1. Upon the death of one or both partners;
2. Upon the discovery that one party is married to another by a previous marriage;
3. Upon the discovery that one has engaged in undisclosed sexual perversity, in the form of harlotry, incest, or prostitution, prior to the supposed 'marriage'; or,
4. Upon discovery that one has engaged in undisclosed sexual perversity after marriage, in the form of harlotry, incest, prostitution, or multiple or gross adultery. Illegitimate offspring were excluded from the congregation of the Lord to the tenth generation, showing how severely God views this perversity.²⁴⁸⁴

A subsequent and single act of adultery occurring after the marriage, for example, and deriving from a sin of weakness rather than a premeditated sin, apparently would not necessarily invoke a bill of divorcement, if the marriage had been properly constituted in the eyes of God:; that is, if the two were virgins and became one flesh, and the deed were immediately repented. The bill of divorcement arising out of adultery subsequent upon a valid marriage between two virgins appears to be founded on unrepented wilful or repeated sexual sin. In the instance of the baptised Judæo-Christian, however, wilful sin subsequent to baptism does not import forgiveness from God,²⁴⁸⁵ unless immediately repented of and not repeated. With failure in these requirements, the miscreant is put back under the Law, losing the covering of God's grace and all that that imports. In such

²⁴⁸¹ Greek: porneia.

²⁴⁸² Mat 19:3-9

²⁴⁸³ Mal 2:16a; Tanakh version

²⁴⁸⁴ Deut 23:2.

²⁴⁸⁵ cp. Deut 22:20,21

circumstances, there can be no forgiveness by the wronged partner, and the issue of a bill of divorcement becomes mandatory, for man cannot over-rule God.²⁴⁸⁶

Now to another tract which has caused difficulties for some: *'Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of a harlot? God forbid. What! know ye not that he which is joined to a harlot is one body? for two, saith he, shall be one flesh. But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit. Flee fornication.'*²⁴⁸⁷ *Every sin that a man doeth is without the body: but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body. What! know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.'*²⁴⁸⁸

In reading and interpreting Paul's writings in his epistles, it is always important to bear in mind the circumstances and events he was addressing. Put simply, his writing must be taken in context. This letter from Paul was written against various illicit sexual practices prevalent at the time in Corinth, and, indeed, elsewhere. Paul admonishes them to flee those illicit sexual practices.²⁴⁸⁹ They had been engaged in illicit sexual union with harlots: in other words they had known that the counter-party was a harlot before they engaged in sexual union. This was more than a reprobate form of marriage, as the parties lacked competence to marry, one not being a virgin, for there was no intention of marriage, as the harlots were being taken and then discarded immediately after completion of the illicit act. The bill of divorcement mechanism for subsequently discovered adultery could not apply here, as one party was a harlot and the other was a consenting and fleeting correspondent. The illicit nature of the act was known by both parties in advance of the sexual union. If it were intended to be a marriage by both parties, then it would be a marriage, after a fashion, if one party were a virgin, but it would be a very unclean and unsatisfactory one in the eyes of God, and one which would have to be reduced immediately by divorce due to prior sexual relations on the part of the harlot, that is, voided in accordance with the Law, other than in instances where it was commanded, such as with Hosea and his whore wife Gomer: *'The beginning of the word of the Lord by Hosea, And the Lord said to Hosea, Go, take unto thee a wife of whoredoms and children of whoredoms: for the land hath committed great whoredom, departing from the Lord. So he went and took Gomer the daughter of Diblaim: which conceived, and bare him a son.'*²⁴⁹⁰ The child-

²⁴⁸⁶ despite this, in the U.K.. e.g., since the AD1960s, a virtual 'no fault' divorce has been available, even on a whim, with the full backing of the state for the party seeking dissolution; Hitchens, Peter, *The Abolition of Britain, From Lady Chatterley to Tony Blair*, pp.216,217:

'In 1965AD, the Law Commission was set up under a liberal judge, the future Lord Scarman, and the development of divorce reform effectively handed over to the lawyers. The Commission would quickly come up with fault-free 'irretrievable breakdown' as the main ground for divorce, and no right for either spouse to keep the marriage in existence beyond five years. In effect, the judges had produced not just 'divorce on demand' but *unilateral* divorce on demand....It also worked hard at shifting the balance of power away from the husband and towards the wife.'

²⁴⁸⁷ Greek: porneia.

²⁴⁸⁸ I Cor 6:15-20

²⁴⁸⁹ Greek: porneia.

²⁴⁹⁰ Hos 1:2,3

ren of this union were given names as warnings and messages to the houses of Israel and Judah. However, and returning to the main theme, if there were no virgin or free person involved,²⁴⁹¹ then the sexual union could not result in any form of marriage before God, however temporary or voidable.

The confusion resulting from all and any such illicit sexual activity is obvious. The marriages of many would be rendered unclean, unsatisfactory, and confused, and, on many occasions, if not all, completely invalid and void. Indeed, such activity often can render one or both parties to the illicit congress incapable of entering into a subsequent, proper marriage before God, or remaining in an extant one. Certainly, for those in the Judæo-Christian church, the practice was proscribed in the words of Paul: *'flee fornication.'*

Bill of divorcement

It is now meet to look back at the implications flowing from the issuance of a bill of divorcement, as seen in Matthew: *'And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication,²⁴⁹² and shall marry another, committeth adultery; and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.'*²⁴⁹³ Man needs the gift of the Holy Spirit to attain agapé, and this sets Judæo-Christian love apart from all other forms of love, for it is based on the love of God, despite remaining man's 'low estate' version of God's love.

The bill of divorcement can arise from one party discovering a previous sexual relationship on the part of the other partner, in other words, a previous marriage in the eyes of God, and issuing a bill of divorcement to the offending partner. This protects the wronged party, but the offender cannot marry another, without the same effect of inducing that new party to commit adultery, as the original sexual union still holds good as the marriage of the offending party.

In the case of the discovery of wilful adultery, gross sexual perversity, occurring after a valid marriage, then the woman would not be able to marry another within the Law: she had been divorced for adultery and was not free to marry another. But in these circumstances, her husband, the innocent party, technically, would be free to marry, having been wronged and deceived.

It should be noted that only the male could issue bills of divorcement under the Law, although both Greek and Roman law²⁴⁹⁴ did allow female-initiated divorce. Under the Law, God's Law, there is simply no

²⁴⁹¹ i.e., a widower.

²⁴⁹² Greek: porneia.

²⁴⁹³ Mat 19:9

²⁴⁹⁴ Barclay, William, *The Plain Man's Guide to Ethics*, p.67:

'Under Greek law there were certain great crimes for which a man might be condemned to death—murder, treason, impiety, sacrilege, and debasing the coinage. There were crimes against person and property. Theft by night was punishable by death, as was theft of more than fifty drachmae....Adultery was a capital crime and the injured husband could take the law into his own hands, and kill the man who had seduced his wife. Fornication, on the other hand, was not a crime at all. Kidnappers, burglars, and highwaymen could be condemned to death. Robbers at the gymnasiums and pilferers at the harbours were liable to sentence of death. By New Testament times, the Greek method of carrying

mechanism whatsoever permitting any form of 'female-initiated' divorce, reflecting the relationship of the Word to the congregation of Israel, and also of Christ to His church, where neither Israel nor the church has any right to put away Christ. *'And if a woman should put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery.'*²⁴⁹⁵ The Greek translated, *'put away,'*²⁴⁹⁶ is more properly and clearly rendered *'depart': 'If a woman shall depart from her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery.'*

The wanting can be seen in the situation recounted in John chapter four, concerning the woman of Samaria and her five husbands. *'Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither. The woman answered and said, I have no husband. Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no husband: For thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly.'*²⁴⁹⁷ The woman had had five husbands, the last in line being the one with whom she then currently cohabited. As Jesus confirmed, this fifth was not her husband under the Law, for she would not have been free to re-marry under the Law. Had each and every one of the first four died in turn while she was then married to them, and she had not re-married until after the death of her previous (fourth) husband, then the fifth-in-line husband would have been her valid husband under the Law. The fact that this was not so clearly indicates the validity of the former state: she had been divorced and had re-married several times, contrary to the Law. Put simply, she had entered into a series of illegitimate marriages. She was engaged in multiple adultery, and thus she was guilty of death by stoning under the Law. She was a Samaritan, however, as confirmed,²⁴⁹⁸ and would be subject, at least in her own eyes, to Samaritan law, which, while it was based on the Pentateuch, doubtless imported much unwanted baggage with it. The degree of laxity and aberration therein is evidenced by the fact that she had been permitted under Samaritan law to enter into such a series of marriages. Samaritan law would be regarded as profoundly defective by Christ, of course, for good and obvious reason.

A telling illustration of the degree of perversity in the attempt to overturn and negate God's Law is found in Judaism's rabbinic law: *"Where a man remarried his divorced wife after she had been married, she and her rival are to perform halizah."*²⁴⁹⁹ The Torah explicitly forbids a man to remarry his wife after she has remarried.

²⁵⁰⁰ The Rabbis permitted what the Torah forbids, then enacted conditions for the forbidden act.²⁵⁰¹

out the death penalty was to give the condemned man hemlock to drink, as was done to Socrates. Under Roman law, treason, corruption by governors and government officials, kidnapping, seduction, and rape were all capital crimes. But in both Greek and Roman law the death penalty was sparingly used.'

²⁴⁹⁵ Mark 10:12

²⁴⁹⁶ Greek: apoluo, deriving from apo, meaning 'away,' and luo, meaning 'to loosen.'

²⁴⁹⁷ John 4:16-18

²⁴⁹⁸ John 4:9

²⁴⁹⁹ Yeb. 12a

²⁵⁰⁰ Deut 24:1-4

²⁵⁰¹ Gruber, Daniel, *Rabbi Akiba's Messiah: The Origins of Rabbinic Authority*, p.81

Taken in adultery

True Christian love in the Holy Spirit, subject to and guided by the '*royal law*,'²⁵⁰² will not exhibit itself in conduct akin to those seeking to work to the letter of the Old Covenant Law. There was no stoning of the married woman taken in an act of adultery,²⁵⁰³ which, in context, was a non-wilful sin of weakness by one outside the church.²⁵⁰⁴

When the Pharisees brought her to Christ, seeking to entice²⁵⁰⁵ Him to utter a sin—her co-respondent was not there²⁵⁰⁶—His response was: '*He who is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.*' The life we did not create, we have not the right to take. God has that right. God decides, and He alone. Had the life of the offending woman been taken partially—given the want of a co-respondent—it would have been contrary to the full tripartite: the Law, justice, and the '*royal law*.'

Vaughan observes, 'There was a person brought to Jesus in the Temple-courts by the Scribes and Pharisees to see what He would say to her. She was a person guilty of a most heinous sin, and they, her enemies and His, would feign draw from Him, by His treatment of her case, something which they might make merchandise of, as an expression of dissatisfaction or variance with the Mosaic Law. "*The Law commands that such should be stoned.*"²⁵⁰⁷ but what sayest thou?' [In their false estimate] He must either sign the warrant of their execution, or else set Himself up as a rival legislator to Moses. The wisdom of God is not thus limited. There is a third course. "*He that is without sin among you,*" such is His answer, late but timely, to the accusers' question, "*Let him first cast a stone at her.*" She is guilty [to their mind]—she deserves the penalty—but who shall be the executioner? Whose hand shall be first upon her to put her to death? Surely the hand of the sinless; the hand of him whose conscience bears against himself no accusing witness; if there be one among you—perhaps there is one—whose soul is clear in this matter—whose life is free and his heart pure from the sin of uncleanness—he is the proper person to execute vengeance [justice, surely!] upon her who unquestionably deserves to die! And, strange to say, among all those Scribes and among all those Pharisees—teachers of the divine Law, and "similar men of virtue" as they were—there was not one who could accept the challenge; not

²⁵⁰² q.v. inf.

²⁵⁰³ Ezek 16:38b, '*women who break* [Hebrew: *na'aph*, meaning '*commit adultery*'] *wedlock*,' refers specifically to adulterers, and, when referred back to and taken in context of v.30, more specifically to serial adulterers.

²⁵⁰⁴ John 8:3-11

²⁵⁰⁵ Greek: *peirazo*, '*tempting*.'

²⁵⁰⁶ cf. Lev 20:10f.

²⁵⁰⁷ but only in the instance of both being caught and, even then, only if adequate witnesses come forward under the Law, with the first stones being administered by the witnesses against the condemned. In this instance, there were obvious deficiencies:

1. there was only one party; not two. There should have been both parties present;
2. the witnesses seemed totally lacking, despite the claim that she had been taken in the act. If the claim were true, this implies, does it not, that the 'takers' were not then present, that she had been taken by others, then handed over to the scribes and Pharisees? John 8:4b implies this, for it reads, '*this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act.*' It does not say '*we took her*,' just that '*she was taken*'; and,
3. the whole affair appears largely fabricated in its claimed detail, purely with a view to entrapment.

one who could say, “My life is clear and my heart is pure—I will throw the first stone.” They went out, convinced by their own consciences, beginning at the eldest even unto the last, till Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. Then at last, face to face with that guilty one whom He had delivered from the human vengeance, He brought her into that truer and higher court, for which they, the human accusers, had cared nothing, and in the very act of absolving, added also the highest of all motives for reformation, when He said, “Neither do I condemn thee: go and sin no more.”²⁵⁰⁸

‘In this story of the woman taken in adultery, we are told that Jesus stooped down and wrote on the ground.’²⁵⁰⁹ In that passage an Armenian manuscript²⁵¹⁰ makes the curious addition that it was the sins of the woman’s accusers which Jesus wrote on the ground, and that is why they slipped silently away. ‘*He himself, bowing his head, was writing with his finger on the earth, to declare their sins; and they were seeing their several sins on the stones.*’²⁵¹¹ ‘John says Jesus ‘wrote’²⁵¹² on the ground. The Greek word used is not the usual word ‘to write,’²⁵¹³ but the word which means ‘to write down a record against,’²⁵¹⁴ since one of the meanings of the prefix is ‘against.’²⁵¹⁵ Again, ‘without sin’²⁵¹⁶ means not only ‘without sin,’ but ‘without a sinful desire.’²⁵¹⁷

This gives a slightly different cadence, although the outcome maintains. On this inferred understanding, there was no writing of the Law on the ground as is often assumed. There would be no need; the Pharisees knew the Law on the matter perfectly well. All that was written were the sins and misdemeanours of each of the accusers of the woman taken in adultery. One of the sins, quite possibly, and common to all, would be their action in hiding, protecting, or simply overlooking her co-respondent. On balance, this gives a more satisfactory exposition of the nature and scope of Jesus’ writing on the earth.

The sheer magnitude of deceit, hypocrisy, and serious legal wanting in the scribes’ and Pharisees’ actions are all too evident: they had no eyewitnesses, and they only brought one of the alleged co-respondents. ‘Under the then Roman law and its interaction with Jewish law, she would not be killed.’²⁵¹⁸ Deficient witness, if deemed acceptable, or an aberration of or departure from the strict letter—both concepts wholly beyond the Law even as they understood it—inevitably would end in the condemning of all of the accusers. The subsequent Jewish contention that the Law did not mandate death by stoning²⁵¹⁹ is incorrect. In Leviticus chapter twenty,

²⁵⁰⁸ Vaughan, C. J., *Christ the Light of the World*, pp.239-241 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

²⁵⁰⁹ John 8:8

²⁵¹⁰ dated to 989AD.

²⁵¹¹ Barclay, William, *The Mind of Jesus*, p.14

²⁵¹² John 8:6,8

²⁵¹³ Greek: graphein.

²⁵¹⁴ Greek: katagraphein.

²⁵¹⁵ Greek: kata.

²⁵¹⁶ Greek: anamartesos.

²⁵¹⁷ Barclay, William, *The Daily Study Bible, Gospel of John*, Vol. 2, pp.3,4 (slightly paraphrased)

²⁵¹⁸ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of John*, Vol. 2, p.3

²⁵¹⁹ Preuss, Julius, *Biblical and Talmudic Medicine*, p.472

the phrase, *'they shall surely be put to death,'* is conjoined with or set in juxtaposition to, *'they shall stone them with stones; their blood shall be upon them.'*²⁵²⁰ The Jewish tradition of death by strangulation for adulterers, however, noted by Preuss, is not only unbiblical, it is pagan in origin.

One by one, the accusers, convicted by their own conscience, slipped away.²⁵²¹ Upon being asked where were her accusers, and had anyone condemned her,²⁵²² the woman replied, *'No man, Lord.'*²⁵²³ Jesus then told her to, *'go, and sin no more,'*²⁵²⁴ indicating that though she had sinned and not been stoned, it wasn't to be repeated, for wilful adultery, in other words, repeated, unrepented wilful sin, brings on the death penalty, but not if it is merely the sin of simple, unplanned weakness, and quickly repented.

Contentious wives

*'There was a certain Levite. And his concubine played the whore against him,'*²⁵²⁵ *and went away from him unto her father's house to Bethlehem-judah, and was there four whole months. And her husband arose, and went after her, to speak friendly unto her.'*²⁵²⁶ After several days, and with her father's consent, he left with her to journey north, reaching Gibeah in Benjamin by nightfall. *'Behold, the men of the city, certain sons of Belial'*²⁵²⁷ *beset the house round about, and beat at the door, and spake to the master of the house, the old man, saying, Bring forth the man that came into thine house, that we may know him. And the man, the master of the house, went out unto them, and said unto them, Nay, my brethren, nay, I pray you, do not do so wickedly; seeing that this man is come into my mine house, do not this folly. Behold, here is my daughter, a maiden, and his concubine; then I will bring them out now, and humble ye them, and do with them which seemeth good unto you: but unto this man do not so vile a thing. But the men would not hearken to him: so the man took his concubine, and brought her forth unto them; and they knew her, and abused her all the night until the morning: and when the day began to spring, they let her go. Then came the woman in the dawning of the day, and fell down at the door of the man's house where her lord was, till it was light. And her lord rose up in the morning, and opened the doors of the house, and went out to go his way; and, behold, the woman his concubine was fallen down at the door of the house, and her hands were upon the threshold. And he said unto her, Up, and let us be*

²⁵²⁰ Lev 20:10,27

²⁵²¹ John 8;9

²⁵²² John 8:10

²⁵²³ John 8:11a

²⁵²⁴ John 8:11c

²⁵²⁵ q.v. inf. for correct translation.

²⁵²⁶ Judg 19:1b-3a; K.J.V.

²⁵²⁷ Hebrew: *'wickedness.'*

going: *but none answered.*²⁵²⁸ The wicked men of Gibeah had slain her: *'and thought to have slain me, and my concubine have they forced, that she is dead.'*²⁵²⁹

The Levite took to wife a woman of Bethlehem. She is called a concubine, not because she was his mistress, but a wife not endowed with a dowry, and it does not appear that he had any other to wife—given the provisions of the Law—for the margin calls her *'a wife, a concubine.'* Significantly, had her sin been one of whoredom, she would have been killed under the Law, or permanently *'put away'* out of the family home in the case of gross sexual perversity.²⁵³⁰ But the Levite went to Bethlehem and spoke softly to her, and had her return with him to mount Ephraim,²⁵³¹ actions by no means suggestive of the sins of whoredom or sexual perversity.

Josephus, in his narrative of this story, makes her to be the person that the wicked Benjamites had a desire upon when they beset the house, and says nothing of their villainous design upon the Levite. They saw her, he says, in the street, when they came into the town, and were smitten with her beauty. But that disregards a crucial part of the narrative and must be compromised as a result, and discarded.

Next to address is the argument of symmetry. By the Law she should have been put to death for her adultery.²⁵³² She had lived at ease in her sin, and although man was not willing to execute punishment, God was, and did. Her punishment, therefore, answered her sin.²⁵³³ But this disregards what the Levite did: he went to her father's house and spoke friendly unto her. Why would he do such a thing, and why would he take her back, with the Law so specific on punishment?

A strange interpretation of the whole passage can be found in the writings of an unknown author which first appeared in a monthly publication: 'A certain Levite of mount Ephraim, a few miles from Shiloh—probably one of the Levites in attendance at the Tabernacle—whilst passing through Gibeah of Benjamin with his concubine, had her seized, maltreated and killed by some unruly Benjamites. The outcome was a punitive expedition against the people of Gibeah which developed into a war of revenge by all the other tribes of against Benjamin. Phineas went into the Tabernacle to ask the Lord if they should continue this war to the death and the Lord told him to do so and He would deliver the Benjamites into their hands. At least, that is what Phineas told his compatriots. The consequence was that the war was pursued with such zeal and fury that the entire tribe of Benjamin, some fifty thousand and probably as many children, were wiped out with the exception of six hundred men.

²⁵²⁸ Judg 19:22-28a

²⁵²⁹ Judg 20:5b

²⁵³⁰ Mat 19:9

²⁵³¹ Judg 19:1,16

²⁵³² Hebrew *zanah*, 'whore,' derived from the idea of overfed and, thus, wanton and uncontrollable.

²⁵³³ Latin: *culpa libido fuit, poena libido fuit*, 'lust was her sin, and lust was her punishment.'

For more than two centuries after this, the story of the Tabernacle is blank; nothing is known of its history....Towards the end of the period came the upheaval in the priesthood which resulted in the line of Eleazar being deposed and priests of the line of Ithamar, Aaron's younger son, seizing the duties of office. So when the child Samuel was brought to the Tabernacle by his mother to be devoted to Divine service, Eli of the line of Ithamar was the serving High Priest. The account in Samuel²⁵³⁴ shows how decadent the priesthood had become.²⁵³⁵

This interpretation is constructed around the assumption that the establishment at the Tabernacle in Shiloh, in the mount of Ephraim, was corrupted, utterly. As a consequence, the Levite was too, on the assumption that he ministered at that Tabernacle. It ignores the wording: *'And his concubine played the whore against him.'*²⁵³⁶ It also claims that the Levite intentionally and wilfully had her taken by the Benjamites, repeatedly raped, and murdered. It also makes the wholly unsupportable assumption that, *'And the children of Israel arose, and went up to the house of God, and asked counsel of God, and said, Which of us shall go up first to the battle against the children of Benjamin? And the Lord said, Judah shall go up first,'*²⁵³⁷ is an account of the devious manipulation and wrenching of God's word by the High Priest, in that Phineas, in conveying God's answer, wholly perverted it to the diametrical opposite. Of course, not one part of this account has any scriptural support, and must be discarded.

There is another way of approaching this matter, however, and it lies beyond the Authorized text. In verse two the Chaldee reads: *'And his concubine carried it insolently to him, and she went away from him unto her father's house to Bethlehem-judah, and was there four whole months.'*²⁵³⁸ The Masoretic text, correctly translated, supports this. This changes the matter from whoredom to vile, vituperative harranging and criticism, mirroring the wanton and uncontrollable root of the Hebrew.²⁵³⁹ Such visceral hatred in a wife of her husband is hardly unknown, of course; after all, it was prophesied in Genesis.²⁵⁴⁰

This opens up a vastly different scenario, one which allows the action of the Levite, and that under the Law, with one caveat. His wife was not a whore, but an adversary, filled with visceral hatred, so deep-seated it constituted the very core of her being. Her every living breath would be directed against him and his God-given position: to denigrate, to belittle, to criticise, to ridicule, to revile, to anathematize, to curse, to hold open to

²⁵³⁴ I Sam 2:12-17

²⁵³⁵ *Bible Study Monthly*, early 1988AD, reprinted two decades later in abridged form in *Bible Study Monthly*, Vol. 85, No.1, pp.35,36 (sublinear emphasis added)

²⁵³⁶ Judg 19:2a

²⁵³⁷ Judg 20:18

²⁵³⁸ Judg 19:2; ex Hebrew.

²⁵³⁹ Hebrew: zanah.

²⁵⁴⁰ Gen 3:16 (correct translation from the correct Hebrew text (sublinear emphasis added): *'and her [evil] intent shall be against her husband'*—cp. Gen 4:7b, where the same Hebrew wording appears (inferred explanatory wording appearing in square brackets. Again, such transmutation from this form of debased Hebrew into English is hardly unknown: the confusion of 'על and 'אל is one of the commonest cases of textual corruption: Cripps, Richard S., *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Amos*, p.236, and footnotes.

public revulsion and mockery, to humiliate, to wear down day and night, to vex without pity or concern, to heap satanic hatred upon satanic hatred—in short, to do the work of Satan, her real lord and master. The ‘*help meet*’ or ‘*helper*’ of Genesis²⁵⁴¹ had become an obstruction, an impediment, a malign counterforce. To cap it all, she left her husband and went home to her father for months on end. She cared not for her vows, she cared not for propriety, she cared not for the Law, and she cared not that the sin was hers and hers alone!

During the return from her father’s house, by this account, there must have evidenced a reversion to her former contentious ways. Proverbs is in point: ‘*a continual dropping in a very rainy day and a contentious woman are alike*,’²⁵⁴² as is, ‘*As coals are to burning coals, and wood to fire; so is a contentious man to kindle strife*.’²⁵⁴³ Despite her husband’s gracious and forgiving stance, she had fallen to criticising his decision to leave late in the day, and done so loudly and incessantly, with all the vituperative hatred and revulsion that she could muster. By the time they had reached Gibeah, her fate was sealed: despite being given more than ample opportunity, she had not repented of her ways, and was doomed. The rest, as they say, was inevitable, one way or another.

But this is where the caveat of context applies. The first verse in chapter nineteen explains that, ‘*there was no king in Israel*.’²⁵⁴⁴ In this instance, ‘*king*’²⁵⁴⁵ means ‘*ruler*,’ since the Lord had not yet given Israel kings. That there was a breakdown of law and order and civil society can be seen from, ‘*In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes*.’²⁵⁴⁶ The second phrase is not reproduced in chapter nineteen when dealing with the Levite and his concubine, but it does lend some background. The implication in the case of the Levite is that while he, at least, did respect and obey the Law, there was no real prospect of a civil judgement against his concubine that would be respected in the society of the time; rather it would bring disgrace upon the Levite and serve to bring the Law into disrepute. What could he do? He had tried to wean her from her wicked ways, but with no success, so, at the last, he cast her out to the wicked men in Gibeah. In doing so, he must have known or at the least suspected her fate. Certainly, upon her death, he was rid of her, but that begs further questions:

1. Was it murder?
2. Was it manslaughter?
3. Was he an accessory to murder?
4. Was it permissible under the Law?

²⁵⁴¹ Gen 2:18

²⁵⁴² Prov 27:15 mutatis mutandis.

²⁵⁴³ Prov 26:21; mutatis mutandis.

²⁵⁴⁴ Judg 19:1b

²⁵⁴⁵ Hebrew: malek.

²⁵⁴⁶ Judg 17:6

5. Did he take the Law into his own hands? and,

6. What, exactly, is the Law on the matter?

In addressing these questions, it is best to address the last: the Law on the matter. The effect of the Law on the marriage relationship can be inferred from the exemplary conduct of women in the Bible. Sarah called Abram her '*lord*' or '*master*,'²⁵⁴⁷ and, like all truly Judæo-Christian women, would obey her husband in all things, '*For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church.*'²⁵⁴⁸ Wives must obey their husbands in the same way that all Judæo-Christians obey Christ. That leaves no place for conduct like the concubine's. Her ways were satanic and left no room for God in what she had reduced to a mere sham and shambles of a marriage. But such is the sanctity of marriage in God's eyes that a bill of divorcement would not apply, for that could be issued only in circumstances of a wife's sexual perversity,²⁵⁴⁹ which leaves but physical punishment of the wife. Her punishment then, under the Law, would have been to be put out, banished from the corpus of Israel. From there, it was up to the hand of God to see to matters, for she would find herself in the hands of the wicked.

The Levite did not take the Law into his own hands, neither did he commit murder, nor was he implicated in manslaughter. He gave his wife much time to repent of her ways, and sought after her, and entreated her, all to no avail, so, at the last, he allowed circumstances presenting to do the work of God's punishment. After all, God often makes wicked people instruments of destruction to one another.

But that left the wicked Gibeonites. Were they to go unpunished? Not at all! The dismembering of the carcass and the sending of one of the parts to each of the tribes remedied that, in addition to serving as a very stark warning to other potentially contentious wives in Israel. The Gibeonites were given the opportunity of turning over the culprits, but in their wickedness, they refused, at which point the bloody outcome became inevitable.²⁵⁵⁰

In summary, the Chaldee text and translation²⁵⁵¹ accounts for and explains all of the actions of the parties, and, accordingly, has much to commend it.

Characteristics of woman

In the Bible, a woman is often depicts a church, for weal or woe. The idealized woman can be extracted from Scripture:

²⁵⁴⁷ I Peter 3:6

²⁵⁴⁸ Eph 5:22

²⁵⁴⁹ implicit in Mat 5:32

²⁵⁵⁰ Judg 20:12,13

²⁵⁵¹ Judg 19:1-30,20:4-6

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1. 'She bridles her tongue';²⁵⁵²
 2. She is not given to gossip;²⁵⁵³
 3. She is not vain;²⁵⁵⁴
 4. She is discrete and honest;²⁵⁵⁵
 5. She is sober and faithful;²⁵⁵⁶
 6. She is wise and kind;²⁵⁵⁷
 7. She is concerned for the welfare of others;²⁵⁵⁸
 8. She is diligent in whatever she does;²⁵⁵⁹
 9. She feeds strangers and cares for others;²⁵⁶⁰ and,
 10. She is hospitable.²⁵⁶¹

The instruction in Proverbs is telling, with valuable instruction for the individual woman: *'Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies. The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil. She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life. She seeketh wool, and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands. She is like the merchant ships; she bringeth her food from afar. She riseth also while it is yet night, and giveth meat to her household, and a portion to her maidens. She considereth a field, and buyeth it: with the fruit of her hand she planteth a vineyard. She girdeth her loins with strength, and strengtheneth her arms. She perceiveth that her merchandise is good: her candle goeth not out by night. She layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff. She stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy. She is not afraid of the snow for her household: for all her household are clothed with scarlet. She maketh herself coverings of tapestry; her clothing is silk and purple. Her husband*

²⁵⁵² Jas 1:26; Mat 12:35,36

²⁵⁵³ I Tim 3:11

²⁵⁵⁴ Prov 31:30

²⁵⁵⁵ Titus 2:3,5; Prov 31:25

²⁵⁵⁶ Titus 2:4; I Tim 3:11; Col 3:18

²⁵⁵⁷ Prov 31:26

²⁵⁵⁸ Prov 31:20

²⁵⁵⁹ Prov 31:26,27

²⁵⁶⁰ Gen 18:6; Prov 31:20; I Tim 2:10,5:10

²⁵⁶¹ Ex 22:21

*is known in the gates, when he sitteth among the elders of the land. She maketh fine linen, and selleth it; and delivereth girdles unto the merchants. Strength and honour are her clothing; and she shall rejoice in time to come. She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness. She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness. Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her. Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all. Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised. Give her of the fruit of her hands; and let her own works praise her in the gates.'*²⁵⁶²

To the contrary, tendencies women have demonstrated over time that should be avoided:

1. Being led into error;²⁵⁶³
2. Being deceived;²⁵⁶⁴
3. Promoting idolatry and superstition;²⁵⁶⁵
4. Being active in promoting iniquity;²⁵⁶⁶
5. Being subtle and deceitful;²⁵⁶⁷
6. Being fond of self-indulgence, dress, and ornaments;²⁵⁶⁸ and,
7. Given to witchcraft.²⁵⁶⁹

Women in a supportive role should use every opportunity to assist their husbands to function well in their positions outside the home and in the church:

1. Take an interest in her husband's work and hobbies;
2. Talk over problems, be a good listener;
3. Study the Bible together;

²⁵⁶² Prov 31:10-31

²⁵⁶³ II Tim 3:6

²⁵⁶⁴ I Tim 2:14

²⁵⁶⁵ Jer. 7:18; Ezek 13:17,23

²⁵⁶⁶ Num 31:15,16; I Kings 21:25; Neh 13:26

²⁵⁶⁷ Prov 7:10

²⁵⁶⁸ Isa 3:17-24; I Tim 2:9

²⁵⁶⁹ Ex 22:18; Deut 18:9-14

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4. Make time to have some fun together;
 5. Be sympathetic and compassionate when necessary;
 6. Keep peace and harmony in the home;
 7. Show respect for her husband; and,
 8. Encourage and support her husband wherever necessary.²⁵⁷⁰

Children

Paul was a former Pharisee, so he knew the scriptures extremely well.²⁵⁷¹ The phrase he used in Corinthians, *'else were your children unclean, but now are they holy,'*²⁵⁷² can be seen as a reference to or use of almost the same phrase in Deuteronomy, where, in the context of the camp of the Israelites, the unclean serves to turn The Lord away.²⁵⁷³ So, in context, *'holy'* means that the Lord will countenance them, and that His protection is available to that family arising from the position of the believing spouse, and that implies and impacts on the system in the family home: it has to be run as a proper Judæo-Christian household, keeping God's Law, etc., and the unbelieving spouse has to fit in with it. If he or she doesn't, then they can leave, and the believing spouse is not under bondage (to run and concede things to get the unbeliever back) in that case.²⁵⁷⁴ In turn, that means that there's a difference between the husband and wife, for the head of the house is the man. If the wife is the believer, then she still has to obey her husband, except where it would infract her beliefs so, in her case, the household could not be run, in toto, on a Judæo-Christian basis. Hence the reason for Paul's admonition: *'Be not be unequally yoked with unbelievers.'*²⁵⁷⁵

Multiple concurrent wives

The Bible has a number of instances of multiple concurrent wives: King Solomon amassing the greatest recorded count: seven hundred no less!²⁵⁷⁶ Both Jacob and King David had more than one wife at one time, as

²⁵⁷⁰ C.C.G.; Cox, Wade (excerpted and extended).

²⁵⁷¹ Old Testament.

²⁵⁷² I Cor 7:14, *'For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy.'*

²⁵⁷³ Deut 23:14

²⁵⁷⁴ I Cor 7:15; q.v. inf.

²⁵⁷⁵ II Cor 6:14a

²⁵⁷⁶ more likely a hyperbolic way of saying very many wives; and three hundred concubines, similarly hyperbolic.

had others, such as Esau. But does this allow or permit multiple marriages in our day, especially when the Law is so clear on adultery?

The non-monogamous relationships of King Solomon, purportedly amounting to no less than seven hundred wives and three hundred concubines, serve to illustrate the complex mess resulting from man's view of what is right. Genesis is perfectly clear and specific: *'And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh'*²⁵⁷⁷—a man and a woman in marriage: not seven hundred plus three hundred 'reserves.'

King David's sins in orchestrating the death of Uriah, and taking his wife, Bathsheba, for his own, are recorded in Scripture.²⁵⁷⁸ As a result, he was not permitted to build the First Temple, and their first child died. As for Solomon, his wisdom departed from him. He took many pagan wives and offered incense to their pagan gods in their sacred groves. Punishment from God was the rending away of most of the kingdom in the following generation.

Despite these obvious aberrations on the part of certain men acting in the 'light' of what they perceived to be their own 'wisdom,' the principle of one man married to one woman is sound, as marriage is the mirror of the relationship between Christ and the church. Several verses stress this.²⁵⁷⁹ The church has to maintain pure marriage arrangements in strict accordance with the Law and with Christ's words on the matter, in order to reflect the marriage of the Lamb and His Bride.

Servants, not wives

A quite astounding proposition is made by Edwards: 'While the following verse is dealing with a slave taken as a wife, notice the contractual nature of these marriage laws. If the man did not do his duty, the wife was free to leave: 'If he [the husband] takes another wife, he shall not diminish her [the first wife's] food, her clothing, and her marriage rights. And if he does not do these three for her, then she shall go out free, without paying money.'²⁵⁸⁰ ²⁵⁸¹ This is entirely contrary to God's Law on marriage, for it allows the dissolution of a marriage contract in the event that the husband takes another wife and then cuts down on the food, clothing, and conjugal rights of the first wife. Nothing could be further from the truth revealed in the Bible.

²⁵⁷⁷ Gen 2:23,24

²⁵⁷⁸ II Sam 11:2–12:23

²⁵⁷⁹ Eph 5:33; I Tim 3:2; Titus 1:6

²⁵⁸⁰ Ex 21:10,11

²⁵⁸¹ Edwards, Norman, *Servants' News*, issue sn9611, 'Marriage & Divorce' (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

In the first instance, it is meet to look at the entire of the passage in Exodus.²⁵⁸² This deals with the question of the treatment of slaves, or servants: the first six verses deal with man-servants, and the balance with daughter-servants. The difference between man- and daughter-servants is often thought to be primarily that a man would be set free in the seventh-year, unless he opted to remain with his master. If he had married his master's servant during his own servitude, and had children, then he was free to go out, but his family remained the 'property' of his master. In such circumstances, he could opt to remain a servant and stay with his family, but if he elected to be freed, he was still married under the Law. A daughter-servant, it is assumed, had no such option: she had to remain. In other words, there was no seventh-year release, but that would run entirely contrary to, *'And if thy brother, an Hebrew man, or an Hebrew woman, be sold unto thee, and serve thee six years; then in the seventh year thou shalt let him [better, 'them'] go free from thee.'*²⁵⁸³ The question, however, would arise as to what would happen if the daughter-servant's master were to find her *'unpleasing.'* The answer is that she could be redeemed by her father who had sold her as a servant.²⁵⁸⁴ If the master were to abuse her by not providing food, clothing, etc., for her, she would be free to go out without being redeemed. Here the K.J.V. has a most unfortunate series of mistranslations.

Firstly, verse eight in the K.J.V.: *'If she please not her master, who hath betrothed her to himself, then shall he let her be redeemed: to sell her unto a strange nation he shall have no power, seeing he hath dealt deceitfully with her.'* The Hebrew word translated *'betrothed,'*²⁵⁸⁵ actually means *'contracted,'* or, *'by agreement.'* It has nothing whatever to do with a marriage contract; the matter in hand is a female servant's contract of servitude enacted between her father and her master.

Now turning to verse ten in the K.J.V. *'If he take him another wife; her food, her raiment, and her duty of marriage, shall he not diminish,'*²⁵⁸⁶ is a quite calamitous translation. The first thing to note is that the word *'wife'* is printed in italics in the K.J.V., it does not appear in the original. It should read: *'If he take him another servant,'* for the passage is dealing with servants, not wives. Secondly, the phrase *'duty of marriage'*²⁵⁸⁷ is derived from an interpretation in the Talmud. But the Talmud is of no interest to Judæo-Christians in deciding doctrinal matters, and, in any event, it runs contrary to the rest of Scripture on the matter. The Hebrew actually translated, *'duty of marriage,'*²⁵⁸⁸ means *'dwell together.'* The correct translation, therefore, reads: *'If he take him another servant; her food, her raiment, and her dwelling shall he not diminish.'* This completely negates any connection with marriage. The Law states that both male and female slaves have a seventh-year release.²⁵⁸⁹

²⁵⁸² Ex 21:1-11

²⁵⁸³ Deut 15:12 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

²⁵⁸⁴ Ex 21:8

²⁵⁸⁵ Hebrew : yaad.

²⁵⁸⁶ Ex 21:10

²⁵⁸⁷ Gesenius: *'conjugal rights,'* equally calamitous.

²⁵⁸⁸ Hebrew: ownah.

²⁵⁸⁹ Deut 15:12

The provisions of chapter twenty-one of Exodus were enacted to discourage fathers from selling their daughters into slavery for financial gain, sometimes by mutual exchange, and getting them back later.

Christian bound irrevocably?

This question is usually put in the context of, *'And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband: But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife. But to the rest speak I, not the Lord: If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away. And the woman which hath an husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him. For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy. But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases: but God hath called us to peace. For what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? or how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save thy wife?'*²⁵⁹⁰

The Moffatt translation: *'A wife is not to separate from her husband—if she has separated, she must either remain single or be reconciled to him—and a husband must not put away his wife,'*²⁵⁹¹ is a deal clearer than the K.J.V. version. The reasons why a wife would ever separate from her husband are few in number:

1. Cases of grave personal danger through physical abuse; and,
2. Failure of the husband to maintain her, to her physical detriment.²⁵⁹²

Paul states but one permissible case of withholding sexual intercourse in marriage, during brief circumstances where one, or other, or both devote time to prayer, and that by mutual consent.²⁵⁹³

Whimsical, capricious, or vexatious departures by the wife are not permitted. Misandry and Feminism are proscribed for Judæo-Christians, despite their remarkably common occurrence in females claiming religious adherence, although Scripture predicts the underlying deep resentment and hatred driving those non-Christian motives.²⁵⁹⁴ Also, there is no provision for female-initiated and female-led divorce in Judæo-Christianity.²⁵⁹⁵ *'A woman is bound to her husband during his lifetime; but if he dies she is free to marry anyone she pleases—only it must be a Christian,'*²⁵⁹⁶ and, *'Are you tied to a wife? Never try to untie the knot.'*²⁵⁹⁷

²⁵⁹⁰ I Cor 7:10-16 (sublinear emphasis added)

²⁵⁹¹ I Cor 7:11

²⁵⁹² this in a society where the husband would be the breadwinner, with his wife at home.

²⁵⁹³ I Cor 7:5

²⁵⁹⁴ Gen 3:16

²⁵⁹⁵ q.v. sup.

²⁵⁹⁶ I Cor 7:39, Moffatt translation; K.J.V. has last phrase, *'only in the Lord.'*

Verse fifteen refers not to the Judæo-Christian partner in marriage, but to the non-believer: '*Should the unbelieving partner be determined to separate, however, separation let it be; in such cases the Christian brother or sister is not tied to marriage*'.²⁵⁹⁸ The point of this statement is not concerning divorce; it is concerning separation through the departure of the non-believer. The believer is still married, but not '*tied*' to that marriage, in that they feel obliged to run after the unbeliever to entice her or him to return through making concessions and offering inducements. The text does not sanction divorce from an 'unbelieving' and departed mate.

Many feminists, together with those who would seek to justify female-initiated divorce or legal separation under man's law, cite this verse in a variety of 'standard' translations as proof that females have the right under God's Law to initiate and exercise divorce. Nothing could be further from the truth. The only valid legal reason for a wife to separate from her husband is if her physical, and presumably mental safety were at serious risk from continued marital cohabitation. In such cases she may separate, but she remains indissolubly married to her husband: she may either continue in her separated state or return to her husband. The husband, for his part, cannot divorce his wife for the separation which his dangerously violent conduct towards her has caused.

Whether the word '*unmarried*' or '*single*' is used, the difficulty in English arises from the flexible nature of the koine²⁵⁹⁹ Greek in which the original was written. Moffatt says of koine Greek: 'Hellenistic Greek has its own defects, from the point of view of the classical scholar, but it is an eminently translatable language, and the evidence of papyrology shows it was more flexible than once was imagined.'²⁶⁰⁰ To use a Greek word meaning 'unmarried' when, in English, the phrase would be 'not remarried,' is predictable, therefore, especially in light of provisions of the Law on the matter.

It is the text of verse fifteen that has caused much dispute and debate. Many claim that the word translated '*depart*'²⁶⁰¹ means divorce. It literally means '*to go,*' or '*to depart,*' or '*to move into space.*' There is no use made here of the Greek word translated '*divorce*' or '*divorcement*'²⁶⁰² in the New Testament. Patently, the meaning here is a spatial distancing, or separation. The believing partner is not under bondage.²⁶⁰³ In other words, the believing partner is not to compromise, dilute, subsume, or relinquish his or her beliefs in order to pacify and entice the departing unbeliever into remaining, or to run after the departing with alluring pleas and supplications, for such courses of action are foolhardy in the extreme. And so the concluding phrase in Moffatt's translation is profoundly in error: '*Should the unbelieving partner be determined to separate, however, separat-*

²⁵⁹⁷ I Cor 7:27a

²⁵⁹⁸ I Cor 7:15, Moffatt translation

²⁵⁹⁹ he koine diakletos, common Greek.

²⁶⁰⁰ Moffatt, James, *First Edition of 'The New Testament*, Preface, p.8. written in 1913AD

²⁶⁰¹ Greek: choreo.

²⁶⁰² Greek: apostasion.

²⁶⁰³ Greek: douloō, a contractual term meaning to become a bond-slave or servant.

ion let it be; in such cases the Christian brother or sister is not tied to marriage,²⁶⁰⁴ for the marriage continues, and could only end once one of the terminating conditions, recited previously, were ever to obtain.

Christ himself prophesied of family divisions over Judæo-Christianity: *'Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household*.²⁶⁰⁵ In many ways this is an enhanced repetition of Micah, although applied by Christ to the new, highly divisive effects of the Judæo-Christian religion: *'For the son dishonoureth the father, the daughter riseth up against her mother, the daughter in law against her mother in law; a man's enemies are the men of his own house*.²⁶⁰⁶

We are all called to peace, and peace cannot be present in living out any negotiated or dictated compromise or settlement between a believer and either an apostate or an unbeliever, for such brings down the wrath of God on both parties, as can be seen time and time again in the Bible. An excellent illustration is found in King Solomon's many attempts at compromise with his apostate or unbelieving wives which resulted in his son losing the kingdom of the northern house of Israel.

The non-availability of another marriage partner after marital separation is seen in Mark: *'And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life*.²⁶⁰⁷ The listing of substitutionary recompenses in this life has the singular omission of a wife, for the original marriage would be binding, were the wife still alive.

Re-marriage after loss of partner

As for re-marriage after the loss of a partner or a valid divorce, the words of Paul, viewing a then soon-coming period of tribulation—something pressingly apposite nowadays—are relevant: *'Art thou bound unto a wife? seek not to be loosed. Art thou loosed from a wife? seek not a wife*.²⁶⁰⁸ However, if a wife is sought in re-marriage under the Law, then Paul offers comfort and warning: *'But and if thou marry, thou hast not sinned; and if a virgin marry, she hath not sinned. Nevertheless such shall have trouble in the flesh: but I spare you*.²⁶⁰⁹

²⁶⁰⁴ I Cor 7:15 (sublinear emphasis added)

²⁶⁰⁵ Mat 10:34-36 (sublinear emphasis added); Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol.2, pp.58,59:

'It has often been the case that, when a man embarked on the way of Jesus Christ, his nearest and his dearest could not understand him, and were even hostile to him. "A Christian's only relatives," said one of the early martyrs, "are the saints."

²⁶⁰⁶ Micah 7:6 (sublinear emphasis added)

²⁶⁰⁷ Mark 10:29,30

²⁶⁰⁸ I Cor 7:27

²⁶⁰⁹ I Cor 7:28

What Paul is stating is simply that the trials and tribulations of life would apply to the re-marriage. While '[i]n the case of adultery after marriage, it is lawful for the innocent party to sue out a divorce; and after the divorce, to marry another as if the offending party were dead,'²⁶¹⁰ it is better for the innocent party not to remarry: 'Art thou loosed from a wife? seek not a wife.'²⁶¹¹

Finally, lest it be thought that the word translated '*bound*' has a connection to the word in verse fifteen translated '*bondage*'—in '*not under bondage*'²⁶¹²—it is from the Greek meaning '*binding*' or '*tying*,'²⁶¹³ whereas '*bondage*' is from the Greek referring contractually to a slave or a servant.²⁶¹⁴ There is a significant and obvious difference.

Time-of-the-end

Paul has this on the benefits of refraining from marriage in the then looming crisis:²⁶¹⁵ '*I suppose therefore that this is good for the present distress, I say, that it is good for a man to so be.*'²⁶¹⁶ A better rendition into English would read: '*in view of the present distress.*' Moffatt has: '*considering the imminent distress in these days.*' In these end-times, his advice is even more apposite.

In today's westernised world, in terms of compliance with the Law, things are a deal more difficult, for obtaining 'clear title' in a society where illicit and deviant sex is near all-pervading is a daunting prospect. While the world's morals career ever downward, the 'elect' are warned: '*Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul.*'²⁶¹⁷ The worldly-wise denigrate the Law, especially Paul's so-called 'offensive' writings, but the 'elect' are to be kept pure and unadulterated. Securing a good, decent, Judæo-Christian wife is extremely difficult, and getting more difficult as the world is propelled to its inevitable nadir.

²⁶¹⁰ Sproul, R. C., *Essential Truths of the Christian Faith*, p.268

²⁶¹¹ I Cor 7:27b

²⁶¹² I Cor 7:15

²⁶¹³ Greek: deo.

²⁶¹⁴ Greek: douloo, deriving from doulos, meaning a bond-servant.

²⁶¹⁵ cf. I Corinthians chpt. 7

²⁶¹⁶ I Cor 7:26a

²⁶¹⁷ I Peter 2:11

Chapter 46

Tithing

To whom are tithes to be given? Many so-called Christian denominations, sects, and cults have tithing as a central and crucial tenet of their belief and observance. In all cases, there is a common thread: the rendering of the tithe, or tithes, has to be made by the membership to the individual denomination, sect, or cult concerned, which claims to be the sole, legitimate, God-appointed recipient of all tithes. This is not a recent phenomenon. As early as the sixth-century, the Roman Catholic Council of Macon²⁶¹⁸ decreed that tithes be paid to Rome, backed by threat of excommunication on those who refused to comply.

Even Orthodox Jews, whilst not tithing in the recognised sense of the Law—in their view for want of the Temple in Jerusalem—although the tithe, '*holy unto the Lord*,' is independent of the worth of the Levitical use of it²⁶¹⁹—still give 'tithe equivalents' to yeshivas²⁶²⁰ and individual Torah scholars. Once the Third Temple is built, and the sacred rituals commenced,²⁶²¹ tithing under the Law is intended to be reintroduced by the Jews.

Regardless of any such man-devised 'interim' diversionary measures, tithing is, essentially, a contract with God, wherein God undertakes to bless the faithful tither with increase and other benefits in return for proper tithing to His stipulated recipients.

²⁶¹⁸ 585AD

²⁶¹⁹ q.v. inf.

²⁶²⁰ Judaism's religious educational institutions.

²⁶²¹ to this end, temple vessels and priestly vestments have been prepared by The Temple Institute, an altar erected for the purpose of practice of ritual sacrifice near the Dead Sea, and the veil to the Holy of Holies, allegedly conforming to the instructions given off in Ex 26:31-33, is in process of being woven by a small group in Shiloh known as 'The Women of the Veiled Chamber.'

Hidden agenda

Tithing to the priesthood for the Jews was effectively abolished by the Rabbis. Gruber gives the agenda behind the abolition: 'As [Louis] Finkelstein noted, "While therefore earlier teachers urged the people to gather in their harvest early so as to have the tithe ready betimes, [Rabbi] Akiba ruled that grain which has not been garnered in time is free from the tithe."²⁶²² He went further and maintained that the grain is free from tithes unless it is stored in a protected barn. If it is stored in a court to which two people have keys, it is unprotected and free from tithes."²⁶²³ These interpretations effectively abolished the whole system of tithes."²⁶²⁴ Abolishing the whole system of tithes effectively eliminated the livelihood of the priests, which effectively eliminated priestly Judaism as a competitor for authority.'²⁶²⁵

The Roman Catholic Church, for its own interest and gain, introduced at the Council of Macon a form of tithing under sanction of excommunication in event of failure to pay.²⁶²⁶

Tithes

Even on cursory inspection, the position presenting appears profoundly perplexing. The existence of so many varying forms of tithing or pseudo-tithing, both in the past and today, does not suggest, in any way, that there has been, or is, widespread compliance with the Law.

Despite all the varying and competing 'neo-Christian' claims on the tithe, 'There is not one single hint in the New Testament of any church board with authority to rule, to decide doctrine, or to handle tithes and church finances....One observer noted: 'Each nation has created a god, and that god always resembles his creators. He hated and loved what they hated and loved, and he was invariably found on the side of those in power. Every god was intensely patriotic, and detested all nations but his own.'²⁶²⁷ Each sect or cult, it seems, has

²⁶²² Mish. Ma'aserot 3.5

²⁶²³ Mish. Ma'aser Sheni 4.8

²⁶²⁴ Finkelstein, Louis, *Great Jewish Personalities in Ancient and Medieval Times*, p.287

²⁶²⁵ Gruber, Daniel, *Rabbi Akiba's Messiah: The Origins of Rabbinic Authority*, p.99 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

²⁶²⁶ *The New Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. XIV, pp.174,175 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets): 'The early [Catholic] Church had no tithing system. The tithes of the of the Old Testament were regarded as abrogated by the law of Christ [sic]....but as the Church expanded and its material needs grew more numerous and complex, it became necessary to adopt a definite rule to which people could be held by a sense of moral obligation or by a precept of positive law. The tithing of the Old Law provided an obvious model, and it began to be taught....The Council of Macon in 585[AD] ordered payment of the tithes and threatened excommunication to those who refused to comply.'

²⁶²⁷ Grabbe, Orlin, letter, late 1973AD, p.5, concerning aspects of Christian belief and practice, and W.C.G. splits. The nascent church, comprising almost exclusively of Law-observing Jews, would obey the Law on tithing, and they would know the Sh'mittah years, and the Yobel which Christ had announced in Nazareth at the start of His ministry, cf. Luke 4:19; Isa 61:2a. At Pentecost, 30AD, Peter addressed the assembled crowd as, 'Ye men of Judæa, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem....Ye men of Israel,' Acts 2:14,22. There were Israelites present in Jerusalem at Pentecost, keeping the chag Law, Deut 16:16, which was intimately connected with the tithing Law. They, too, would keep the whole Law, including tithing; also cf. Acts 2:1,14,22,37,38,41,42.

erected its own god, and, unsurprisingly, it is found that that god has directed tithe or other income to the sect or cult that created him.

Happily, the biblical accounts and imperatives, when taken together, leave no doubt on the matter. Tithing, in the form of giving a tenth, is first mentioned in chapter fourteen of Genesis, when Abram,²⁶²⁸ on his return from the slaughter of the kings and the rescue of his brother Lot together with his family, met Melchisedek,²⁶²⁹ high priest of God. Also, in Genesis chapter twenty-eight, Jacob vowed to tithe if God was with him. In neither of these cases was it yet the Law: the first recognising that all was God's, the second presaging God's protection of the faithful tither.

In the Old Testament there are a number of important commandments and instructions concerning tithing.²⁶³⁰ Fundamentally, God's instruction to the ancient nation of Israel was that the tithe, a tenth part of their increase (which not only redeems the balance, but also imports further increase under promise), was holy unto the Lord; that it was given as an inheritance unto the Levite; and, in turn, that a tenth part of this Levitical increase was to be given to the priests for the purposes of the Temple. While the priests worked and served, at least in theory, in and around the temple, the Levites were differently employed and even appear, on occasion, to have had duties beyond the scope of their religious position.²⁶³¹ The second tithe and the Jerusalem chag commandment come from Deuteronomy.²⁶³² Both it and Numbers, it should be noted, were written long before the construction and operation of Solomon's Temple, so tithes were paid before the Temple was built.

The early Judæo-Christians tithed under the Law, as did the entire early Judæo-Christian church. The Law is the Law!²⁶²⁸ later changed to Abraham.

²⁶²⁹ who was to become known as Jesus Christ, q.v. inf.

²⁶³⁰ Leviticus chpt. 27; Numbers chpt. 18; Deuteronomy chpts. 10,12,14,26; II Chronicles chpt. 31; Nehemiah chptrs. 10,12,13; Amos chpt. 4; Malachi chpt. 3

²⁶³¹ Kelly, Russell Earl, *An Exhaustive Examination of "Tithe," "Tithes" and "Tithing" Should the Church Teach Tithing? A Theologian's Conclusions about a Taboo Doctrine*:

'As temple workers, David re-organized the Levites' work schedules under his political authority. Levites served in 24 divisions, each serving at the temple only a week at a time, or about two weeks per year (I Chronicles chpt. 24; Luke 1:5,6). During the construction of the temple David divided the 38,000 Levites as follows: 24,000 construction supervisors, 6,000 treasurers and judges, 4,000 gatekeepers, and 4,000 musicians (I Chron 23:4,5).

Duties of 38, 000 Tithe-Receiving Levites as Religious / Political Workers:

24, 000 Temple Workers (I Chron 23:4)

6, 000 civil and religious judges and officers (I Chron 23:4,26:29-31)

4, 000 civil and religious guards (I Chron 23:5) (Neh 13:22)

4, 000 singers (I Chron 23:5)

4, 600 earlier served as soldiers (I Chron 12:23, 26) (I Chron 27:5)

While preachers want us to think that Levites received the tithe because they were full-time workers for God, they are deceiving us! Look at the list above! As temple workers and supervisors of temple workers, they certainly must have been experts in crafts and trades! They were also politicians and soldiers. After the temple construction was completed, most likely many of the 24,000 Levites who were construction supervisors continued to serve the king in other roles.

First Chronicles chapter 26 is a very interesting chapter for those who want to know how their tithe was used. While only serving about two weeks a year in religious activities at the temple, the remainder of the time many Levites were still the core of the king's officials. Inspired by God, King David used the Levites as the base of his political support.'

²⁶³² Deut 16:16

When this ancient nation divided, the tribes of Judah, Benjamin, Levi,²⁶³³ and, perhaps, some of Simeon, seceded, remaining in the southern part of the lands occupied at that time by the twelve tribes, retaining their capital at Jerusalem under King Rehoboam—thereafter collectively referred to in the Bible as Judah or the Jews. The ten northern tribes made their capital in Samaria under King Jeroboam—thereafter collectively referred to as Israel or the Israelites.

Despite this division, the Law remained extant—and it still does to this day—and tithing was thus incumbent on Jew and Israelite alike. The recipients today are still some, but not all, of the descendants of Levi:²⁶³⁴ *'At that time the Lord separated the tribe of Levi, to bear the ark of the covenant of the Lord, to stand before the Lord to minister unto him, and to bless in his name, unto this day. Wherefore Levi hath no part nor inheritance with his brethren; the Lord is his inheritance, according as the Lord thy God promised him.'*²⁶³⁵ Some see a covenant in the word '*promised*,'²⁶³⁶ meaning, in context, '*arranged*,' or '*said to*,' but the simpler reading is one of a financial arrangement on behalf of those who were debarred from real inheritance²⁶³⁷ in the Promised Land, which itself, it should be recalled, was part of the Abrahamic covenant. Accordingly, as the tithing obligation stands to this day, it is necessary to determine the exact nature and extent of the tithing commandments in order that nothing is omitted and no obligation remains unfulfilled.

Cadence

The 'first tithe' falls to the Levite,²⁶³⁸ to be rendered annually,²⁶³⁹ for specific purposes, mostly related to temple duties. In default, where there is no temple, then that tithe goes to the priesthood.²⁶⁴⁰ There are, however, further tithes, and the existence of these has been confirmed by Old Testament scholars.

The 'second tithe' is commanded in Deuteronomy,²⁶⁴¹ whereby a tithe is to be eaten in the place where God has chosen to place His name, during the feast of Tabernacles. This is commanded to be kept annually in Jerusalem, and only Jerusalem, and most certainly not in any of a vast range of diasporic, ad-hoc sites selected by man.²⁶⁴² Those observing any or all of God's annual feasts²⁶⁴³ in man-chosen sites are violating God's Law.

²⁶³³ those of Levi in the northern kingdom were expelled by Jeroboam.

²⁶³⁴ q.v. inf.

²⁶³⁵ Deut 10:8,9

²⁶³⁶ Hebrew: dabar.

²⁶³⁷ real or heritable land rights, as opposed to personal or moveable property rights.

²⁶³⁸ Num 18:2,8,11,19

²⁶³⁹ Deut 14:22

²⁶⁴⁰ Num 18:19; since all offerings were given to the priesthood by God, sealed under an unbreakable 'covenant of salt,' the logical inference is that the tithes would then go to the priesthood. This is confirmed in Heb 7: 5, '*And verily they that are of the sons of Levi, who receive the office of the priesthood, have a commandment to take tithes of the people according to the law, that is, of their brethren.*'

²⁶⁴¹ Deut 12:17,18

²⁶⁴² the other commanded annual convocations, Passover / Unleavened Bread and Pentecost, are also only to be observed in Jerusalem, by adult males (although wives and children can attend, it is not a direct commandment).

The 'third tithe' is given to the poor, the fatherless, the widow, and others,²⁶⁴⁴ and is linked with further commandments regarding the gleanings of the field and the gleanings of the olive harvest which are to be left for the benefit of the poor. This third tithe is to be rendered every third year, in the seven year cycle which includes a Sabbath of rest in the seventh year; with seven cycles of seven years leading to the year of the Jubilee, or Yobel, in the fiftieth year.²⁶⁴⁵

Were the God-commanded tithe restricted to agricultural production and livestock, as some contend,²⁶⁴⁶ then it is unclear how non-agriculturally earning Israelites would have tithe funds to go to the feasts, when they would have no obligation to tithe. Or was it that only farmers were to attend the shalosh regalim festivals?

A farmer living within driving distance could get to the three feasts with his animals for slaughter, but if the distance were too far, then he could sell his stock and agricultural produce, take the money, and buy replacements when he got to Jerusalem. But what about a person with no agriculturally-derived increase tithe, and one whose increase or income is, say, one percent agriculturally-based and ninety-nine percent fishing-derived, what would they do?²⁶⁴⁷

Perhaps the same proponents would say non-agriculturals only have to pay the second (and third) tithes, but not the first. But if the tithe is restricted to agriculture-based increase, they can't; they won't have any!

²⁶⁴³ the seven annual feasts presage and prefigure certain events that are critical to the Judæo-Christian:

Passover:	The forgiveness of sin, and the remission of its penalty.
Unleavened Bread:	Putting away sin for the rest of one's life.
Weeks / Firstfruits / Pentecost:	The covenants, Old and New, the latter with the receipt of the Holy Spirit and, eschatologically important, the time of return of Christ in-the-air for His 'elect.'
Trumpets:	Return of Christ to earth, at mount of Olives—a time of elation for God's people and alarm for the others.
Atonement:	Christ's proclamation of 40th. Jubilee since start of His earthly ministry (40 being the number of probation); announcement of freedom from Satan's tyranny.
Tabernacles:	The Millennium of Rest, abiding with Christ in His world-wide kingdom.
Last Great Day:	When the Father comes down to earth to reside with His people.

²⁶⁴⁴ Deut 14:22-29

²⁶⁴⁵ q.v. sup.

²⁶⁴⁶ the tithe is paid on all increase / net earnings. The early society of Israel was almost entirely agriculturally-based, not a money economy such as exists today. If the tithe were solely restricted to the increase in land-based produce, all other produce, such as fish, and all services and non-agricultural activity would be excluded, leading directly to anomalies over the 7-year Sabbatical, and the twice 3-year double tithes in that 7-year period (e.g. agricultural business would cease production and not tithe in the Sabbatical year, while all others would continue to work and tithe, or merely tithe, making a mockery of the Sabbath of rest of the land in the seventh year). A minority of religious Jews hold that the tithe is solely on agriculturally-derived increase with direct connection to the soil in Israel, with great dispute over the exact boundaries of that land (this is what gives rise to the technique of hydroponics with no contact with the soil of Israel during the Jewish Sabbatical year—and thus no need of cessation of agricultural operations, according to some Rabbis—with the entire sham formulated around a Judaic calendar year cycle based on the foundation of the modern state of Israel in 1948AD. A quite ridiculous notion!).

²⁶⁴⁷ 10% of 0% isn't worth anything; 10% of 1% isn't much better.

It's dreadfully poor exegesis to assume two tithing systems are in operation when the Bible has one Law, and, consequently, one tithing system.

Sabbaticals & Jubilees

There is one outstanding and highly important question concerning the Sabbatical year observance,²⁶⁴⁸ and that is the extent to which it impacts upon and applies to general economic activity. Authorities and commentators cite Leviticus as either an interdiction only of arable production or of arable production but only within the Promised Land:²⁶⁴⁹ *'And the Lord spake unto Moses in Mount Sinai, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye shall come into the land which I give you, then shall the land keep a sabbath unto the Lord.'*²⁶⁵⁰ *Six years thou shalt sow thy field, and six years thou shalt prune thy vineyard, and gather in the fruit thereof; But in the seventh year shall be a sabbath of rest unto the land, a sabbath for the Lord: thou shalt neither sow thy field, nor prune thy vineyard. That which groweth of its own accord of thy harvest thou shalt not reap, neither gather the grapes of thy vine undressed: for it is year of rest unto the land. And the sabbath of the land shall be meat for you; for thee, and for thy servant, and for thy maid, and for thy hired servant, and for thy stranger that sojourneth with thee. And for thy cattle, and for the beast that are in thy land, shall all the increase thereof be meat.'*²⁶⁵¹ But there is a fundamental difficulty with both of these commonly held viewpoints for, if the interdiction applied only to arable land, the economic activity not directly related to agricultural production would not have to respect a Sabbatical year. The inference from this is that non-agricultural economic activity would continue on a three-year tithing cycle,²⁶⁵² and this would not result in a fiftieth-year Yobel, for the simple reason that forty-nine years is not exactly divisible by three. There is also a further potential problem with this, in that it can be argued that the tither is blessed by the Lord in very special and specific ways, so those engaged in non-agricultural based activities, and therefore not tithing, would not be blessed. A subordinated development of the same flawed reasoning extends to some contending that the

²⁶⁴⁸ q.v. sup.

²⁶⁴⁹ Hebrew: shabbat shabbathown, meaning, correctly, 'ceasing of all, including lesser matters,' since shabbathown, a derivative and functional diminutive of shabbat, means a lesser degree of ceasing; cf. 'Sabbath Day Activities' table in Appendix; q.v. sup. In the instance of the land, it does not completely cease to produce, since all land capable of sustaining growth will continue to produce that growth. The total ceasing is on the part of man (farmer, servant, slave) in not sowing, dressing, tending and reaping crops. In the natural course, the land still produces, albeit at a much lower yield, and that production is food for man, beast, and fowl. In addition, it follows that the 'sabbath for the Lord,' v.4a, is directed to man, not the land, and encompasses, through its 'ceasing for the Lord,' a proscription on all work. Man's activity during the Sabbatical years is to be for God's purposes, e.g. through prayer, study, and preaching. The LXX translation exhibits two different words in vv. 4,5 for 'rest,' i.e., corresponding to the two uses of the Hebrew shabbathown (Greek: sabbata and arapauseus respectively).

²⁶⁵⁰ or a 'ceasing unto the Lord.' The ceasing is not wholly on the part of the land, for the land will still produce untended crops; the ceasing is on the part of the farmer, the vinedresser, the labourer, the servant.

²⁶⁵¹ Lev 25:1-6 (sublinear emphasis added)

²⁶⁵² q.v. inf.

agriculturally-based tithers' tithes somehow 'cover,' in some unspecified way, the non-tithers so that they, too, can be blessed by the Lord, but that appears both inequitable and illogical. Why should some get to keep the entire proceeds of their work and increase and yet be blessed as a tither, on foot of the faithful tithing of others?

Now the Sabbatical year is also a year of release from debts incurred by Israelites of Israelites,²⁶⁵³ and some would cite this as a compliance by non-agricultural economic activity of the Sabbatical, but it still does not address the fundamental difficulty, for debt release has no impact whatsoever on the seven-year tithing cycle, so the problem with the tithing cycle and the Yobel remains.

The only cogent resolution of this is found by investigating the activities of the children of Israel at a time shortly after they entered the Promised Land, for theirs was an agricultural society. Indeed, the economic activity of Israel was almost exclusively agricultural in nature. Such an economic regime would have the effect of rendering virtually the entire economic activity of the people subject to the Sabbatical year of rest. It is, as the sublinear emphasis noted above, '*a sabbath for the Lord.*' The requirement of the Law to pay tithes on a seven year cycle consisting of 'three + three + one,' the last a fallow or non-productive year, indicates that all economic activity in the seventh year would not produce titheable increase, for if this did not pertain, tithing would be due in the seventh year as God's due tithe arising from their work and its concomitant increase. The seven-year tithing cycle, with a tithing Sabbatical in the seventh year, can only indicate a total cessation of economic activity, both agricultural and non-agricultural, in the Sabbatical year. This is bolstered by Josephus: '[A]nd as the siege was drawn out in length by this means, that year on which the Jews used to rest, came on; for the Jews observe this rest²⁶⁵⁴ every seventh year, as they do every seventh day.'^{2655 2656}

The reference goes on²⁶⁵⁷ to intimate that at that time the Jews kept a rest from making war in a Sabbatical year. This could have had no connection with the land's Sabbath of rest unless it formed part of a much wider proscription on production and work, and equated in these terms with the weekly Sabbath. This can be seen, possibly, in their being taken together in Exodus chapter twenty-three.²⁶⁵⁸ Indeed, the term '*sabbath of rest*,'²⁶⁵⁹ used of the Sabbatical year,²⁶⁶⁰ is also used of the day of Atonement and other high holy days on which no work was done. Thus weekly Sabbaths, Sabbatical years, and Yobels are all '*Sabbaths of rest.*' In the

²⁶⁵³ q.v. Deut 15:1-3, but cp. Deut 31:10, where the '*end of seven years*' is given as occurring at the feast of Tabernacles, so the actual time of release would not be the end of the sacred year, i.e., sometime in March or April, but in autumn, at the time of the feast, making more sense in a predominantly agricultural society harvesting immediately beforehand.

²⁶⁵³ i.e., the Jews' rest, not the land's rest.

²⁶⁵⁴ i.e., the Jews' rest, not the land's rest.

²⁶⁵⁵ i.e., comparable to the Jews' rest on the weekly Sabbath.

²⁶⁵⁶ Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, 13.234, which speaks of the days of the high priest John Hyrcanus (with added comment and clarification in square brackets).

²⁶⁵⁷ Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, 13.235

²⁶⁵⁸ Ex 23:10-12

²⁶⁵⁹ Hebrew: shabbath shabbathon.

²⁶⁶⁰ Lev 25:4

Sabbatical Year, people were released from both business and agriculture, according to Edersheim.^{2661 2662 2663}

No commercial activity should be undertaken in Sabbatical and Jubilee years.

Recipients

In summary, there are three tithes, in addition to freewill and other offerings, but the question remains to whom are they paid? Who are the God-appointed recipients of these tithes? Many so-called Christian and quasi-Christian denominations, sects and cults have taken it upon themselves to issue 'executive orders' or similar pronouncements seeking to 'clarify' the position, and through this, have introduced a vast raft of man's mutations, ill-founded devices, and avaricious prescriptions of the tithing commandments contained in the Old Testament. By far the most common is the assertion that Hebrews chapter seven changed the recipients of the 'first tithe,' and that this tithe is now specifically for the funding of the so-called 'true' Christian church—choose your denomination, sect or cult—for the propagation of their gospel of the kingdom. The core of this claim is

²⁶⁶¹ Edersheim, Alfred, *Jesus the Messiah*, p.193

²⁶⁶² Sabbatical year is a year of rest unto the land. That there is no work or economic activity to be done can be seen from a comparison with the tithing laws, where there is no tithe of increase to be paid in the seventh year, the ineluctable inference being: no tithe, therefore no income, therefore no work.

²⁶⁶³ this has certain ramifications, for some, keen to discover any possible or claimable discrepancy in the New Testament—and there is a marked tendency to make play of alleged discrepancies between the synoptic gospels and between them and the gospel of John—point to the synoptic and Johanne accounts of the calling of the disciples as a good case in point. While John 2:43-51 recounts the calling of Philip and Nathanael, and also mentions, in its introduction, Andrew and Peter, it is important to note that in contradistinction to Philip and Nathanael, neither Andrew nor Peter are mentioned as being told at that time by Jesus to 'Follow me.' (Peter, Andrew, James, and John became disciples of Jesus Christ several months later at the lakeside near Capernaum, forsaking their boats, nets, and fishing business to become 'fishers of men' after sight of Jesus' miracle of the great draught of fishes, Luke 5:5-11). The next recorded event, in John 2:1-11, is the wedding feast at Cana of Galilee, followed by His recourse to Capernaum, q.v. John 2:12, where His sojourn there is described as '*continu[ing]....not many days,*' whereupon, in v.12, He goes up to Jerusalem for the Passover. When taken with Luke 4:14-21 (an account of Jesus' declaring the Jubilee year, which could only have taken place on the day of Atonement (Yom Kippur), 27AD), it gives the overall time-flow from Yom Kippur in October, 27AD to the following year's Passover in April. Since Jesus' stay in Capernaum was but short, the events which took place at that time in or around Capernaum, and on or beside the lake of Gennesaret / the sea of Galilee, q.v. Luke 5:1, are, of necessity, compressed. The only instance of work recorded in Scripture which conceivably could fall within a Sabbatical or Jubilee year—and so far as the ban on economic activity and work is concerned, the two are identical—is mentioned in Luke 5:5. However, since in that verse Simon, later called Peter, answered Jesus and said that '*we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing,*' that night's fruitless fishing toil out on the lake of Gennesaret must have taken place in that same compressed period shortly before Jesus' departure for Jerusalem. Passover, falling on the evening of 14 Abib, would leave more than sufficient time after Rosh hashanah (on the New Moon of 1 Abib) for the events at the lakeside and on the lake to play out, including a proportion of His teaching on the Sabbaths (q.v. Luke 4:31), and then for Jesus and His disciples to travel to Jerusalem (about four or five days' journey on foot). It follows that the strong balance of probability is that that night's fishing expedition occurred after Rosh hashanah—in other words, in the year following the Jubilee, not in it. Of course, when the import of Scripture's Sabbatical and Jubilee injunctions on economic activity are taken into account, it is clear that the date of the fishing trip could not possibly have fallen in the Jubilee year. The effect of the second- and third-tithes on the Sabbatical year question are dealt with later, q.v. inf.

founded on: *'For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law. For there is verily a dissannuling of the commandment going before for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof.'*²⁶⁶⁴

There are two contentions commonly based on a reading of these two texts together. The first is that the tithing commandment was changed to take away the tithes from the Levites and re-allocate them to the Christian church, and the second is that the whole Levitical priesthood was abolished, and replaced by the Melchisidek priesthood, importing the effect of the first contention in that tithes should thus be paid to the new priesthood found in one or other denomination or cult of the visible Christian church. But is there any substance whatsoever in either of these contentions?

The content of Hebrews chapter seven gives confirmation that Melchisidek was Christ, that Abraham gave a tenth of the spoils to Melchisidek, and that Levi had a commandment to take tithes of the children of Israel according to the Law. Paul, writing with powers,²⁶⁶⁵ points out that Melchisidek blessed Abraham—and through him, Levi—and that the greater can only bless the lesser.

As Christ is the ultimate priest before God,²⁶⁶⁶ and as Christ, in His earthly, human manifestation came of the tribe of Judah and of the line of David—as promised by God to King David—and not of the priestly line of Levi, there was need of a corresponding change in the Law, as stated.²⁶⁶⁷ The Law here referred to was that part of the Law pertaining to the lineage of the Levitical priesthood: the change had nothing whatsoever to do with a redirection of tithes. The disannuling of the commandment for the unprofitableness of it—for no-one ever gained salvation by the Levitical priesthood operating under the Law—actually relates to the exclusiveness of the priestly line of Levi, and the introduction of a better hope, our only hope, in Christ, our Saviour, who lived a blameless and sinless life, and died for our sins. The Law had to be changed to permit this ultimate purification.

The actual text reads: *'For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God.'*²⁶⁶⁸ However, it should be observed that the word '*did*' has been inserted by the translators into English: it does not appear in the original Greek, and, as a result, it is noted in italics in the K.J.V. This apparently minor addition to the original actually imports a meaning inconsistent with Scripture, specifically: *'For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws in their mind, and write them in their hearts:*

²⁶⁶⁴ Heb 7:12,18

²⁶⁶⁵ Holy Spirit.

²⁶⁶⁶ Gen 14:18,19

²⁶⁶⁷ Heb 7:18

²⁶⁶⁸ Heb 7:19; K.J.V. (subscripted emphasis added)

*and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.*²⁶⁶⁹

This bears a direct relationship with Jeremiah.²⁶⁷⁰ It is clear that this 'hope' (by definition, as yet unrealised), the New Covenant, is still to be fulfilled, both at and after the time of Christ's Second Coming.²⁶⁷¹ This New Covenant is a complete, inner, spiritual change, which goes way beyond the scope of the Old Covenant. But if the word 'did' be added,²⁶⁷² then the implication is that this 'better hope' 'did' make things perfect, which clearly it could not, and did not, as perfection comes later, at the time referred to.²⁶⁷³ The disannulling of the carnal commandment of flesh,²⁶⁷⁴ relating to the Levitical priesthood, did not occur at the time of Christ, or the time of Paul, or at any point inter-adventual; neither will it come during the Millennium of rest, as the Levitical priesthood will still be extant and ministering unto Christ, as is clear from Ezekiel,²⁶⁷⁵ at the time of the millennial Fourth Temple. Therefore, the 'disannulling' of the Levitical priesthood will only come after the Great White Throne judgement, and the passing away of this heaven and this earth, and the introduction of the new heaven and the new earth and the new Jerusalem. As Hebrews states, '*The law made nothing perfect,*'²⁶⁷⁶ but all things will be made perfect when the new heaven and the new earth, and the new Jerusalem come, and God and the Lamb actually dwell with the saints.²⁶⁷⁷ At that time, there will be no Levitical priesthood, since all of the 'elect' will comprise an holy, royal priesthood before God, the firstfruits of which are identified by Peter: '*Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.*'²⁶⁷⁸

Given that this 'disannulling' is currently not in effect, there is no change to the status of the Levitical priesthood, and, as a result, no change to their God-appointed duties, including those of receiving God's tithe. The tithing provisions in Numbers chapter eighteen are spoken, not to the Levites in general, but to the priests, the descendants of Aaron, who constitute the upper echelon of the tribe of Levi, and they are given not the

²⁶⁶⁹ Heb 8:7-12

²⁶⁷⁰ Jer 31:31-34

²⁶⁷¹ q.v. sup.; the Melchisidek priesthood has but one member at the moment: Christ, our High Priest, who is sitting at the right hand of the Father, awaiting the coming kingdom. Only once Christ comes again, and the dead in Christ and the living firstfruits are raised to meet Him, will the Melchisidek priesthood mushroom in numbers, into which those qualifying of the Levitical priesthood will be elevated.

²⁶⁷² to Heb 7:19

²⁶⁷³ Heb 8:7-12; Jer 31:31-34

²⁶⁷⁴ Heb 8:16-18

²⁶⁷⁵ Ezek 44:15,16

²⁶⁷⁶ Heb 7:19

²⁶⁷⁷ Rev 21:1-3

²⁶⁷⁸ I Peter 2:5,9

'heave offerings' as the K.J.V. has it, but the 'offerings'²⁶⁷⁹ given by the children of Israel to the Lord. These are all of them, and are given to them by the Lord on foot of an irrevocable 'covenant of salt.'²⁶⁸⁰ This utterly refutes and renders worthless the contentions of those who seek to divert the tithe flows to their own use as a result of their claim of God's removal of the Levitical priesthood.

Had the import of Paul's words in Hebrews chapter seven been to divert tithe flows to the church, then there would have been ample record of it, but nowhere in the New Testament is there any indication whatsoever that the apostolic or sub-apostolic church was funded by a diversion of the tithes away from the Levites. Again, the change was in respect of the priesthood: '*the priesthood being changed*.'²⁶⁸¹ It was neither a change in tithing nor of the recipients thereof. In this context, it should be noted that there is a paragraph split in the original Greek separating the tithing verses from this change in the Law.

In the Epistles, Paul felt accountable to the brethren for any funds placed in his trust by them. He did not collect tithes. His support came in the form of 'giving and receiving,' as he indicates: '*But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at the last your care of me hath flourished again; wherein ye were also careful, but ye lacked opportunity. Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me. Notwithstanding ye have well done, that ye may communicate with my affliction. Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only. For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity. Not because I desire a gift, but I desire fruit that may abound to your account. But I have all, and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, wellpleasing to God.*'²⁶⁸²

The members in Philiphia helped Paul with his necessities when they were not met by the local congregation. Paul did view it as normal for the local church to support him while he was with them, as a result of their financial autonomy, but was very aware of the promulgation in Isaiah: '*Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David.*'²⁶⁸³ As a result, given that the spreading of the gospel of the

²⁶⁷⁹ e.g., Num 18:19a, Hebrew: terumah, 'offering.'

²⁶⁸⁰ Num 18:19d

²⁶⁸¹ Heb 7:12a

²⁶⁸² Philp 4:10-18

²⁶⁸³ Isa 55:1-3

kingdom of God was the supreme mandate, he financed his needs from the freewill offerings sent by other congregations, an act he referred to as 'robbery of other churches' in Corinthians: *'Have I committed an offence in abasing myself that ye might be exalted, because I have preached to you the gospel of God freely? I robbed other churches, taking wages of them, to do you service. And when I was present with you, and wanted, I was chargeable to no man: for that which was lacking to me the brethren which came from Macedonia supplied: and in all things I have kept myself from being burdensome unto you, and so will I keep myself.'*²⁶⁸⁴

Paul took delight in freely preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God: *'What is my reward then? Verily that, when I preach the gospel, I may make the gospel of Christ without charge, that I abuse not my power in the gospel.'*²⁶⁸⁵ There was no demand of money, no holding back the gospel as an inducement to or pending of payment. Indeed, everyone could give as he felt moved: *'Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.'*²⁶⁸⁶

The needs which Paul refers to are recited in detail in Corinthians: *'Mine answer to them that do examine me is this. Have we not power to eat and to drink? Have we not power to lead about a sister, a wife, as well as other apostles, and as the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas? Or I only and Barnabas, have not we power to forbear working? Who goeth a warfare at any time at his own charges? who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock? Say I these things as a man? or saith not the law also? For it is written in the law of Moses, Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God take care for oxen? Or saith he it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, this is written: that he that ploweth should plow in hope; and that he that thresheth in hope should be a partaker of his hope. If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things? If others be partakers of this power over you, are not we rather? Nevertheless we have not used this power; but suffer all things, lest we should hinder the gospel of Christ. Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar? Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel. But I have used none of these things: neither have I written these things, that it should be so done unto me: for it were better for me to die, than that any man should make my glorying void.'*²⁶⁸⁷

Simply demanding support would have hindered the spread of the gospel. Although there was a right to support for hired work,²⁶⁸⁸ it could be waived by the rightful recipient in the greater interests of spreading the gospel. That objective was paramount, and so payment of the needs of the apostle Paul was subordinated: *'For*

²⁶⁸⁴ II Cor 11:7-9

²⁶⁸⁵ I Cor 9:18

²⁶⁸⁶ II Cor 9:7

²⁶⁸⁷ I Cor 9:3-15

²⁶⁸⁸ cp. Luke 10:7, *'And in the same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they give: for the labourer is worthy of his hire. Go not from house to house.'*

*ye remember brethren, our labour and travail: for labouring night and day, because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God.'*²⁶⁸⁹

God's tithes are not to be mixed with or be affected by the concerns of mammon,²⁶⁹⁰ or diverted for man's perceived needs in preaching whatever version of 'gospel' that he happens to esteem for the moment. There is a well known commandment: *'Render²⁶⁹¹ to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's.'*²⁶⁹² This indicates that the things of this world, such as taxes, are not to interfere with the things that pertain to God, like tithes and freewill offerings. One does not restrict, curtail or impact upon the other; they are both due in full, and, thus, tithes must be calculated on the gross amount of the annual increase, not on a 'net after tax' basis.

Irrefutable proof of the nature and permanency of the Levitical priesthood's right to receive God's tithes is contained in various commandments regarding the position of the Levites and the priests,²⁶⁹³ which clearly state both the extent and duration of their inheritance from God. In Numbers²⁶⁹⁴ it states that the Levites and the descendants of Aaron are of one tribe, Levi, and that God gave them the heave offerings, better all offerings, of all of Israel, *'by an ordinance forever,'²⁶⁹⁵ 'by a statute forever,'²⁶⁹⁶ 'by a statute forever, it is a covenant of salt before the Lord unto thee.'*²⁶⁹⁷ Heave offerings include tithes, firstfruits, freewill offerings and gifts, and all similar things holy unto the Lord in Israel. A covenant of salt is a solemn, unbreakable contract.

The tithe was given to the Levite, in the first instance, *'for an inheritance, for the service which they serve, even the service of the tabernacle of the congregation,'* but the promise of all offerings under *'a covenant of salt'*²⁶⁹⁸ is to the priesthood, not to the Levites who serve. Indeed, the Levites were commanded to give a tithe of that tithe to the priesthood.²⁶⁹⁹ It follows, therefore, that in the absence of the Temple, the Levites' service is removed through supervening impossibility, but as the tithing obligation remains, the entire tithe goes to the priesthood. In the fullness of time, a Third Temple will arise in Jerusalem, and the sacrifices will be reinstated. At that time, the Jews will tithe to the Levites, but Judæo-Christians, who can have no part in the sacrificial system, will continue to tithe to the priesthood.

In Scripture, if a commandment had been made as important as a change in the recipients of tithes who, after all, act as agents of the Lord, it would have been clearly stated, the former commandments annulled,

²⁶⁸⁹ I Thes 2:9

²⁶⁹⁰ a Syrian word meaning 'stored possessions'; Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Luke*, p.168: 'Roman proverb: Money is like sea water. The more a man drinks, the thirstier he becomes.'

²⁶⁹¹ Greek: *apodidomi*, 'pay back in full.'

²⁶⁹² Mark 12:17; cp. Rom 13:7

²⁶⁹³ viz., descendants of Aaron.

²⁶⁹⁴ Num 18:2,8,11,19

²⁶⁹⁵ Num 18:8

²⁶⁹⁶ Num 18:11

²⁶⁹⁷ Num 18:19 (sublinear emphasis added)

²⁶⁹⁸ Num 18:19d; '*covenant of salt*' is immutable.

²⁶⁹⁹ Num 18:26-28

and replacement commandments instituted. None of this appears anywhere in the Bible. In any event, as God had entered into an unbreakable covenant, He could neither later resile nor redact. The Levitical priesthood's right to receive God's tithes, firstfruits, and other gifts and offerings remains extant, and is commanded by God. Any party seeking to divert these cash flows is simply robbing God. Those who render tithes to others, even through ignorance in good faith, similarly rob God. All are then subject to the curse in Malachi: *'Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation.'*²⁷⁰⁰ What the people had been doing at the time Malachi wrote was withholding some of the tithes, as times were hard, and giving not of the best; in other words they were giving reprobate offerings. Irrespective of whether it is a wholesale withholding, a partial withholding, or simply reprobate, the judgement is the same: *'Ye are cursed with a curse.'*

If tithes and other offerings are duly rendered to the appropriate parties, however, then it is possible to look to the promise of God. God even allows those so complying to 'prove' or 'test' Him: *'Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruit of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the Lord of hosts. And all nations shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the Lord of hosts.'*²⁷⁰¹

Payment

The remaining point to be addressed is not quite as simple as might first appear: how to source a descendant of Levi who is actively engaged in some or all of the activities described for the purposes of the tithe. Despite what some may think, the marker names of Levi for a Levite and Cohen, inter alia, for a priest are remarkably inaccurate, to the extent that, even for most Jews, the tracing of a true Levite is an impractical task, because, since the destruction of the Second Temple in Jerusalem, the special role of Levites in daily life has been greatly diminished, and this leaves the lineage difficult to discern. In addition, frequent persecutions and exiles caused many communities to lose records of births and marriages. Tracing such genealogies accurately for centuries is usually impossible, even for knowledgeable Jews. A rare exception is certain religious families, whose members were well known either in oral tradition or by the books that they had written.²⁷⁰²

²⁷⁰⁰ Mal 3:8,9

²⁷⁰¹ Mal 3:10-12

²⁷⁰² after four years' research, one such family came to light: a family whose lineage can be proven to be an unbroken, son-after-son descendant from Aaron. The method adopted by ultra-Orthodox Jews in determining the probity of such a lineage goes even further, requiring that each and every wife of each and every son-after-son be proven to be Jewish, or an Israelite. The head of this thus-sourced household, a deeply religious man engaged in the work of God, as Judaism sees it, accepts tithes from Judæo-Christians.

The promise of all offerings was given by God under 'a covenant of salt'²⁷⁰³ to the priesthood. The normal format adopted today is where first tithes and an offering are rendered to the priesthood by converted males during the feast of Tabernacles,²⁷⁰⁴ a time when true Judæo-Christians would be in Jerusalem in any event, as commanded. Similarly, the other two commanded offerings, at Passover / Unleavened Bread and Pentecost, are rendered during these feasts, again in Jerusalem, and again as commanded: *'Three times in a year shall all thy males appear before the Lord thy God in the place which he shall choose; in the feast of unleavened bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles: and they shall not appear before the Lord empty.'*²⁷⁰⁵

Where God chose to place His name is confirmed in several biblical texts,²⁷⁰⁶ among which is, *'and he'*²⁷⁰⁷ *reigned seventeen years in Jerusalem, the city which the Lord did choose out of all the tribes of Israel, to put his name there.'*²⁷⁰⁸ In an appeal to secure for themselves the right to designate alternative and personally lucrative feast sites around the world, some cite: *'An altar of earth shalt thou make unto me, and shalt sacrifice thereon thy burnt offerings, and thy peace offerings, thy sheep, and thine oxen: in all places where I record my name I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee.'*²⁷⁰⁹ The problems inherent in such an abrogation are manifold, not least of which are the following:

1. It is God who records His name;
2. In the places where He chooses to so record;
3. *'Record[ing],'* an historical fact, is not the same as *'plac[ing]'* for all time;

²⁷⁰³ Num 18:19d

²⁷⁰⁴ although others, owing to the end of the secular financial year, render first tithes during the feast of Unleavened Bread.

²⁷⁰⁵ Deut 16:16

²⁷⁰⁶ The Lord hath chosen to place His name:

II Chron 7:16 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets): *'For now have I chosen and sanctified this house [the Temple at Jerusalem], that my name may be there forever: and mine eyes and mine heart shall be there perpetually.'*

I Kings 8:16,17, *'Since the day that I brought forth my people Israel out of Egypt, I chose no city out of all the tribes of Israel to build an house, that my name might be therein; but I chose David to be over my people Israel. And it was in the heart of David my father to build an house for the name of the Lord God of Israel.'*

I Kings 8:29, *'That thine eyes may be open toward this house night and day, even toward the place of which thou hast said, My name shall be there.'*

I Kings 9:3 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets): *'And the Lord said unto him [Solomon], I have heard thy prayer and thy supplication, that thou hast made before me: I have hallowed this house, which thou hast built, to put my name there for ever; and mine eyes and mine heart shall be there perpetually.'*

The Lord has chosen the Temple in Jerusalem to place His name forever. His name rests in Jerusalem.

²⁷⁰⁷ Rehoboam.

²⁷⁰⁸ I Kings 14:21

²⁷⁰⁹ Ex 20:24

4. There is no derogation mentioned; and,

5. Exodus precedes Deuteronomy and so, chronologically, God's decision to, *'place His name in Jerusalem for all time'* is binding and effective.

Only by acting strictly in accordance with the commandments of God can the Judæo-Christian correctly discharge the duty of tithing the first tithe. The discharging of the second and third tithes are self-evident, and well known, and demand of no further exposition in this connection, other than to note the words of Josephus: *'Besides those two tithes which I have already said you are to pay every third year, the one for the Levites, the other for the festivals, you are to bring every third year a tithe to be distributed to those that want; to women also that are widows, and to children that are orphans.'*²⁷¹⁰

This is the surprising content and extent of the commandments of God concerning tithing.

Unjust servant

The parable of the unjust servant has resonance here, for it shows what the Judæo-Christian should do with money. After-tithe income is to be used wisely and fruitfully. *'And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, that when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations.'*²⁷¹¹ The worldly, unrighteous servant sought to insulate himself from looming privation through unjustly benefiting those he hoped would receive him into their houses when he was put out of his stewardship.²⁷¹² Christ's injunction to His people concerns making friends through the judicious use, or use beneficial to those in need, of mammon, or money, in order that when, in the course of time, the Judæo-Christian *'fails'*²⁷¹³—or, more easily understood, *'dies'*—then the Father and Son may receive him or her into their *'house,'* an everlasting habitation: the kingdom of God. Money may be used to good or ill; the Judæo-Christian must use it for good, to the help of others.

Interdiction?

Some reading this dissertation may be led to doubt the *'proof'* or *'test'* in Malachi: *'Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruit of your ground;*

²⁷¹⁰ Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, 4.8.22

²⁷¹¹ Luke 16:9; K.J.V.'s *'friends of'* is better, *'friends through.'*

²⁷¹² Luke 16:4b

²⁷¹³ Greek: *ekleipo*, *'to pass by,' 'to leave,'* or *'to quit.'*

*neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the Lord of hosts. And all nations shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the Lord of hosts.*²⁷¹⁴ Even some actively tithing may be led to the conclusion that there are no absolute guarantees of prosperity to the Judæo-Christian in this life. Smyrna, for example, could be adduced by way of support, an era of the church which elicited no criticism from our Lord,²⁷¹⁵ but which was poor, destitute, beleaguered, and suffering, and about to go through the rigours of persecution unto death. Things were getting bleaker, with no material blessing ever in prospect. So perhaps the blessing is national; not sectional or individual? But Christ said, *'Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life.*²⁷¹⁶ Here Christ adds the overarching Judæo-Christian dimension: all must be done for His sake, and that of the gospel. There is material reward here and now, but even that comes *'with persecutions.'*

This is not merely a paying of dues and the receipt of divine blessings and benefits without end. The simple cause and effect that this implies ignores the reality of living a Judæo-Christian life in a world in thrall of Satan. And herein lies the essential difference between a national and an individual blessing. If an entire nation be God's, then all will be well. But if not, then under Satan's guidance, everything is done to destroy those isolated individuals seeking after God to do His will. A Judæo-Christian, taking God at His Word, disregards the difficulties, the pains, the persecutions, the hardships, for, as Paul says, *'For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory....for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.'*²⁷¹⁷ God will provide. He who without help brought each and every one into this world, giving life, will provide food, and shelter, and raiment for the maintenance of that life, and the furtherance of His gospel.²⁷¹⁸ And that is guaranteed, by God.

²⁷¹⁴ Mal 3:10-12

²⁷¹⁵ Rev 2:8-11

²⁷¹⁶ Mark 10:29,30 (subscripted emphasis added)

²⁷¹⁷ II Cor 4:17,18

²⁷¹⁸ Mat 6:30-34

Chapter 47

Wicked Hateth the Righteous (& why some do not received the Holy Spirit)

*'The wicked watcheth the Righteous, and seeketh to slay him.'*²⁷¹⁹ The reason why this happens to be so is identified by Christ: *'If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love its own: but because you are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also. But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me. If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloak for their sin,'*²⁷²⁰ and, *'Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you. Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and appointed you,'*²⁷²¹ that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it to you. These things I command you, that ye love one another. If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love its own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.'²⁷²²

²⁷¹⁹ Psa 37:32

²⁷²⁰ John 15:18-23

²⁷²¹ Greek: tithemi, K.J.V. 'ordained you,' here more correctly rendered 'appointed you.'

²⁷²² John 15:14-19

Although the disciples were Christ's friends, it was by His choice, not theirs. The phrase, '*bring forth fruit*,' refers to love and its results. There is a progression in this: to abide in Him means to bear fruit; to bear fruit means to experience answered prayer. In other words, to experience first-hand the power of the Holy Spirit.

Christ commands love, but in turning from this subject to the ways of this world, love is replaced by hatred.²⁷²³ All who are not friends of Christ are of this world, and are driven, not by love, but by hatred towards God's own. The world can 'love' only those that are of this world. Since the friends of Christ have been chosen out of the world, the world, logically, hates them. As the world hated Christ, so it also hates those that are His.

Wicked hatred

Any who are held by God to be righteous can only expect to be objects of hate in this ungodly world, merely because they are righteous. Their lives condemn those who are evil and evoke hatred from them. *'In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother. For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous.'*²⁷²⁴ When to this is added the driver of Satan, working through the minds of those in his sway, the inevitable outcome would be the complete annihilation of the righteous, were it not for the bountiful protection afforded by God.

After the murder of his brother, Cain—whose name means '*possessed*'—expressed no contrition and repentance, preferring, rather, to lie to God. This, and his sentence are recorded in Genesis: *'And the Lord said unto Cain, where is Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not: Am I my brother's keeper? And he said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground. And now art thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand; When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength; a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth.'*²⁷²⁵

On being sentenced, Cain expressed only self-pity, and a strong desire for self-preservation: *'And Cain said unto the Lord, my punishment is greater than I can bear. Behold, thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth; and from thy face shall I be hid; and I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth; and it*

²⁷²³ Greek: *miseo*.

²⁷²⁴ I John 3:10-13 (sublinear emphasis added); Gen 4:7d, K.J.V., '*If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted?*' In the Vulgate the phrase reads: '*If thou divide rightly, shalt thou not be accepted?*' The LXX gives more detail with the entire verse: '*And the Lord God said to Cain, Wherefore didst thou become vexed, and wherefore did thy countenance fall? If thou didst rightly offer, but didst not rightly divide, didst thou not sin? Hold thy peace.*' This is referred to by Paul in Heb 11:4, '*By faith Abel offered unto God a more abundant sacrifice than Cain.*' In short, Cain's initial sin lay in withholding part of his tithe and offering not of the best; the firstborn of Adam cheated God.

²⁷²⁵ Gen 4:9-12

*shall come to pass, that every one that findeth me shall slay me.*²⁷²⁶ Having just killed his brother, Cain complains about what he perceives to be the harshness of the sentence. He even complains of being hidden from the face of God; not something that concerned him in any way before his perpetrating the foul deed. There is also an element of paranoia apparent, in the fear that any finding him would kill him.

Under the circumstances, the Lord's response was gracious: *'And the Lord said unto him, Therefore whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold. And the Lord set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him.'*²⁷²⁷ It was not for a third party to execute a death sentence: God will do that in the fullness of time, at the Great White Throne Judgement, for there was no sign of repentance. In the interim, until Cain's natural death, God laid a punishment on him, for all would know what Cain had done, by dint of the mark. It is because of these considerations that anyone killing Cain would not only be committing murder, but also acting contrary to the will of God in the matter—hence the sevenfold vengeance.

Comparisons

But what is the definition of righteousness, and how is it possible that sinning man can attain such a state? *'For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.*²⁷²⁸ The definition of righteousness, then, is faith counted for same. And it follows that the faith of those who are called righteous is faith in God. The wicked, however, have faith in themselves, or in their possessions, or in others, or in evil spirits, or in Satan, or whatever; but not in God. As a result, God disowns them, for they are wicked.

Many think that God has allowed man to be autonomous—a free moral agent. In theory, he can choose between good and evil, right and wrong. However, 'free moral agency' is an extremely awkward term, and very heavily prescribed, given that the only 'freedom' available is that of rejecting God: *'For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Spirit, And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.'*²⁷²⁹ Man in this condition is immediately bond-slave to sin and Satan,²⁷³⁰ thus denying any true freedom

²⁷²⁶ Gen 4:13,14

²⁷²⁷ Gen 4:15

²⁷²⁸ Rom 4:3-5 (sublinear emphasis added)

²⁷²⁹ Heb 6:4-6

²⁷³⁰ John 8:34b

whatsoever. Man cannot choose to be righteous, for it is a gift of God, as is manumission,²⁷³¹ given to whomsoever God chooses. The modus to being elected to the righteous is recited by Paul in Romans.²⁷³²

As for Islam, the rather fatalistic and circular doctrine on predestination²⁷³³ which is found there is well demonstrated by Konemann: 'Everything that happens to people is predetermined by God (viz., predestination). In the examination of the relationship between God and man the strong emphasis on predestination has made the problem of human free will a particularly controversial point in Islamic doctrine. The question arises as to why God leads some people to the correct faith and thus to salvation and lets others perish through their lack of faith. Thus, in early Islam, those who denied human freedom—Jabarites²⁷³⁴—argued against the emphatic defenders of the freedom of human beings to decide and act (Mu'tazilites; the official state religion in the ninth-century). It was the school of [the] Ash'arites, who asserted themselves in the tenth-century, that emphasized the unrestricted predetermination of everything by God, but also the responsibility of the human being. The Ash'arites believe that all actions have two levels: each action is created by God in human beings but the individual consents to this and takes it upon himself in an act of "acquisition,"²⁷³⁵ which gives him the feeling of freedom. But the capacity to take this upon himself, the act of acquisition, is in turn something that God has created in man. The starting point for this idea [is] the commandments of God pronounced in the Koran. Ethical rules can only be appropriately established if people have the ability to differentiate between good and evil (and also the freedom to choose between these two possibilities).' ²⁷³⁶

An illustration the vast gulf between the wicked and those who are God's is highlighted in a selection of texts on the manifold and manifest differences between the wicked and the righteous:

Wicked

'Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall

Righteous

'Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his

²⁷³¹ as a base and pagan parallel, Caird, G. B., *The Apostolic Age*, p.12 observes:

'It is true that slaves were encouraged to save their small earnings to buy their manumission by a fictitious sale to a god.'

²⁷³² Rom 4:4,5, 'Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.'

²⁷³³ Predestination: the doctrine that everything was predestined by God from the beginning, especially with reference to the play of divine omnipotence and human freewill in determining the fate of the 'soul,' q.v. sup.

²⁷³⁴ from Arabic: jabr, compulsion

²⁷³⁵ Arabic: kasb or itkisab.

²⁷³⁶ Konemann, *The Story of World Religions*, p.98

*not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. **The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.***^{'2737}

*'Oh let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end; but establish the just: for the righteous God trieth the hearts and reins. My defence is of God, which saveth the upright in heart. God judgeth the righteous, **and God is angry with the wicked every day.***^{'2739}

'The Lord is known by the judgment which he executeth: the wicked is snared in the work of his own hands.....The wicked in his pride doth persecute the poor: let them be taken in the devices that they have imagined. For the wicked boasteth of his heart's desire, and blesseth the covetous, whom the Lord abhorreth. Break thou the arm of the wicked and the evil man: seek out his wickedness till thou find none.^{'2741}

'The Lord bringeth the counsel of the heathen to nought: he maketh the devices of the people of none effect. The counsel of the Lord standeth forever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations.^{'2743}

'Wherefore doth the wicked contemn God? he hath said in his heart, thou wilt not require it.....The Lord is in his holy temple, the Lord's throne is in heaven:

*season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.*²⁷³⁸

*'Oh let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end; **but establish the just: for the righteous God trieth the hearts and reins. My defence is of God, which saveth the upright in heart. God judgeth the righteous, and God is angry with the wicked every day.***²⁷⁴⁰

'But let all those that put their trust in thee rejoice: let them ever shout for joy, because thou defendest them: let them also that love thy name be joyful in thee. For thou, Lord, wilt bless the righteous; with favour wilt thou compass him as with a shield.^{'2742}

*'The Lord bringeth the counsel of the heathen to nought: he maketh the devices of the people of none effect. **The counsel of the Lord standeth forever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations.***^{'2744}

'The Lord is in his holy temple, the Lord's throne is in heaven: his eyes behold, his eyelids try, the children of men. The Lord trieth the righteous: but the wicked

²⁷³⁷ Psa 1:1-5

²⁷³⁸ Psa 1:1-5

²⁷³⁹ Psa 7:9-11

²⁷⁴⁰ Psa 7:9-11

²⁷⁴¹ Psa 9:16,10:2,3,15

²⁷⁴² Psa 5:11,12

²⁷⁴³ Psa 33:10,11a

²⁷⁴⁴ Psa 33:10,11b

*his eyes behold, his eyelids try, the children of men. The Lord trieth the righteous: **but the wicked and him that loveth violence his soul hateth. Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest: this shall be the portion of their cup.** For the righteous Lord loveth righteousness; his countenance doth behold the upright.'*²⁷⁴⁵

*'Let me not be ashamed, O Lord; for I have called upon thee: **let the wicked be ashamed, and let them be silent in the grave. Let the lying lips be put to silence; which speak grievous things proudly and contemptuously against the righteous.***²⁷⁴⁷

*'Many sorrows shall be to the wicked: but he that trusteth in the Lord, mercy shall compass him about.'*²⁷⁴⁹

*'Evil shall slay the wicked: and they that hate the righteous shall be desolate.'*²⁷⁵¹

*'The wicked plotteth against the just, and gnasheth upon him with his teeth. The Lord shall laugh at him; for he seeth that his day is coming. The wicked have drawn out the sword, and have bent their bow, to cast down the poor and needy, and to slay such as be of upright conversation. Their sword shall enter into their own heart, and their bows shall be broken. **But the wicked shall perish, and the enemies of the Lord shall be as the fat of lambs: They shall con-***

*and him that loveth violence his soul hateth. Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest: this shall be the portion of their cup. **For the righteous Lord loveth righteousness; his countenance doth behold the upright.***²⁷⁴⁶

*'Let me not be ashamed, O Lord; for I have called upon thee: let the wicked be ashamed, and let them be silent in the grave. Let the lying lips be put to silence; which speak grievous things proudly and contemptuously against the righteous.'*²⁷⁴⁸

*'Many sorrows shall be to the wicked: **but he that trusteth in the Lord, mercy shall compass him about.***²⁷⁵⁰

*'The Lord redeemeth the soul of his servants: and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate.'*²⁷⁵²

*'For the arms of the wicked shall be broken: **but the Lord upholdeth the righteous. The Lord knoweth the days of the upright: and their inheritance shall be forever.** The wicked borroweth, and payeth not again; **but the righteous showeth mercy, and giveth. For such as be blessed of him shall inherit the earth;** and they that be cursed of him shall be cut off. **But the salvation of the righteous is of the Lord: he is their strength in the time of trouble. And the Lord shall help them, and***

²⁷⁴⁵ Psa 10:13,11:4-7

²⁷⁴⁶ Psa 11:4-7

²⁷⁴⁷ Psa 31:17,18

²⁷⁴⁸ Psa 31:17,18

²⁷⁴⁹ Psa 32:10

²⁷⁵⁰ Psa 30:10

²⁷⁵¹ Psa 34:21

²⁷⁵² Psa 34:22

*sume; into smoke shall they consume away. The wicked borroweth, and payeth not again; but the righteous showeth mercy, and giveth. For such as be blessed of him shall inherit the earth; and they that be cursed of him shall be cut off.*²⁷⁵³

*'But unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldst take my covenant in thy mouth? Seeing thou hatest instruction, and casteth my words behind thee. When thou sawest a thief, then thou contendest with him, and hast been partakers with adulterers. Thou givest thy mouth to evil, and thy tongue frameth deceit. Thou sittest and speakest against thy brother; thou slanderest thine own mother's son.....Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and not written with the righteous.....Grant not, O Lord, the desires of the wicked: further not his wicked device; lest they exalt themselves. Selah.*²⁷⁵⁵

'Because the voice of the enemy, because of the oppression of the wicked: for they cast iniquity upon me, and in wrath they hate me. For it was not an enemy that reproached me; I could have borne it: neither was it he that hated me that did magnify himself against me; then I would have hid myself from him: But it was thou, a man mine equal, my guide, and mine acquaintance. We took sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company. He hath delivered my soul in peace from the battle that was against me: for there were many with me. God shall hear, and afflict them, even he that abideth of old. Selah. Because they have no changes,

*deliver them: he shall deliver them from the wicked, and save them, because they trust in him.*²⁷⁵⁴

*'Ye that love the Lord, hate evil: he preserveth the souls of his saints; he delivereth them out of the hand of the wicked. Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart. Rejoice in the Lord, ye righteous; and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness.*²⁷⁵⁶

'He hath delivered my soul in peace from the battle that was against me: for there were many with me. God shall hear, and afflict them, even he that abideth of old. Selah. Because they have no changes, therefore they fear not God. He hath put forth his hands against such as be at peace with him: he hath broken his covenant. The words of his mouth were smoother than butter, but war was in his heart: his words were softer than oil, yet they were drawn swords. Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved. But thou, O God, shall bring them down into the pit of destruction: bloody and deceitful men shall not live out half their days;

²⁷⁵³ Psalms 37:12-15,20-22,32,35-38

²⁷⁵⁴ Psalms 37:17,18,21,22,39,40

²⁷⁵⁵ Psalms 50:16-20,69:28,140:8

²⁷⁵⁶ Psalms 97:10-12

*therefore they fear not God. He hath put forth his hands against such as be at peace with him: he hath broken his covenant. The words of his mouth were smoother than butter, but war was in his heart: his words were softer than oil, yet they were drawn swords. Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved. **But thou, O God, shall bring them down into the pit of destruction: bloody and deceitful men shall not live out half their days; but I will trust in thee.***²⁷⁵⁷

*'The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies.'*²⁷⁵⁹

*'Hide me from the secret counsel of the wicked; from the insurrection of the workers of iniquity: **Who whet their tongue like a sword, and bend their bows to shoot their arrows, even bitter words: That they may shoot in secret at the perfect: suddenly do they shoot at him, and fear not. They encourage themselves in an evil matter: they commune of laying snares privily; they say, Who shall see them? They search out iniquities; they accomplish a diligent search: both the inward thought of every one of them, and the heart, is deep. But God shall shoot at them with an arrow; suddenly shall they be wounded. So they shall make their own tongue to fall upon themselves: all that see them shall flee away. And all men shall fear, and shall declare the work of God; for they shall wisely consider of his doing. The righteous shall be glad in the***

*but I will trust in thee.'*²⁷⁵⁸

*'The righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance: he shall wash his feet in the blood of the wicked. So that a man shall say, Verily there is a reward for the righteous: verily he is a God that judgeth in the earth.'*²⁷⁶⁰

*'Hide me from the secret counsel of the wicked; from the insurrection of the workers of iniquity: Who whet their tongue like a sword, and bend their bows to shoot their arrows, even bitter words: That they may shoot in secret at the perfect: suddenly do they shoot at him, and fear not. They encourage themselves in an evil matter: they commune of laying snares privily; they say, Who shall see them? They search out iniquities; they accomplish a diligent search: both the inward thought of every one of them, and the heart, is deep. **But God shall shoot at them with an arrow; suddenly shall they be wounded. So they shall make their own tongue to fall upon themselves: all that see them shall flee away. And all men shall fear, and shall declare the work of God; for they shall wisely consider of his doing. The***

²⁷⁵⁷ Psalms 55:3,12-14,18-23

²⁷⁵⁸ Psalms 55:18-23

²⁷⁵⁹ Psalms 58:3

²⁷⁶⁰ Psalms 58:10,11

*Lord, and shall trust in him; all the upright shall glory.*²⁷⁶¹

*'For I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked. For there are no bands in their death: but their strength is firm. They are not in trouble as other men; neither are they plagued like other men. Therefore pride compasseth them about as a chain; violence covereth them as a garment. Their eyes stand out with fatness: they have more than heart could wish. They are corrupt, and speak wickedly concerning oppression: they speak loftily. They set their mouth against the heavens, and their tongue walketh through the earth. Therefore his people return hither: and waters of a full cup are wrung out to them. And they say, How doth God know? and is their knowledge in the most High? Behold, these are the ungodly, who prosper in the world; they increase in riches. Surely thou didst set them in slippery places: thou castedst them down into destruction. How are they brought into desolation, as in a moment! they are utterly consumed with terrors.*²⁷⁶³

'But God is the judge: he putteth down one, and setteth up another. For in the hand of the Lord there is a cup, and the wine is red; it is full of mixture; and he poureth out of the same: but the dregs thereof, all the wicked of the earth shall wring them out, and drink them. But I will declare forever; I will sing praises to the God of Jacob. All the horns of the wicked also will I cut off; but the horns of the righteous shall be

*righteous shall be glad in the Lord, and shall trust in him; and all the upright shall glory.*²⁷⁶²

*'Ye that love the Lord, hate evil: he preserveth the souls of his saints, he delivereth them out of the hand of the wicked....Let sinners be consumed out of the earth, and let the wicked be no more. Bless thou the Lord, O my soul. Praise ye the Lord....And a fire was kindled in their company; the flame burned up the wicked.'*²⁷⁶⁴

*'But God is the judge: he putteth down one, and setteth up another. For in the hand of the Lord there is a cup, and the wine is red; it is full of mixture; and he poureth out of the same: but the dregs thereof, all the wicked of the earth shall wring them out, and drink them. But I will declare forever; I will sing praises to the God of Jacob. All the horns of the wicked also will I cut off; but the horns of the righteous shall be exalted.'*²⁷⁶⁶

²⁷⁶¹ Psa 64:2-10

²⁷⁶² Psa 64:2-10

²⁷⁶³ Psa 73:3-19

²⁷⁶⁴ Psa 97:10,104:35,106:18

exalted.^{'2765}

*'...and he that is upright in the way is **abomination** to the wicked....Therefore I will pour out my wrath upon them like water.'*^{'2767}

'How long will ye judge unjustly, and accept the persons of the wicked? Selah.'^{'2769}

'When the wicked spring as the grass, and when all the workers of iniquity do flourish; it is that they shall be destroyed forever....The wicked flee when no man pursueth.'^{'2771}

'Lord, how long shall the wicked, how long shall the wicked triumph? How long shall they utter and speak hard things? and all the workers of iniquity boast themselves? They break in pieces thy people, O Lord, and afflict thine heritage. They slay the widow and the stranger, and murder the fatherless. Yet they say, The Lord shall not see, neither shall the God of

'Thou shalt not be afraid of the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day; Nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that walketh at noonday. A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee. Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked. There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.'^{'2768}

'The Lord is righteous: he hath cut asunder the cords of the wicked.'^{'2770}

'Mine eyes also shall see my desire on mine enemies, and mine ears shall hear my desire on the wicked that rise up against me. The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree: he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon. They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing.'^{'2772}

'For the Lord will not cast off his people, neither will he forsake his inheritance. But judgment shall return unto righteousness: and all the upright in heart shall follow it.'^{'2774}

²⁷⁶⁶ Psa 75:7-10

²⁷⁶⁵ Psa 75:7-10

²⁷⁶⁷ Prov 29:27; Hos 5:10

²⁷⁶⁸ Psa 91:5-11

²⁷⁶⁹ Psa 82:2

²⁷⁷⁰ Psa 129:4

²⁷⁷¹ Psa 92:7,28:1

²⁷⁷² Psa 92:11,12,14

²⁷⁷⁴ Psa 94:14,15

Jacob regard it. Understand, ye brutish among the people; and ye fools, when will ye be wise? He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? he that formed the eye, shall he not see? He that chastiseth the heathen, shall he not correct? he that teacheth man knowledge, shall he not know?^{'2773}

Hold not thy peace, O God of my praise; For the mouth of the wicked and the mouth of the deceitful are opened against me: they have spoken against me with a lying tongue. They compassed me about also with words of hatred; and fought against me without a cause. For my love they are my adversaries: but I give myself unto prayer. They have rewarded me evil for good, and hatred for love.^{'2775}

'Surely he shall not be moved for ever: the righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance. He shall not be afraid of evil tidings: his heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord. His heart is established, he shall not be afraid, until he see his desire upon his enemies. He hath dispersed, he hath given to the poor; his righteousness endureth forever; his horn shall be exalted with honour. The wicked shall see it, and be grieved; he shall gnash with his teeth, and melt away: the desire of the wicked shall perish.^{'2777}

'Salvation is far from the wicked: for they seek not thy statutes.^{'2779}

'Surely thou wilt slay the wicked, O God: depart from

'For the rod of the wicked shall not rest upon the lot of the righteous; lest the righteous put forth their hands unto iniquity.^{'2776}

'Surely he shall not be moved for ever: the righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance. He shall not be afraid of evil tidings: his heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord. His heart is established, he shall not be afraid, until he see his desire upon his enemies. He hath dispersed, he hath given to the poor; his righteousness endureth forever; his horn shall be exalted with honour. The wicked shall see it, and be grieved; he shall gnash with his teeth, and melt away: the desire of the wicked shall perish.^{'2778}

'The wicked have laid a snare for me: yet I erred not from thy precepts.^{'2780}

'They compassed me about; yea, they compassed me

²⁷⁷³ Psa 94:3-11

²⁷⁷⁵ Psa 109:1-5

²⁷⁷⁶ Psa 125:3

²⁷⁷⁷ Psa 112:6-10

²⁷⁷⁸ Psa 112:6-10

²⁷⁷⁹ Psa 119:155

²⁷⁸⁰ Psa 119:110

me therefore, ye bloody men.^{'2781}

about: but in the name of the Lord I will destroy them. They compassed me about like bees; they are quenched as the fire of thorns: for in the name of the Lord I will destroy them. Thou hast thrust sore at me that I might fall: but the Lord helped me. The Lord is my strength and song, and is become my salvation. The voice of rejoicing and salvation is in the tabernacles of the righteous: the right hand of the Lord doeth valiantly. The right hand of the Lord is exalted: the right hand of the Lord doeth valiantly.^{'2782}

*'Keep me from the snares which they have laid for me, and the gins of the workers of iniquity. **Let the wicked fall into their own nets**, whilst that I withal escape.*^{'2783}

'Keep me from the snares which they have laid for me and the gins of the workers of iniquity. Let the wicked fall into their own nets, whilst that I withal escape.^{'2784}

*'The Lord preserveth all them that love him: **but all the wicked will he destroy.***^{'2785}

'The Lord preserveth all them that love him: but all the wicked will he destroy.^{'2786}

*'The Lord preserveth the strangers; he relieveth the fatherless and widow: **but the way of the wicked he turneth upside down.***^{'2787}

'The Lord openeth the eyes of the blind: the Lord raiseth them that are bowed down: the Lord loveth the righteous: The Lord preserveth the strangers; he relieveth the fatherless and widow: but the way of the wicked he turneth up-side down.^{'2788}

*'The Lord lifteth up the meek: **he casteth the wicked down to the ground.***^{'2789}

'The Lord lifteth up the meek: he casteth the wicked down to the ground.^{'2790}

²⁷⁸¹ Psa 139:19
²⁷⁸² Psa 118:11-16
²⁷⁸³ Psa 141:9,10
²⁷⁸⁴ Psa 141:9,10
²⁷⁸⁵ Psa 145:20
²⁷⁸⁶ Psa 145:20
²⁷⁸⁷ Psa 146:9
²⁷⁸⁸ Psa 146:8,9
²⁷⁸⁹ Psa 147:6
²⁷⁹⁰ Psa 147:6

Why no gift?

The fate of the wicked is sure, for there is no escape afforded to those who, when confronted with the ready offer of forgiveness and salvation, will not repent, and be baptised for the remission of sins, and receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. This statement, however, in itself, raises a frequently pondered question: Why, after baptism, do some not receive the gift of the Holy Spirit?

The answer is found in a number of scriptural tracts, among which ranks the baptism of John, which impinges upon the matter in hand, arising from the wording used in Acts in connection with certain disciples of John at Ephesus: *'And it came to pass, that, while Appolos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples, He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Spirit since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Spirit. And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptised? And they said, Unto John's baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptised with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. When they heard this, they were baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied. And all the men were about twelve.'*²⁷⁹¹

In connection with this, the following should be considered:

1. The Greek participle which in the K.J.V. is translated *'since ye believed'* should be rendered *'when ye believed.'* In this form, it is specific to an event and a time, but it does not identify exactly when, but the context renders it certain that it had been John himself who had baptised them as his disciples. John, however, merely baptised with water,²⁷⁹² which was a sign, whereas Christ brought the freely available gift of the Holy Spirit. When Christ was baptised, He already had a limitless superabundance of the Holy Spirit, and this serves to underscore the fact that there was no elevation of Christ to deity at His baptism, as is claimed by some in error.²⁷⁹³ John's baptism clearly lacked the capacity to lead to the conferring of the gift of the Holy Spirit; and,

²⁷⁹¹ Acts 19:1-7

²⁷⁹² John 1:26

²⁷⁹³ through misreading or misinterpreting John 1:29-34, *'The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for he was before me. And I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water. And John bare record, saying, I saw the spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Spirit. And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God.'* The Holy Spirit abode in Him before His baptism, cp. Mat 3:11-17.

2. The point is that the Holy Spirit only came upon the twelve or so after the laying on of hands, and not at the point of re-baptism. Where the previous baptism had been deficient, with the omission—at that time, correctly—of even the mention of the Holy Spirit; it was made good by this means.

Some would point to Acts in claiming that the baptism to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit need only be in the name of Jesus Christ: *'Now when they²⁷⁹⁴ heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptised every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off [namely, the house of Israel], even as many as the Lord our God shall call. And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.'*²⁷⁹⁵ Such a contention is erroneous, however, as here Peter was exhorting the children of Israel to repentance and baptism; he was not baptising anyone there and then. And therein lies the difference. Peter had just finished reciting the proof that Jesus was the Messiah, and therefore, in context, it was completely correct to urge repentance and baptism in His name.²⁷⁹⁶ Once that actual baptism would come, it would be as instructed by Christ. This will be discussed later.

The impact of baptism through Christ in conferring the Holy Spirit is described in John: *'And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptise with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptiseth with the Holy Spirit.'*²⁷⁹⁷ The result of the baptism of Samaritans by Philip is seen in Acts: *'Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Spirit: (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus.)'*²⁷⁹⁸ In context, this does not appear to refer to a baptismal deficiency—*'in Jesus' name'*, meaning baptised under His authority, and probably a short form of *'Father, Son, and Holy Spirit'*—but rather to the unique circumstances surrounding the first wholesale Gentile embracing of the faith. When the Holy Spirit was given it was through prayer and laying on of hands by Peter and John, and not re-baptism. This action distinguished those deserving of the gift, and those not, and served to inaugurate the great mission to the Gentiles.

The deficiency in Samaria is seen in the actions of Simon the sorcerer: *'But there was a certain man, called Simon, which before time in the same city used sorcery, and bewitched the people of Samaria, giving out that himself was some great one: To whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, This man is the great power of God. And to him they had regard, because that of long time he had bewitched them with sorceries. But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of*

²⁷⁹⁴ viz., the men of Israel.

²⁷⁹⁵ Acts 2:37-40 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets; sublinear emphasis added)

²⁷⁹⁶ Acts 2:14-36

²⁷⁹⁷ John 1:33

²⁷⁹⁸ Acts 8:15,16

Jesus Christ, they were baptised, both men and women. Then Simon himself believed also: and when he was baptised, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done. Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Spirit: (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus.) Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit. And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Spirit was given, he offered them money, Saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Spirit. But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God. Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee. For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity. Then answered Simon, and said, Pray ye to the Lord for me, that none of these things which ye have spoken come upon me.²⁷⁹⁹ Simon tried to buy the Holy Spirit, and obviously feigned contrition and repentance prior to his baptism. In this he was an hypocrite, excoriated by Christ in His words for the Pharisees of the day, where He referred to them as 'vipers,' and 'hypocrites.' When Christ accused the scribes and Pharisees of being 'hypocrites' in Luke, 'Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees! Hypocrites,'²⁸⁰⁰ the word used means a dissembler, an actor, or a stage-player.²⁸⁰¹ What was being said was that they were performing a staged and insincere religion; an outward show, trite and superficial, yet signifying nothing: a mere froth. Likewise, the lack of sincere contrition and repentance—in essence, an outward show but lacking the innermost conviction—results in defective baptism, and the resulting lack of the gift of the Holy Spirit.

In the Scriptures, hypocrisy is linked to iniquity, '*Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.*'²⁸⁰² Hypocrisy is a grave sin. When practised in religion by so-called, self-appointed 'leaders,' or 'apostles,' it has the greatest condemnation pronounced by Christ Himself. It is wilful, and done in the full knowledge of what it is, and what it imports. This sin cannot be practised without the practitioner ending in '*the lake of fire.*'

The underlying reason for failure to receive the Holy Spirit is lack of obedience, or the lack of intention to obey, in the case of those newly baptised: '*And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Spirit, whom God hath given to them that obey him.*'²⁸⁰³ And, as an absolute prerequisite, there is need of justification in order to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. It is God Who justifies. There is an absolute need of true faith. Therefore, the Judæo-Christian is:

²⁷⁹⁹ Acts 8:9-24 (sublinear emphasis added)

²⁸⁰⁰ Luke 11:44

²⁸⁰¹ Greek: hupokrites.

²⁸⁰² Mat 23:28

²⁸⁰³ Acts 5:32

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1. Saved by Grace;²⁸⁰⁴
 2. Justified by Faith;²⁸⁰⁵ and,
 3. Rewarded according to his / her works.²⁸⁰⁶

Visible fruits

In summary, the Holy Spirit, the Power of God, cannot be duped, bought, or secured on the basis of a deficient baptism or some manufactured ruse. It is clear that all of these wantings are the products of man, and import no criticism of the gift of the Holy Spirit. These wantings arise only in the case of those who have not had their names written in the '*book of life*' from the foundation of the earth. This can be gleaned from reading, '*And I entreat thee also, true yokefellows....and with my other fellowlabourers, whose names are in the book of life,*'²⁸⁰⁷ in tandem with, '*And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.*'²⁸⁰⁸

The works of the wicked of this world, in the time of the end, are ably recited by Paul: '*This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves,*'²⁸⁰⁹ *covetous, boast-ers, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent,*²⁸¹⁰ *fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women,*²⁸¹¹ *laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.*'²⁸¹²

²⁸⁰⁴ Acts 15:11; Eph 2:8,9, et al.

²⁸⁰⁵ Rom 8:33, Titus 3:7 et al.; and not justified by the works of the Law, Gal 2:16,3:11; with no justification for the wicked, Ex 23:7, et al.

²⁸⁰⁶ II Cor 5:10; James 2:10-18; Rev 22:12, et al.

²⁸⁰⁷ Philp 4:3

²⁸⁰⁸ Rev 13:7,8

²⁸⁰⁹ Trentham, C. A., *Studies in Timothy*, p.122:

'When man loves self more than God he becomes his own god, and the pathos of this fact is that he is left with such an inadequate god. Out of love of self comes covetousness, for lovers of self must pamper themselves. Centering all their worship in themselves, they become proud, overbearing, abusive scoffers.'

²⁸¹⁰ i.e., without self-restraint.

²⁸¹¹ i.e., '*wives*'; Trentham, C. A., *Studies in Timothy*, pp.124,125:

'Literally "*little women*"....flattered by the personal visitation of a prominent leader in their own homes....Pauls sees women who are so easily led astray as fickle persons who are prone to evil. They are "*laden*," or heaped up, with sins and are, "*wayward creatures of impulse*" (II Tim 3:6, Moffatt), utterly devoid of moral stability....The indiscriminating people who flit from one fad and fancy to another, willing to listen to anybody, "*always learning*," never come to a knowledge of the truth because they would rather flit to some new fancy than face the moral demands of the truth already revealed to them.'

²⁸¹² II Tim 3:1-7 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

This recital may be compared to that given by Christ: *'But I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you, Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you. And unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek offer also the other; and him that taketh away thy cloak forbid not to take thy coat also. Give to every man that asketh of thee; and of him that taketh away thy goods ask them not again. And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise. For if ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? For sinners also love those that love them. And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? For sinners also do even the same. And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? For sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again. But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil. Be ye therefore merciful, as your father also is merciful. Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven: Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.'*²⁸¹³

The 'elect,' unless they later *'fall away,'* have their names indelibly written in the *'book of life.'* The antipathetic, those who are hypocritical, or actors, do not and cannot have their names written in the *'book of life,'* no matter how good the 'performance' happens to be. God is not fooled.

The indwelling of Jesus Christ in the Judæo-Christian has been described thus: 'This is one truth [amongst myriad] that makes Christianity unique and distinctive in its pre-eminence over all the other religions of the world today....Christianity lives because Christ lives....now He lives in the heart of every true believer.'²⁸¹⁴ 'The Spirit of Christ, then, or the real deity of Christ, dwells in the truly spiritual believer....Because of infilling by the Holy Spirit, the lives of....early believers were transformed, so that they had personal piety and power such as they had never known before.'^{2815 2816}

The various negative reactions to the gospel, and resulting deficiencies in obtaining the Holy Spirit, are recited in the parable of the sower, as are the bountiful results flowing from a positive reaction:

1. Those who are dead to Christ are as the seed sown by the wayside: *'And when he sowed, some seeds fell by the wayside, and the fowls came and devoured them up. When anyone heareth the word of the kingdom, and*

²⁸¹³ Luke 6:27-38; Psa 75:7a, *'But God is the judge,'* q.v. inf.

²⁸¹⁴ Jones, Howard O., sermon *The Indwelling Christ*, given in 1957 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

²⁸¹⁵ Phlp 1:6

²⁸¹⁶ Finney, Charles G., *Sanctification* (with added comment and clarification in square brackets).

*understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which receiveth seed by the way side;*²⁸¹⁷

2. Those who are lukewarm to or lackadaisical in Christ, that is, who are but superficially His, are of the seed sown in stony places: *'Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth.'*²⁸¹⁸ *and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth: And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away. But he that receiveth the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; yet he hath not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation and persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended'*²⁸¹⁹

3. There are also they of the seed sown among thorns: *'And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them: He also that receiveth seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; but the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful,'* where worldly cares and concerns crowd out the word of God, or relegate it to a thing of little import;²⁸²⁰

4. None of these has the indwelling of the Holy Spirit; none of these will inherit eternal life; but,

5. The fruitful ground is described in very different terms: *'But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold. But he that receiveth seed into good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.'*²⁸²¹

And so, finally, to a very brief consideration of some of the external signs of the righteous:

1. They keep God's commandments;
2. They trust in God;
3. They are close to God;
4. They have the protection of God;
5. They are humble and longsuffering;

²⁸¹⁷ Mat 13:4,19

²⁸¹⁸ meaning, literally, a rock overlain with a thin veneer of soil.

²⁸¹⁹ Mat 13:5,6,20,21

²⁸²⁰ Mat 13:7,22

²⁸²¹ Mat 13:8,23

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6. They are generous,²⁸²² putting other first;
 7. They help the poor, the widowed, the disadvantaged;
 8. They are forgiving and loving;²⁸²³
 9. They have no 'hidden agenda' or ulterior motive;
 10. They judge not, for God is the judge,²⁸²⁴ yet they deplore the current state of this evil world;
 11. They are persecuted by the workers of evil, for they are not conformed to this world; and,
 12. They evidence total adherence to the 'royal law,' for they love God, and they love their fellow man.

In dealing with each other, and with others, they are typified in the exhortation by Paul in Colossians: *'Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.'*²⁸²⁵ This is in contrast to, *'Therefore mortify²⁸²⁶ your members²⁸²⁷ which are upon the earth: fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry,'*²⁸²⁸ the way of the world.

'There is the judgement that is based on human standards and which never sees below the surface. That was the judgement of the scribes and Pharisees; and, in the last analysis, that is any human judgement, for in the nature of things men can never see below the surface of things.'²⁸²⁹ The righteous judge not, lest they

²⁸²² both with their time and their money.

²⁸²³ in the Judæo-Christian way, q.v. sup.

²⁸²⁴ Psa 75:7a

²⁸²⁵ Col 3:12-17

²⁸²⁶ viz., put to death.

²⁸²⁷ Greek: melos, members or parts of the human body, not church members.

²⁸²⁸ Col 3:5; Gill, John, *Gill's Exposition of the Bible*:

"inordinate affection," viz., effeminate, abusers of themselves with mankind; 'evil concupiscence,' viz., lusting after the flesh and carnal things.'

²⁸²⁹ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of John*, Vol.2, p.15

be judged.²⁸³⁰ This is a corollary from Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil, *'durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee.'*²⁸³¹

This demands some development, however, since Paul says in Corinthians, *'For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? do not ye judge them that are within?'*²⁸³² Those that are without the church are not to be subject to any in the church *'judging'*²⁸³³ them. The converse is expanded in, *'Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints? Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life? If then ye have judgments of things pertaining to this life, set them to judge who are least esteemed in the church.'*²⁸³⁴ Within the church, discerning *'things pertaining to this life'* is perfectly valid. The Greek translated *'matters'* means *'deeds,' 'affairs,' 'business,' or 'work.'*²⁸³⁵ These are things *'pertaining to this life,'* normal day-to-day disputes. It is also a low-level activity: *'set them to judge who are least esteemed in the church.'* This discerning has nothing to do with condemning unto death, for that is for God alone to do. It is restricted to mundane matters arising in the normal course of living. *'Least esteemed in the church'*, however, is a quite calamitous translation—the Greek, in context, meaning not those of the lowest circumstances of life, and of the meanest abilities and capacities, for in the next verse he requires a wise man for such a business; but private persons, laymen, who were not in any office and authority in the church, in distinction from pastors, elders, and rulers, that were in office, power, and high esteem, whom he would not have troubled with cases of this nature; but should rather choose out from among the laity persons of the best judgement and capacity, to be umpires and arbitrators in such worldly matters, which do not so properly come under the notice and cognizance of spiritual guides.²⁸³⁶

The *'elect,'* the very best in the church, are instructed to judge righteous judgement, and in doing so emulate Christ: *'And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears; But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.'*²⁸³⁷

²⁸³⁰ q.v. inf.

²⁸³¹ Jude 9c

²⁸³² I Cor 5:12

²⁸³³ Greek: krino, *'to distinguish,' or 'discern.'*

²⁸³⁴ I Cor 6:1-4

²⁸³⁵ Greek: pragma.

²⁸³⁶ I Cor 6:5b

²⁸³⁷ Isa 11:3,4

Concerning those outside the church, Paul has this: *'But them which are without God judgeth,'*²⁸³⁸ which uses the same Greek word. Although those who have not heard the gospel of the kingdom are not subject to judgement and condemnation during this life, they will be judged eventually, on their conscience, and their reactions to it,²⁸³⁹ in The Great White Throne Judgement. Christ admonished the Jews, people patently outside the church, for the time being, not to judge or discern superficially, but to judge, or better discern correctly: *'Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment,'*²⁸⁴⁰ so far as that is possible without the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

As for the greater judgement, that of condemnation unto death, Christ says in Luke, *'Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven.'*²⁸⁴¹ In other words, do not act as God; for that is the sole prerogative of God. It is not the place of any Judæo-Christian to condemn, for want of authority. The same was seen in the archangel Michael's dealings with the Devil over the body of Moses.²⁸⁴² Rather, it is God alone who can condemn unto death. Again, there is Christ's words in Matthew: *'Judge'*²⁸⁴³ *not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.'*²⁸⁴⁴ Those placing themselves in the stead of God, arrogating His authority in judgement and condemnation, will suffer the self-same penalty they attempt to mete. As to discerning somewhat lesser matters, Christ's command to His 'elect' is also given in John: *'Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgement.'*²⁸⁴⁵ The 'elect' can discern here, for they have the Holy Spirit.

The 'elect' evidence the signs identified by Christ Himself in John: *'Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.'*²⁸⁴⁶ The signs of the righteous are greater than those exhibited by Christ Himself, the latter recited in His reply to the question conveyed from two disciples of John the Baptist: *'Then Jesus answering said unto them, Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached.'*²⁸⁴⁷ To this can be added, *'And Jesus said unto them....for verily I say unto you, if ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed,*

²⁸³⁸ I Cor 5:13a; Greek: krino.

²⁸³⁹ q.v. sup.

²⁸⁴⁰ John 7:24, where Greek: krino, 'separate,' or 'discern' is translated 'judge' in the K.J.V. but paradoxically the verse contains the translation 'judgment,' from Greek: krisis, meaning 'discernment.'

²⁸⁴¹ Luke 6:37

²⁸⁴² Jude 9

²⁸⁴³ Greek: krino, 'pronounce judgment,' 'condemn,' this warning because 'God is the judge,' Psa 75:7a; II Chron 19:6 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets): *'And [Jehoshaphat the king] said to the judges, Take heed what you do: for ye judge not for man, but for the Lord.'* Our Lord God is the Judge. If magistrates judge meantime on His behalf, then they must do it honourably, scrupulously fairly, and in accordance with the provisions of God's Law.

²⁸⁴⁴ Mat 7:1,2

²⁸⁴⁵ John 7:24

²⁸⁴⁶ John 14:12

²⁸⁴⁷ Luke 7:22

ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place;²⁸⁴⁸ and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.²⁸⁴⁹ The impassable barrier can be removed, at a word, through faith.

There is also the ability of those imbued with the Holy Spirit to speak in tongues—in multiple foreign languages which were formerly beyond their understanding—as seen in the instance of the approximately one hundred and twenty on the day of Pentecost, 30AD, recorded in Acts, *'And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance....we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God';*²⁸⁵⁰ on the family of the centurion Cornelius, *'While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Spirit fell on all them which heard the word. And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Spirit. For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God....and he ordered them to be baptised';*²⁸⁵¹ and finally on the disciples of John the Baptist, *'And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied.'*²⁸⁵²

The nature of this gift of the Holy Spirit can be compared with man's vain imaginings of same, patent in the many and various manifestations of ecstatic religious fanaticism where aberrant, hysterical, and possessed behaviour is positively encouraged, with adherents frequently speaking in gibberish tongues,²⁸⁵³ under the guise of being 'slain for Jesus,' 'slain by the Spirit,' or, as evidenced at certain so-called 'tarry meetings,' in barking like dogs, roaring like lions, lengthy and uncontrollable laughter, and in seriously deluded women writhing about on the floor, claiming orgasm with the Holy Spirit, no less!

Well might it be wondered, as stated by Christ in Luke: *'Nevertheless, when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?'*²⁸⁵⁴ for there appears to be precious little external evidence of any true faith and righteousness on the earth just now.

²⁸⁴⁸ a colloquialism of the time.

²⁸⁴⁹ Mat 17:20

²⁸⁵⁰ Acts 2:4,11

²⁸⁵¹ Acts 10:44-48

²⁸⁵² Acts 19:6

²⁸⁵³ Cripps, Richard S., *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Amos*, pp.14,15 footnote (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'The [supposed] primitive prophetic ecstasy of I Sam 10:10 finds a certain parallel in the gift of tongues of I Cor 14:1-28; Acts 10:46,19:6; [the latter to be distinguished from] a phenomenon....manifest today in less educated [so-called] Christian communities in India (see a discussion by Browne, L. E., *Acts*, pp.34-37). It may also be compared with the ecstasy of the Montanists of the 2nd.-century AD (Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* v. xvii. 2). It would appear to be even more comparable to the ecstasy of the holy man of the East today such as is characterised by incoherent speech and bodily contortions and which not seldom ends with the ecstatic lapsing into unconsciousness. "The Indian practice of inhaling or exhaling the breath was known to the Sufis of the 9th-century and was much used afterwards. Among the Dervish Orders, music, singing, and dancing are favourite means of inducing the state of trance called "passing-away" (*fana*), which....is the climax and raison d'être of the method." (Nicholson, R. A., *Mystics of Islam*, p.48).'

²⁸⁵⁴ Luke 18:8

Chapter 48

Law & Royal Priesthood

Over one thousand, nine hundred years ago, the Messiah, Jesus Christ, brought from God to mankind the message and modus of salvation, the gospel of the kingdom of God. This unique man was an Israelite by nationality, and a Jew by ancestry, and though His message, modus, and gospel actually related to all of mankind, it was delivered to the Jews in the first instance.

Unfortunately, or so it may seem at first, the vast majority of those Jews rejected all of His gospel. Some even thought that there was a hidden agenda behind it, the common perception being that Christ was seeking to subvert the Roman civil government of the day. Others felt He was challenging the veracity of their religion, which was viewed as a special covenant made between themselves and God.

'The Jews never lost the conviction that they were the chosen people, but they interpreted their chosenness in terms of privilege rather than in terms of responsibility. There were many who held that physical descent from Abraham was enough to ensure for a man the favour of God and salvation and the right of entry into heaven, no matter what kind of life he had lived. They could actually say that at the gate of hell there was stationed a kind of guardian angel to turn back any Jew who had the mark of circumcision in his flesh, and who had in error strayed there. Descent from Abraham was the passport to the favour of God. That was a belief on which Jesus poured withering scorn.²⁸⁵⁵ He insisted that what mattered was a man's character, and therefore

²⁸⁵⁵ Mat 3:7-9; Luke 3:7f.

He came with His absolute ethical demand. The rich must share with the poor; the tax collector²⁸⁵⁶ must be an honest man; the soldier must be a man under honourable discipline; a man must live the good life wherever God had set him.²⁸⁵⁷ And so in the end John came with a threat. The greater One was coming; the axe was poised to smite the fruitless tree; the chaff was to be winnowed from the grain; the time of judgement was on the way.^{2858 2859}

Jewish self-aggrandisement

The Jewish view of themselves, at the time of Christ, corresponds remarkably closely with the current version:²⁸⁶⁰ *'Behold, thou art called a Jew, and resteth in the law, and maketh thy boast of God. And knowest his will, and approvest the things that are most excellent, being instructed out of the law; And art confident that thou thyself art a guide to the blind, a light of them which are in darkness. An instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, which hast the form of knowledge and of truth in the law.'*²⁸⁶¹ Because they had received catechetical training in the Law in youth, and rabbinical training later, the Jews felt confident that they could prove or discern those things that are more excellent. Confident that they would be saved by their reading of the Law, and the mode of life deriving, Jews were convinced that they had been made righteous, and able to assume four roles:

²⁸⁵⁶ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Luke*, pp.61,62 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets): 'Of all the people in Palestine, the tax-collectors were the best hated. At this time Palestine was a country subject to the Romans. The tax-collectors had taken service under the Roman government, and, therefore, they were regarded as quislings, and renegades and traitors. The taxation system lent itself to abuse. The Roman custom was to farm out the taxes. They assessed a district at a certain figure, and then they sold the right to collect the taxes within it to the highest bidder. So long as the buyer handed over the assessed figure at the end of the year he was entitled to retain whatever else he could extract from the people; and since there were no newspapers or wireless, and no ways of making public announcements which would reach everyone, the common people had no real idea of what they had to pay. There were two types of taxes. First, there were state taxes. There was a poll tax which all men from 14 to 65, and all women from 12 to 65, had to pay simply for the privilege of existing. There was a ground tax which consisted of one-tenth of all grain grown, and one-fifth of wine and oil. This could be paid in kind or commuted into money. There was income tax, which was one percent of a man's income. In these taxes there was not a great deal of room for extortion. Second, there were all kinds of duties. A tax was payable for using the main roads, the harbours, the markets. A tax was payable on a cart, on each wheel of it, and on the animal which drew it. There was purchase tax on certain articles, and there were import and export duties. A tax-collector could bid a man stop on the road and unpack his bundles and could charge him well-nigh what he liked. If a man could not pay sometimes the tax-collector would offer to lend him money at an exorbitant rate of interest and so get him further into his clutches. Robbers, murderers and tax-collectors were classed together. A tax-collector was barred from the synagogue. A Roman writer tells us that he once saw a monument to an honest tax-collector. An honest specimen of this renegade profession was so rare that when he occurred he received a monument. Matthew was like that, and Jesus chose him as an apostle.'

²⁸⁵⁷ Luke 3:10-14

²⁸⁵⁸ Mat 3:11f.; Luke 3:9,16f.

²⁸⁵⁹ Barclay, William, *The Mind of Jesus*, p.29

²⁸⁶⁰ Calvin, John, *Commentary on Daniel*, Vol. 2, p.43:

'The supreme power is constantly promised by the Prophets to the church, especially by Isaiah, who often predicts its complete supremacy. The Papists seize upon such testimonies to clothe themselves in the spoils of God, as if God had resigned his right to them! But they are immersed in the same error with the Jews, who swell with pride whenever such dignity is promised to the elect people, as if they could remain separate from God and yet obtain the right of treading the whole world under foot. The Papists also do exactly the same.'

²⁸⁶¹ Rom 2:17-20

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1. 'a guide of the blind'—Gentiles being 'blind' in their un-Jewish darkness;
 2. 'a light of them which are in darkness'—Gentiles need be enlightened by the Jews who, in turn, have been enlightened by the Law;
 3. 'an instructor of the foolish'—Gentiles did not know the Law, they were deemed to be fools; and,
 4. 'a teacher of babes'—Gentiles were immature, and objects of Jewish disgust.

But compare this list to Paul's assessment: *'Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? Thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal? Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? Thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege? Thou that makest thy boast of the law, through breaking the law dishonourest thou God? For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you, as it is written.'*²⁸⁶² The Jews were ever ready to preach morality, but their lives did not back it up. There was no sign of lives deriving from adherence to the Law. They were stealing from one another, committing adultery,²⁸⁶³ profaning the house of God by commercialism, and so Paul posed the biting question: *'Thou that makest thy boast of the law, through breaking the law dishonourest thou God?'*

Noachide laws & legalism

The insidious nature of this peculiarly Jewish 'ethical morality' extended far beyond even this self-aggrandising view. In the Babylonian Talmud, the zeal for legalism and the importation of Kabbalistic beliefs brought forth what is known as the 'Noachide Law':

1. 'Civil justice;
2. Prohibition of blasphemy;
3. Abandonment of idolatry;
4. Prohibition of incest;
5. Prohibition of murder;
6. Prohibition of theft; and,

²⁸⁶² Rom 2:21-24

²⁸⁶³ Rom 2:21,22

7. Prohibition against eating flesh cut from a live animal.^{'2864}

'The expanding and refining genius of the Rabbins added others, and by the third-century AD, there were thirty, the principal additional four being:

1. The blood of a living animal is not to be drawn for the purpose of drinking it;
2. Animals are not to be mutilated;
3. Magic and sorcery are unlawful; and,
4. The crossing of animals and grafting of trees are also unlawful.'

No stranger was allowed to dwell in Hebrew territory unless he conformed to the Noachian Precepts and became "a proselyte at the gate," in contradistinction to the strangers who conformed by being circumcised, and were styled "proselytes of righteousness."²⁸⁶⁵

The Talmud states the penalty for disobedience: 'One additional element of greater severity is that violation of any of the seven laws subjects the Noachide to capital punishment by decapitation.'²⁸⁶⁶ This corresponds eerily closely to, *'and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands.'*²⁸⁶⁷ A further correlation exists in the burden and modus of proof of an alleged infraction of the Noachide law. 'The many formalities of procedure essential when the accused is an Israelite need not be observed in the case of the Noachid. The latter may be convicted on the testimony of one witness, even on that of relatives, but not on that of a woman. He need have had no warning from the witnesses; and a single judge may pass sentence.'²⁸⁶⁸ Christ's words appear to mirror such a set of circumstances: *'Think not that I am come to set peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household.'*²⁸⁶⁹

"Noachide laws" have nothing to do with the Biblical patriarch Noah. They are, rather, part of an elaborate masquerading function and counterfeiting apparatus of rabbinic Judaism, wherein the "Noah" being referred

²⁸⁶⁴ *The Encyclopedia of Judaism*, abstracted from Sanh. 56A

²⁸⁶⁵ *Encyclopedia Americana*, heading 'Noachide Laws.'

²⁸⁶⁶ *The Encyclopedia of Judaism*, Sanh. 57A

²⁸⁶⁷ Rev 20:4

²⁸⁶⁸ *Jewish Encyclopedia*, pp.648,649

²⁸⁶⁹ Mat 12:34-36

to in "Noachide" as used by Judaism, is the Noah of the Midrash, a most problematic patron saint for Gentiles who are aspiring to anything approaching conditional tolerance or acceptance by the "sages" of Judaism.'²⁸⁷⁰

'There is no authentic debate [in Orthodox Judaism] about the Gentiles having no souls (though there may be a bogus one rigged for Gentile consumption, where and when necessary, as the situation requires). That Gentiles do not have souls is the fixed sacred law and dogma of Gedolei Yisroel. How the law that Gentiles have no souls is applied is certainly subject to discussion and contestation in the Mishneh Torah, Kesef Mishneh and a thousand lesser texts. The law itself is incontestable. When Judaics point to debates about how halacha is to be interpreted as evidence that the halacha itself is being debated, they are playing a cruel prank on their goyische dupes, which behind the scenes is the subject of much mirth.'²⁸⁷¹

In addition to patent Jewish presumption of superiority and didacticism, there are two distinct ramifications flowing from this. The first is that by importing another law²⁸⁷² the Jews took upon themselves the right to ameliorate and determine the Law of God when applied to non-Jews. In other words, they sought to act in mediation. Secondly, the 'seven laws of Noah' are not compatible with the '*royal law*,'²⁸⁷³ for they do not place the love of God above all, and then the love of fellow man, but rather seek merely the erection of a desiccated and truncated form of legalism and control in place of God's Law, resulting in the latter's grand purpose and meaning being completely obscured, to be supplanted by anarchy and persecution.

The apostate Law of Noah, as reported in many and diverse pagan sources, is said to have originated with Adam who handed down certain 'mysteries' to Seth, thence to Noah. This also appears in the beliefs of Freemasonry: 'After Noah's emergence from the Ark, he is said to have promulgated seven precepts for the government of the new race of men of whom he was to be the progenitor.'²⁸⁷⁴

Lubavitchers,²⁸⁷⁵ however, claim that God gave the seven Noachide Laws at mount Sinai²⁸⁷⁶ with the intention that the children of Israel should keep them and teach them to the Gentiles: 'The Seven Universal Laws were given on mount Sinai at the time when the Torah was given to the Jewish people....with the giving of the Torah, the God of Israel chose the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as His Chosen People, commanding them to fulfil the six hundred and thirteen precepts of the Torah. He also commanded the righteous of the other nations....to keep the seven Commandments of the Children of Noah and commanded Moses

²⁸⁷⁰ Hoffman, Michael, *Judaism Discovered*, p.125

²⁸⁷¹ Hoffman, Michael, *Judaism Discovered*, pp.150,151 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

²⁸⁷² a direct Kabbalistic derivative from the Chaldeans and the Egyptians, as pointed out even by the theosophist Mrs. Blavatsky.

²⁸⁷³ q.v. inf.

²⁸⁷⁴ cf. Mackey, Albert Gallatin, *The History of Freemasonry: It's Legendary Origins*

²⁸⁷⁵ those comprising Chabad-Lubavitch, a Hasidic movement in Orthodox Judaism, and the only major branch extant of a former family of Hasidic groups known collectively as the Chabad movement. It is the largest Jewish organization in the world today.

²⁸⁷⁶ actually given at Horeb.

and his people to teach them how.'²⁸⁷⁷ There is not a shred of Scriptural support for either of these wildly aberrant contentions.

Some measure of the exclusivism in all of this can be gleaned from a statement explaining that the 'children of Noah,' the Noachides, are the Gentiles: 'With respect to God's commandments, all of humanity is divided into two general classifications—the Children of Israel and the Children of Noah. The Children of Israel are the Jews, the descendants of the Patriarch Jacob. They are commanded to fulfil the six hundred and thirteen commandments of the Torah. The Children of Noah are the Gentiles, comprising the seventy nations of the world. They are commanded concerning the Seven Universal Laws, also known as the Seven Laws of the Children of Noah, or the Seven Noachide Laws.'²⁸⁷⁸

Rabbi Moshe Ben Maimon²⁸⁷⁹ took this exclusivism further, stating that: 'It is a mitzvah,²⁸⁸⁰ however, to eradicate Jewish traitors, minim,²⁸⁸¹ and apikorsim,²⁸⁸² and to cause them to descend to the pit of destruction, since they cause difficulty to the Jews and sway the people away from God, as did Jesus of Nazareth and his students, and Tzadok, Baithos, and their students. May the name of the wicked rot.'²⁸⁸³

Maimonides defines Minn and Apikores very clearly. Minn is one of five categories:

1. 'A person who denies the existence of God;
2. A person who says there are two of them;²⁸⁸⁴
3. A person who believes in God but claims He is of a corporal existence;
4. A person that claims that He is not the First and Master of all beings; and,
5. One who worships to a star or a similar being in order that that star be a mediator between this person and God.'²⁸⁸⁵

An Apikoros is one of three categories:

1. A person who denies the possibility of prophecy and says that God's inspiration cannot reach humans;
2. A person who denies the prophecy of Moses;²⁸⁸⁶ and,

²⁸⁷⁷ cf. *Chabad Lubavitch in Cyberspace*.

²⁸⁷⁸ cf. *Chabad-Lubavitch*.

²⁸⁷⁹ Maimonides, also known as the Rambam, 1138–1204AD.

²⁸⁸⁰ religious duty.

²⁸⁸¹ a derogatory term for Judæo-Christians, q.v. sup.

²⁸⁸² a derogatory term for secular Jews.

²⁸⁸³ Maimonides, *Mishnah Torah*, chpt. 10, English translation.

²⁸⁸⁴ Chaldean: min, meaning 'two.'

²⁸⁸⁵ Maimonides, *Laws of Repentance*.

²⁸⁸⁶ one who claims that Moses was not a true prophet of God.

3. A person who claims that God is not aware of Man's action.

Thus the term Minim and Apikorsim cover eight categories.

The implication deriving from a wholesale adoption of what is variously known as the 'Natural Law,' the 'Universal Law,' the 'Seven Laws of the Children of Noah,' or the 'Noachide Law,' is one of a general coalescing of a 'politically correct' view of the Law as it pertains to the bulk of mankind. The fundamental concern herein lies not only in the condensed and selective nature of the Noachide law, but in its narrow interpretation and implementation. Jesus Christ was falsely accused of blasphemy by the Sanhedrin. Similarly, Rambam not only excoriates 'Jesus of Nazareth and his students,' but calls down the death penalty upon their heads. It is not at all difficult to see how such a perversion of God's Law will be used once again against God's 'elect' during the Great Tribulation, where the true Judæo-Christian faith will be denounced as a blasphemous and idolatrous perversion, arising, presumably, over the question of the deity of Christ. Jesus spoke of this in Matthew, *'Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.'*²⁸⁸⁷ It is clear that any denial of deity of the incarnate Christ—something that is a surprisingly popular notion these days, and found in Judaism, Islam, Gnosticism, Arianism, Unitarianism, and Jehovah's Witnesses, amongst others—will bring down terrible punishment on the foolhardy perpetrators in the final assize.²⁸⁸⁸

Interestingly, such restriction of the Law in respect of Gentiles was not an all-pervading doctrine among the Jews during the early years of the primitive church: *'But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying, That it was needful to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses.'*²⁸⁸⁹ Here the Pharisees can be clearly seen to have brought their old, legalistic baggage with them. There is, however, no suggestion of any amelioration of the Law of Moses with respect to Gentile converts.²⁸⁹⁰ The response by James to the latter suggestion is recorded in Acts, *'For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every sabbath day.'*²⁸⁹¹ There is no amelioration here either: the Law of Moses remains extant, and applies to Jew and Gentile alike. There is no suggestion whatsoever of the existence and applicability of any Gentile-oriented Noachide laws, for they are not any part of God's Law, cannot apply to anyone, and most certainly cannot replace God's universal Law. The very suggestion that there are two vastly different sets of God's Law, operating in parallel, and applicable to fundamentally different

²⁸⁸⁷ Mat 10:32-33

²⁸⁸⁸ if done wittingly and knowingly, q.v. 'wilful sin' sup.

²⁸⁸⁹ Acts 15:5b

²⁸⁹⁰ are not men bound to keep everything in the Law?

II Chron 34:14b-15;21b, *'Hilkiah the priest found a book of the law of the Lord given by Moses. And Hilkiah answered and said to Shaphan the scribe, I have found the book of the law in the house of the Lord....for great is the wrath of the Lord that is poured out upon us, because our fathers have not kept the word of the Lord, to do after all that is written in this book.'*

²⁸⁹¹ Acts 15:21

classes of people, is nothing more than fatuous nonsense, and the work of the Devil. Moses, confirming, states: *'One law shall be to him that is homeborn, and unto the stranger that sojourneth among you.'*²⁸⁹²

Transgression of God's Law certainly brings dishonour to God: it also brings death, *'For the wages of sin is death.'*²⁸⁹³ But there is a Saviour who paid the penalty in the stead of sinning mankind, and who removed the curse under the Law, but only for those who believe in Him, and accept Him, and walk in His ways. 'To believe in Jesus means to take Jesus at His word, to accept His commandments as absolutely binding, to believe without question that what He says is true,'²⁸⁹⁴ and, amongst other things, that means keeping the Law.

The Jews claimed to have known the Law but were singularly silent in claims to have kept it. *'For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you, as it is written,'*²⁸⁹⁵ is also a reference back to Isaiah, *'and my name continually every day is blasphemed.'*²⁸⁹⁶ The manifestly deficient lifestyle of the Jews caused the Gentiles to speak lightly of the God of Israel. The word of God was being blasphemed among the Gentiles by dint of the inconsistencies and sins of the Jews. Much the same can be said today of all actors or *'hypocrites,'* who shamefully profess adherence to the word of God, and who are hearers, but not doers: to wit, the superficial and worthless. The Jews at the time of Christ rested in the Law, but they did not keep it, and, as a result, the Law imported punishment. The veiled language and circumlocution of the hypocrite, the actor, can result in nothing less, and the self-same error is manifest today, in abundance.

In Scripture, hypocrisy is linked to iniquity: *'Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.'*²⁸⁹⁷ Hypocrisy is a grave sin, and, when practised in religion by so-called 'leaders,' or 'apostles,' has the greatest condemnation pronounced by Christ Himself. It is wilful; done in the full knowledge of what it is, and what it imports. It cannot be practised without the practitioner ending in *'the lake of fire.'*

At Horeb, about three-and-a-half millennia ago, God took a nation unto Himself, gave them His Laws, and purposed that they should show all other nations His ways of truth, peace, and righteousness. All other nations, which the Hebrews called goyim, and the Greeks ethnoj, translated as *'Gentiles'* in the Bible, and which can be accurately translated *'other nations'* in context, had this singular difference: they did not have a covenant with God. To the children of Israel, the people of this covenant, God promised for their forefather's sake that they would be blessed by Him and used in His hand for the ultimate blessing of all the other nations of the earth, subject to their obedience of His Will and His Laws. The great tragedy, however, was that this chosen people appear to have failed miserably both in that nexus and in that mission.

²⁸⁹² Ex 12:49; the substitutionary law of man is well described by Donald Findlay, probably the leading criminal defence advocate in Scotland, as being: '[A]bout people, for people, decided by people,' but no mention of God.

²⁸⁹³ Rom 6:23

²⁸⁹⁴ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of John*, Vol.1, p.44

²⁸⁹⁵ Rom 2:24

²⁸⁹⁶ Isa 52:5c

²⁸⁹⁷ Mat 23:28

Jewish laws & customs

The traditional Jewish law and custom categories appear as follows:

1. Chukkim—religious laws for which no reason is given in the Torah;
2. Gezeirah—laws instituted by Rabbis to prevent people from unintentionally violating commandments;
3. Halakhah—meaning 'the path one walks.' This comprises the complete body of rules and practices that are binding on observant Jews, including biblical commandments, rabbinical commandments, and binding customs;
4. Minhag—a religious custom which has evolved and been maintained long enough to become a binding religious practice. It is also used to describe any customary religious practice;
5. Noachide—various commandments claimed to have been given by God to Noah after the Flood, binding on all mankind; and,
6. Takkanah—Rabbinically-instituted laws not derived from any biblical commandment.

Jews' understanding of codified Law versus Judæo-Christians'

That the Jews had a false estimate of the Law is patent,²⁸⁹⁸ and Our Saviour sought to remedy their deficient understanding: '*Ye have heard that it hath been said.*'²⁸⁹⁹ Jesus used the phrase to introduce and highlight the restrictions placed on the extent and working of the Law by the Jews, and their unwarranted extrapolations.

*'Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil, but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at law, and take away thy coat,²⁹⁰⁰ let him have thy cloak also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain. Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not away.'*²⁹⁰¹

²⁸⁹⁸ q.v. sup.

²⁸⁹⁹ Mat 5:21,27,31,33,38,43

²⁹⁰⁰ the '*coat*,' Greek: chiton, was the cheaper undergarment, the '*cloak*,' Greek: himation, was the more expensive outer garment worn over the tunic. The one mile or two refers to the law of the time when government agents—e.g., a Roman soldier—could compel a native of Palestine to carry his armour or material for one mile in order to provide relief from the burden to the soldier or official; the Jews' promotion of retribution to the extent of using man's law to secure a person's basic clothing was contrary to God's Law on sureties, Deut 24:6-13.

²⁹⁰¹ Mat 5:38-42

Like much else in the Bible, this is compressed, but contrary to the views of the Jews of the time, the clear principle is fundamental to Christian life: recompense evil to no man; provide for all to the limit of your ability, even when this means demurring to evil in the form of spurious law suits, and going beyond what even man's law demands. For God will protect and God will provide for His own.

'So, then, for the Christians, Jesus [advances] the old law of limited vengeance and introduces the new spirit of non-resentment and of non-retaliation. He says that if anyone smites us on the right cheek we must turn to him the other cheek also.²⁹⁰² There is far more here than meets the eye, far more than a mere matter of blows on the face.

Suppose a right-handed man is standing in front of another man, and suppose he wants to slap the other man on the right cheek, how must he do it? Unless he goes through the most complicated contortions, and unless he empties the blow of all force, he can hit the other man's cheek only in one way—with the back of his hand. Now according to Jewish Rabbinic law to hit a man with the back of the hand was twice as insulting as to hit him with the flat of the hand.²⁹⁰³

So, then, in this passage....Jesus is laying down three great rules:

1. The Christian will never resent or seek retaliation for any insult, however calculated and however deadly;
2. The Christian will never stand upon his legal rights or on any other rights he may believe himself to possess; and,
3. The Christian will never think of his right to do as he likes, but always of his duty to be of help. The question is: How do we measure up to that?'²⁹⁰⁴

The common use or, rather, abuse of the Law at that time can be seen in the Jews' application of the law of retribution to practically everything.²⁹⁰⁵ This meant, in effect, that there was almost universal retribution being sanctioned, the only restriction²⁹⁰⁶ being imposed by the Roman authorities, then under Pilate.

Christ was correcting this gross licence, this false estimate of the Law. He mentions two aspects of the Jews' extrapolation: minor violence and suing at law. The first, if reciprocated, would simply lead to further

²⁹⁰² Mat 5:39b

²⁹⁰³ the implication is clear: if smote on the right cheek, the Christian has to turn the other cheek, physically, so that the next blow, while still undefended, is also with the flat of the hand. Not to turn the other cheek, and still receive the second blow, would be to seek double insult. The Christian, therefore, must not seek out additional insult in his or her response to evil and unwarranted attack. It is, essentially, a form of pacific mitigation.

²⁹⁰⁴ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol. 1, pp.165,169 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

²⁹⁰⁵ Ex 21:24; Lev 24:20; Deut 19:21, which refer to injury to servants and pregnant servants, general principles, and false witnesses respectively.

²⁹⁰⁶ if that be the word.

violence, such is the disposition of human nature. Unfortunately, the Jewish teachers of the time, who were not the most compassionate men in the world, insisted upon it as necessary that such revenge should be taken, even by private persons themselves, and that there was no room left for remission, or, for that matter, acceptance of satisfaction.²⁹⁰⁷

'The old dispensation under the Law, given in the Old Testament, was being redacted and augmented by the Jews on a near wholesale basis.'²⁹⁰⁸ This Christ sought to redress, for the Jews had changed the law of recompense—deliberately set to prescribe and limit vengeance—into an all-embracing, bloodthirsty law of savagery, retaliation, and revenge. The Jews' form of lex talionis, the law of 'tit for tat,' issued as little better than the law of the jungle.

The two instances given as examples are minor, relatively speaking, for the Law of God restricts the operation of retribution²⁹⁰⁹ to the following:

1. Murder;²⁹¹⁰
2. Maiming;
3. Punishment of false witnesses;
4. Hurt to an innocent, pregnant woman, beyond the loss of the unborn child; and,
5. Hurt to a slave, with specified examples.

²⁹⁰⁷ satisfaction in the form of blood money is not permitted under the Law: Num 35;31,32, '*Moreover, ye shall take no satisfaction for the life of a murderer, who is guilty of death: but he shall surely be put to death. And ye shall take no satisfaction for him that is fled to the city of his refuge, that he should come again to dwell in the land, until the death of the priest.*'

²⁹⁰⁸ Peake, A. S., *The Century Bible: Jeremiah II, Lamentations*, [a commentary] p.100 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'The ancient doctrine of solidarity had affirmed the mutual responsibility of the members of the group which formed its social unit. The individual had but little independent significance. If a man killed one who belonged to another clan, the individual aspect of the case was unimportant in comparison with the collective. The vital fact was that the one clan had shed the blood of another clan, and the vengeance was directed not so much at the actual offender as his clan as a whole. [The potential in this system for blood feuds to arise and perpetuate is readily apparent]. If a man broke the law or violated some taboo, then it was considered quite just that his family should suffer with him in expiation of his transgression....With the development of the social and political organisation and the break-up of the older clan system, the cruel injustice of such treatment was more and more recognised....The Deuteronomic Code explicitly enjoined that the fathers should not be put to death for the children or the children for the fathers, but every man for his own sins (Deut 24:16).'

²⁹⁰⁹ Lev 24:17-22; esp. v.20a, '*breach for breach*' which is rendered '*fracture for fracture*' in the Tanakh and in other translations, such as Moffatt's; no one in the early Christian church, or outside it, had a sanction to take life, for the Roman authorities in the regions of the empire would not permit it. Despite this, the Law of retribution in the Bible stands.

²⁹¹⁰ as opposed to non-wilful killing.

The manner it is set forth in the New Testament, and the words Christ used, must leave the law of retribution intact, a priori. But even in the Old Testament there is this: *'To me belongeth vengeance and recompense,'*²⁹¹¹ a reference to God's punishment of the enemies of Israel. This is reflected in the New Testament in, *'For we know him that hath saith, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord,'*²⁹¹² and, *'Dearly beloved, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.'*²⁹¹³ *'Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.'*²⁹¹⁴ The righteousness of the Christian is evident not only to those within the church, but also to those without: to all men, in other words.

*'But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil.'*²⁹¹⁵ It is futile to resist all and every evil act that is done to the Judæo-Christian, for there are so many. There are only twenty-four hours in a day, and there is simply insufficient time to attend to them all. If an attempt were ever made, the Christian's life would become dedicated to righting evil. Given the magnitude of the task, that can only be accomplished by our Lord. It is humanly impossible, and that is before any consideration of the vagaries inherent in using man-devised legal systems. There is simply so much evil that it is beyond human capacity to remedy.

*'Moreover ye shall take no satisfaction for the life of a murderer, which is guilty of death: but he shall surely be put to death. And ye shall take no satisfaction for him that is fled to the city of his refuge, that he should come again to dwell in the land, until the death of the priest. So ye shall not pollute the land wherein ye are: for blood it defileth the land: and the land cannot be cleansed of the blood that is shed therein, but by the blood of him that shed it.'*²⁹¹⁶ There is no remission or satisfaction available under the Law for murder.²⁹¹⁷ In the second case, that of manslaughter, the due process would out, and the perpetrator would not be allowed back

²⁹¹¹ Deut 32:35a

²⁹¹² Heb 10:30c; God says: *'Vengeance is mine'* to the Israelites in the Old Testament, in terms of national deliverance. He also says: *'Vengeance is mine'* in the New Testament to the church, collectively and individually. God will kill the guilty. He always reserves the right to exact punishment directly. The maxim, even under man's law, is qui facit per alium, facit per se, 'he who does a thing through another does it himself.' By way of example, in the Old Testament, Korah fell through the ground and was killed, rather than being stoned. Another, from the New Testament, would be Ananias and Sapphira. Although God often acts through others—sometimes wicked people—to exact punishment, He always reserves the right to act in the first person.

²⁹¹³ Rom 18:19

²⁹¹⁴ Rom 12:17

²⁹¹⁵ Mat 5:39a

²⁹¹⁶ Num 35:31-33

²⁹¹⁷ in medieval Anglo-Saxon society, a rough and unconnected parallel existed in the system of wergild, a fine or monetary compensation in cases of manslaughter, maiming, and other offenses against the person, paid by the kindred of the offender to the kindred of the injured person, to avoid a blood feud. This arrangement was also evident in Teutonic law.

In cases of maiming—tooth, eye, fracture, and the like—there is Judæo-Christian healing available rather than recompense, although partial recompense could still be available. While there is no satisfaction available under the Law for murder, for it is proscribed, by implication and by lack of proscription, the position is vested with a potential derogation, or partial derogation, under the Law, but not a complete abrogation. Satisfaction, or partial satisfaction, in such circumstances, would be available, in circumstances where God's healing through His power, the Holy Spirit, had occurred, bringing the victim back to life.

into the land, out of the city of refuge,²⁹¹⁸ until the death of the chief priest,²⁹¹⁹ and then satisfaction could be extracted. Paul's summation: '*and such were some of you*,'²⁹²⁰ does not mention murderers in his listing.²⁹²¹ It is implicit that while there was 'godly satisfaction,' in other words, remission,²⁹²² it was not available to murderers.

*'The revenger of blood himself shall slay the murderer: when he meeteth him, he shall slay him.'*²⁹²³ In the world of the New Testament, the Roman world, 'the right of the sword'²⁹²⁴ had been removed from the Jews, so what was to happen? The due authorities, the elders of the community acting in conformity with God's Law, did not have the right to condemn anyone to death under the Roman system, so the 'people,' the witnesses and others, would not be able to stone or otherwise kill someone found guilty and condemned to the death penalty,²⁹²⁵ since the controlling authority of the time, in matters of capital punishment etc., was Roman.

There was even a divergence in what constituted murder. For example, Moses killed the Egyptian who killed the Israelite slave. The Shocken Bible has the verse thus: '*He [Moses] turned this way and that, and seeing that there was no man (there), he struck down the Egyptian and buried him in the sand.*'²⁹²⁶ Was it murder? Almost! It was, to an extent, premeditated, for Moses looked around and then killed the Egyptian; it was not accidental. But the extent of premeditation was extremely limited, for it was not an act coldly planned in advance. It was a hot reaction to a set of circumstances that presented. When Pharaoh got to hear of it, and sought to kill Moses, he fled to Midian,²⁹²⁷ where he stayed for forty years, forty being the Biblical period of probation. Thus Moses' deed can be seen almost as that of a human avenger of blood, under the Law, but not quite; hence the probation period, which, again, is broadly analogous to the provisions of the Law for cities of refuge.^{2928 2929}

²⁹¹⁸ Hebron, Shechem, Bezer, Kedesh, Ramoth, Golan.

²⁹¹⁹ Josh 20:7-9

²⁹²⁰ I Cor 6:11a

²⁹²¹ I Cor 6:9b,10

²⁹²² available, for instance, to homosexuals; purely as an hypothetical exercise, for it cannot maintain before Christ returns, what would be the implications for a Judæo-Christian living in a wholly Judæo-Christian society compared to a secular one?

1. in the former, habitual, established homosexuals would be put to death in accordance with the Law, but given the completely non-violent nature of a Judæo-Christian society, God would do the killing (cp. Sapphira and Ananias, Acts 5:1f.).

2. in the latter, when living in a modern, secular society, unrepentant or recidivist homosexuals would be cast out of the body of the church.

²⁹²³ Num 35:19

²⁹²⁴ Latin: *ius gladii*.

²⁹²⁵ stoning for adultery and women breaking marriage through adultery; the sword for murder.

²⁹²⁶ Ex 2:12

²⁹²⁷ Ex 2:13-15

²⁹²⁸ to obfuscate, some point out that the Hebrew can also mean '*beat without killing*' but this depends on the context. Had the Egyptian only beaten the Israelite slave, however, most certainly Moses was guilty of murder, and the penalty under the Law would have been exacted: death of the perpetrator.

²⁹²⁹ cities of refuge: there were, in Israel, six cities of refuge (cf. Josh 20:1-9). They were so chosen and sited that every part of the country would have its city. So there were three cities on the west of the Jordan: Hebron in the Judæan mountains, Shechem in mount Ephraim, and Kedesh in the hill country of Naphtali. And there were three cities on the

But to the Roman mind, it would be murder, most likely. What was to happen then? Paul supplies the answer in Romans, *'Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.'*²⁹³⁰ *for rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of same: For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid: for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. For this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.'*²⁹³¹ But should the power be evil, in thrall of wickedness, then the Judæo-Christian must resist, for one must obey God rather than man.²⁹³²

If the ruling powers do not impose the biblically correct sanction on, say, a murderer—in other words, if they impose a lesser sanction, or utilise a different and, by implication, inferior standard of proof—then what should be done? The Judæo-Christian is unable to infract man's inferior law, for to do so would bring down on his own head the sanction of the guilt of murder under that law. So nothing is done beyond the due process of man's law, but the Judæo-Christian cannot become part of the statutory judicial or enforcement process. God will repay in His own good time. But Paul introduces conscience,²⁹³³ for the Judæo-Christian always lives in a tension between two competing claims of obedience: to the state and to God. Since the state is much inferior, in an instance of conflict between the two, the Judæo-Christian must, for conscience' sake, obey God, not man. For lesser crimes against the person, the Judæo-Christian is to suffer, leaving the resolution to God, in His way. In cases of evil or recidivism impacting others and exposed by Judæo-Christians under the general obligation to do so,²⁹³⁴ others may take the matter to the magistrates, for the social good, or the good of society.

east side of the Jordan: Bezer in the plain belonging to Reuben, Ramoth in Gilead in the territory of Gad, and Golan in Bashan in the territory of Manasseh.

²⁹³⁰ better, 'judgment.'

²⁹³¹ Rom 13:1-7; also cf. I Peter 2:13-15 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets), *'Submit yourselves to every ordinance [Greek: ktisis, 'institution,' 'ordinance,' 'anything created'] of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well. For so is the will of God, that with welldoing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men.'*

²⁹³² Acts 4:19,5:29

²⁹³³ Rom 13:5

²⁹³⁴ Eph 5:11 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets), *'Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove [Greek: elegcho, 'expose,' 'bring to light'] them.'*

Six corrections

In Matthew, Christ gave six instances of the Law,²⁹³⁵ where either the Jews were remiss or abusive in their application of it, or they went beyond it, adding their own vain ordinances and traditions. In three of them—murder, adultery, and oath-taking—He introduces the subject with the words: *'Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time,'* and, in the others—divorce, retribution, and loving of enemies—with the words: *'It hath been said.'* The difference in the prefatory wording is significant, for in the former He is correcting the Jews' false estimate and understanding of the Law, whereas in the latter He is exposing the capricious additions and traditions which they had utilised in extrapolating and encumbering the Law. It follows, therefore, that in the matter of retribution, the Jews had so projected the Law as to encompass almost every slight, making almost anything capable of retaliation. That was wrong, clearly, for the Law deals with murder and maiming only; not with lesser matters. It follows that Christ was not abolishing the Law; He could not do so, for He came *'not to destroy the law, but to fulfil it.'*²⁹³⁶ He was not *'the end of the law,'*²⁹³⁷ as in its foreclosure, but in its objective, for the Law leads he who keeps it inerrantly to Christ, the same who was correcting the aberrant Jewish practices of the time concerning the Law.

*'Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shall perform unto the Lord thine oaths: But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne: Nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King. Neither shall thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black. But let your communication be Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.'*²⁹³⁸ Christ admonished and commanded the multitudes of people attending what is termed 'the sermon on the mount' not to swear at all.²⁹³⁹ Therefore the taxonomy is:

²⁹³⁵ Mat 5:21-48

²⁹³⁶ Mat 5:17b

²⁹³⁷ Rom 10:4a

²⁹³⁸ Mat 5:33-37

²⁹³⁹ Mat 5:34a; Mat 26:63-64: the High Priest adjured Christ to swear an oath before God and declaring that He was *'the Christ, the Son of God.'* He could have done so, for He was without sin, but He did not, as v.64 shows. He merely answered *"Thou hast said...."* patently, that is not an oath. What's more, He confirms that He was spoken of in such terms by the chief priest himself!

Paul's words in I Cor 1:23, *'Moreover, I call God for a record unto my soul, that to spare you I came not as yet into Corinth.'* That is neither an oath to God nor man.

Paul in Gal 1:20, *'Now the things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not.'* In v.11 he says, *'But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel that is preached is not after men.'* He is saying that that gospel is pure, and not the aberrant product of sinful man. *'Before God,'* essentially, is under God's eye. God would be taking careful note, monitoring what was being preached. Paul's statement is not an oath before God. There is no: *'I swear by Almighty God that the gospel I give to you is the full and truthful gospel.'* He is calling God as a witness that his teaching is true, but he is not swearing an oath by God.

God swearing by Himself in Heb 6:13-18 is irrelevant to the question of man swearing oaths by God. Unlike sinning and wayward man, God neither sins nor errs.

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1. Those of old time, the Israelites, who would only swear an oath to God and would endeavour to keep it;
 2. Those of the then present Jews who had relaxed that to the position where any oath, other than one mentioning the name of God, was meaningless, for it would not be kept if it no longer suited the oathmaker to do so. Indeed, the Jews of the time were widely known for their meaningless and worthless oaths; and,
 3. Christ's prohibition of all oaths.

But why prohibit all? The answer is simply this: no matter how serious and diligent an oathmaker before God may be, he may be unable to purify that oath before God in terms of what he had undertaken to do or refrain from doing, either through weakness, or sin, or aberration, or omission; it might even be by wilful intent. So great is the majesty of God that any of these would be an affront to Him, and, as a result, given the chronic sinfulness of human nature, the correct form is to refrain from all oaths.

"But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment." The verb used [for 'angry'] is orgizesthai. In Greek there are two words for anger. There is thumos, which was described as being like the flame which comes from dried straw. It is the anger which quickly blazes up and which just as quickly dies down. It is an anger which rises speedily and which just as speedily passes. There is orge, which was described as anger become inveterate. It is the long-lived anger; it is the anger of the man who nurses his wrath to keep it warm; it is the anger over which a person broods, and which he will not allow to die. That anger is liable to the judgement court.²⁹⁴⁰

Barclay then claims that the phrase '*without a cause*' is a scribal or copyist's addition, 'not found in any of the great manuscripts.' But that is a gross overstatement. The 'great manuscripts,' to which he refers, are, in fact, almost exclusively the Alexandrian or Egyptian texts, many of which are known to have been corrupted or reproduced as palimpsests.²⁹⁴¹ They contain numerous omissions, additions, and redactions. The majority textual record, and the Antioch or Received Text, retains the phrase.

The omission or otherwise of '*without a cause*' makes a considerable difference to the meaning. As Barclay points out, its omission means that one is left with a proscription on all anger, regardless of taxonomy,

Paul again in Rom 1:9, '*for God is my witness*' simply means that his prayers for the Christians in Rome were made very often. He mentioned them in his daily prayers: '*that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers.*' He is simply saying that as God received his prayers, he could witness to their existence and content concerning those Christians. There is no oath before God here. Neither is there one before man.

Paul in Phil 1:8, '*for God is my record*'; v.4 shows the same thing regarding the Philippians: his mentioning them in his prayers. Again, he is simply saying that as God received his prayers, he could witness to their existence and content concerning those Christians. There is no oath before God here. Neither is there one before man.

I Thes 2:5c, '*God is witness.*' Paul is simply saying that God could attest that what he was saying was true concerning there being no use of flattering words, etc., in his dealings with them.

²⁹⁴⁰ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol. 1, p.138 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

²⁹⁴¹ a manuscript page (either from a scroll or a book) from which the text has been either scraped or washed off so that the page can be reused for another document.

but as to its retention, he is silent. At first pass, in this regard, retaining the phrase appears to be worthless. After all, hasn't everything a cause? Would that then mean that all anger is acceptable? But that cannot be true: the whole thrust of the verse, a verse which deals with a certain sin and its punishment, is to the contrary. If all anger were acceptable, there would be no punishment. So what does it mean?

The key lies in the Greek word here used for anger.²⁹⁴² It is long-held anger that is proscribed unless it has, by implication, a valid cause. Does God ever get angry? Yes! He is angry with those who have given their lives and being over to Satan, for instance. It is not fleeting anger, by any means, and He has just cause or reason for that anger. It is brooding anger that is proscribed, and anger without just cause. The other form of anger, from the Greek thumos, isn't mentioned. That is quickly flaring and dying anger which disappears almost immediately. It is by no means as destructive as the former. It doesn't eat into a person. That said, and by implication, it contains restrictions, the same restrictions, mutandis mutatis, as before. It isn't anger per se that is proscribed, but anger that does not spring from righteousness. Man-made anger is always corrosive, vindictive, destructive; Divine anger is corrective and constructive, applied to a Godly end. There lies the crucial difference!

Leaven

Jewish outrage towards the gospel, allied to the scheming and politicking of the local Roman governor, eventually led to the death of the Messiah through crucifixion, albeit with the prior concurrence of God. Yet even though such traumatic events transpired, with the Jews convinced that this gospel at once threatened their society, culture, and religion, the disciples and followers of Christ endeavoured resolutely to demonstrate to the world that it did not concern the overthrow of the then civil governments, and that it did not dissolve the Old Covenant between God and ancient Israel. But the gospel of the kingdom, and salvation, was new, involving, as it did, spiritual issues between man and the great God-being whom He, the Messiah, revealed as the Father.

But even as His disciples spread their message of hope, counterfeit disciples began instructing their followers that the main point of the gospel message was that mankind was to obey the Laws of the Old Israelite Covenant with God. These false disciples claimed that the good news or gospel of the kingdom of God and salvation and the gift of the conferring of the Holy Spirit were nothing more than a restatement of the Old Covenant, except that now Christians had access to spiritual powers to enable them to better keep the Old Covenant. The 'leaven' was already at work.

Christ's true apostles and disciples fought back against this false estimate of the gospel with New Testament writings such as Romans, Galatians, and Hebrews. Despite this, and a little over a century after the death and resurrection of Christ, the subject of the Old Covenant and its Laws and its relationship with the gos-

²⁹⁴² Greek: orgizesthai, from orge.

pel of the kingdom of God and the New Covenant,²⁹⁴³ had degenerated into a mass of confusion. Sadly, this has continued right down to the present day, where apparent Christian belief spans an incredible spectrum from, at the one extreme, the belief that the Old Covenant and the Law were 'nailed to the cross,' with Christians no longer needing to worry about sin, to the other extreme, with the belief that in addition to the Old Covenant Laws still being in effect, or substantially so, the Ten Commandments²⁹⁴⁴ not only identify sin, but that they describe the complete love and holiness of God. Adherents of this latter belief hold that man must obey every written command of God, or virtually every one—depending on the flavour—which they say will cause mankind to become holy, like God. Some claim that obedience to Old Covenant Law in holy days, tithing and dietary issues, for example, is required to obtain salvation.

Law & righteousness

In such a sea of ignorance and conflict, wherein lies the truth? Are Judæo-Christians free to sin because Christ abolished the Law, and took sin upon His own head? Or was the gospel just a confirmation of the Old Covenant Law? Or is there some other meaning that has been missed in the entire mêlée? And where was man ever instructed in Holy Scripture to be content merely to pander to the multi-flavours of modern theological stupidity and error?

The following is not a line-by-line commentary on the Law, for that would warrant a book in its own right; rather it deals with the general taxonomy, and, specifically, what is binding on the Judæo-Christian today, and what is not.

Certainly, Law is a central theme of the message brought by Jesus Christ, but for the greater part of two millennia, false teachers and false leaders have been hard at work disguising, confusing, and counterfeiting the

²⁹⁴³ God's new covenant, cf. Jer 31:31-33, intrinsically involves the keeping of God's Law. The covenant is the proclamation of God's gracious intentions towards Israel, and His covenant-love (Hebrew: hesedh) is the loyalty with which He abides by His declared purpose.

²⁹⁴⁴ Ex 20:1-17; Barclay, William, *The Plain Man's Guide to Ethics*, pp.12,13 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'[The ten commandments] code falls quite clearly into two sections. The first section deals with God, and the second deals with man. The lonely supremacy of God is laid down. The impossibility of expressing God in any material form is stated. The reckless use of the name of God in promises and pledges is forbidden. The rights of God's day are safeguarded. The code then moves on to the human side. Father and mother are to be honoured and thus there is a rampart round the home. Human life is sacred. Sexual purity and fidelity are demanded. The rights of human property are conserved. False and slanderous speaking about others is condemned. The desire for what is not ours and which is not for us is branded as wrong.

It may be said that this code inculcates two basic things—it demands reverence for God and respect for man....

The second thing to note about the Ten Commandments is that they are a series of principles, and not a body of detailed rules and regulations. They do not attempt to give a man a series of rules ready-made to apply to any situation. What they do give is a certain attitude to God and to his fellowmen.'

It is interesting that in writing a book on ethics, Barclay discusses the Ten Commandments. The Law is detailed, but it is not expressed wholly in the Ten Commandments. The Torah extends to five books: the Pentateuch. It is that which expresses and states the Law.

Messiah's message about the Law.²⁹⁴⁵ Indeed, the accumulated effect of all of their endeavours has been so overwhelming that for the average person, lacking the guidance of the Holy Spirit, it is impossible to arrive at what the Bible actually has to say on this extremely important subject.

It is opportune, perhaps, to begin the quest for the truth of the matter in Genesis. While the Ten Commandments are recited in Exodus, the twenty-fifth chapter of Genesis records that Abraham obeyed God. Also, Abraham tithed to Christ, in the form of Melchisedec.²⁹⁴⁶ Even earlier, Adam sinned, and the existence of the Law then is confirmed, albeit that it had not been formally enunciated and codified.²⁹⁴⁷ This is confirmed by Paul: *'Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: (For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come. But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many. And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification. For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ).'*²⁹⁴⁸ Even before the Law of Moses was given, physical death attested to the presence of sin in Adam and his posterity, and to the Law. So universal was this sin that its deadly effects were seen over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's sin. While Adam sinned by eating of the forbidden fruit, other sins were committed by his posterity, including murder, by Cain, therefore the Law was already in place and operable,²⁹⁴⁹ although yet to be codified and formally announced to the children of Israel.²⁹⁵⁰ Moreover, in the matter of the existence of the Law prior to the giving off of the Ten Commandments, it is evident that the Sabbath was instituted at the time of the creation when God rested on the seventh-day, and hallowed it.²⁹⁵¹

Adam is contrasted with Christ²⁹⁵² and said to be a *'figure'*²⁹⁵³ or *'type'* of Him that was to come. The only Old Testament character to be called explicitly a type of Christ is Adam,²⁹⁵⁴ for in the writings of Paul the

²⁹⁴⁵ e.g., the Ten Commandments are found reiterated throughout the New Testament: #1. Mat 4:10; Rev 19:10. #2. Acts 17:29; I John 5:21. #3. I Tim 6:1. #4. Mark 2:27,28; Heb 4:4. #5. Mat 19:19; Eph 6:1-3. #6. Rom 13:9; James 2:11. #7. Mat 19:18; #8. Rom 13:9; Eph 4:20. #9. Rom 13:9. #10. Rom 7:7,13:9. There is no injunction to remove the Law.

²⁹⁴⁶ q.v. sup.

²⁹⁴⁷ North, Gary, *Boundaries and Dominion—An Economic Commentary on Leviticus*, Vol. 1, p.61, footnote: 'Were it not for the sacrifice of Jesus Christ in history, Adam would have been executed on the day he sinned.'

²⁹⁴⁸ Rom 5:12-17

²⁹⁴⁹ penalties for sin were ameliorated, especially in the case of Cain; cp. Rom 5:13,14

²⁹⁵⁰ Rom 5:13; Greek: *de*, 'but' can also mean 'moreover,' removing the sense of introduced objection into the parenthesis created immediately previously; better translation: *'(For until the law sin was in the world: moreover sin is not imputed when there is no law)'*; viz., a reference to the codified Law handed down at Horeb.

²⁹⁵¹ Gen 1:3-2:3

²⁹⁵² Rom 5:12,17

contrast between the first Adam and the Last Adam begins to be examined. The first Adam brought death on all and also the 'curse of the ground' on himself and his immediate posterity,²⁹⁵⁵ *'And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.'*²⁹⁵⁶ The last Adam, Christ, redeemed mankind from death, and will cast death and hell²⁹⁵⁷ into the lake of fire²⁹⁵⁸ and replace the earth after His Millennial reign.²⁹⁵⁹

Note that even the promise of the seed and material blessings to Abraham was not of the Law, but of righteousness, imputed from faith: *'Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin. Cometh this blessedness upon the circumcision only, or upon the uncircumcision also? for we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness. How was it then reckoned? when he was in circumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision. And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed to them also: And the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had yet being uncircumcised. For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect: Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression. Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all,'*²⁹⁶⁰ and also, *'And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God.'*²⁹⁶¹

Control through mediation

The fundamental difficulty with the legalistic approach, and this is common to all its variants, is that a myopic viewing of the Law above all else results in the exclusion from the purview of the message of the gos-

²⁹⁵³ Greek: typos, 'type.'

²⁹⁵⁴ although Acts 3:22-26 speaks in a somewhat similar way of Moses.

²⁹⁵⁵ this curse was later removed, cf. Gen 8:31b.

²⁹⁵⁶ Gen 3:17-19

²⁹⁵⁷ viz., the grave.

²⁹⁵⁸ Rev 20:14

²⁹⁵⁹ Rev 21:1

²⁹⁶⁰ Rom 4:8-16

²⁹⁶¹ James 2:23

pel: in other words, the strictures of the Law are elevated above grace, and, in so doing, the modus of salvation becomes first obscured and then lost. But then, why would such an elevation commend itself to man? Simply this: man-made accretions to the Law introduced a system of human mediation between man and God, whereas the change in the Law²⁹⁶² for those under the Judæo-Christian dispensation, through conferring of the Holy Spirit, introduced Christ as the sole Mediator. But many strict legalists, hankering after the former control system, seek to set themselves up as leaders and authorities over God's 'elect,' in direct contravention of the correct form and organisation of the true church, and the will of God. Well might it be asked, why, when the Bread of Life is now freely available, would mankind adamantly choose to be merdivorous? Sadly, the answer lies in human nature.

Even compliance in full with the Law, something not achieved by any save Christ, does not merit much, as can be seen from Luke: *'But which of you, having a servant plowing or feeding the cattle, will say unto him by and by, when he is come from the field, Go and sit down at meat? And will not rather say unto him, Make ready wherewith I may sup, and gird thyself, and serve me, till I have eaten and drunken; and afterward thou shalt eat and drink? Doth he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I trow not. So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do.'*²⁹⁶³ This is to be compared with Christ's words in the parable of the talents,²⁹⁶⁴ addressed to the faithful servants, for that, in turn, speaks of grace.

Covenant = contract

The Old Covenant was set up to achieve certain specific objectives, but even these have been subject to man's manipulation, mutation, and conjecture. The resulting range of opinion is simply staggering. As an illustration, some hold the Ten Commandments to be one covenant, and Old Covenant statutes and judgements another. Others hold that the Sabbath is part of the Old Covenant, while others dispute this. Still others point to, *'Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; Put your burnt offerings unto your sacrifices and eat flesh. For I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices,'*²⁹⁶⁵ and claim that the sacrifices and offerings were added outside the Old Covenant, that they prefigure or are a type of the blood sacrifice of Christ, and, given that this actual sacrifice has been made, that they are now done away with, while the Ten Commandments, statutes, and judgements still remain in effect. And at the other extreme, anti-legalists claim that the Old Covenant and the Law are redundant, given the grace of salvation. Even some go so far as to claim that the Old Testament

²⁹⁶² Heb 7:11-22

²⁹⁶³ Luke 17:7-10 (sublinear emphasis added)

²⁹⁶⁴ Mat 25:14-30

²⁹⁶⁵ Jer 7:21,22

should not even be included in the 'Christian Bible!' But God is not the author of confusion: that is Satan. And it is Satan's influence over man that has given rise to such a variety of confused and competing doctrines and speculations, and that is perfectly clear from Scripture.²⁹⁶⁶

There are various covenants contained in the Old Testament. Four are unconditional or unilateral, and which God has made with the following:

1. Noah: concerning the earth, by virtue of which man enjoys seed-time and harvest and cold and heat, and summer and winter and day and night, and immunity from world-destroying flood waters;²⁹⁶⁷
2. Abraham: concerning the land, and nations, and other matters discussed herein;²⁹⁶⁸ and then reconfirmed;²⁹⁶⁹
3. Aaron: concerning the priesthood,²⁹⁷⁰ and,
4. David: concerning the throne, and lineage, and other matters.²⁹⁷¹

Of these, of particular interest here is the Abrahamic covenant: *'And, behold, the word of the Lord came unto him,²⁹⁷² saying, This shall not be thine heir;²⁹⁷³ but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir. And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto them, So shall thy seed be. And he believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness, And he said unto him, I am the Lord that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it. And he said, Lord God, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it? And he said unto him, Take me an heifer of three years old, and a she goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtle dove, and a young pigeon. And he took unto him all these, and divided them in the midst, and laid each piece one against another, but the birds divided he not. And when the fowls came down upon the carcasses, Abram drove them away. And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram, and lo, an horror of great darkness fell upon. And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; And also that*

²⁹⁶⁶ here there is need of the introduction of a temporary convention: in the main, or at least where possible, New Testament texts are quoted below, given that certain deluded beliefs permit of no regard for Old Testament ones.

²⁹⁶⁷ Gen 9:8-17

²⁹⁶⁸ Gen 15:8-21; but with Abram (Abraham) as a beneficiary, q.v. inf., but extended, unilaterally, in the confirmation of the covenant, q.v. Gen 17:1-10,13b,21,22, a unilateral extension and undertaking by the Word to Abraham, in the form of '*an everlasting covenant*,' introducing, inter alia, the obligation of the rite of circumcision, q.v. inf.

²⁹⁶⁹ Gen 17:1-10,13b,21,22

²⁹⁷⁰ Num 18:19c; linked to the covenant with Levi, Mal 2:4b, 8c, referring to the election of that tribe to be ministers of the sanctuary; also probably based on Deut 33:8-10 which, in turn, refers back to the events at Horeb described in Ex 32:26-29.

²⁹⁷¹ II Sam 7:4-29,13:5; Psalm 89

²⁹⁷² Abram.

²⁹⁷³ Ishmael.

nation, whom they shall serve will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance. And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age. But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full. And it came to pass that, when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces. In the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, *Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt²⁹⁷⁴ unto the great river, the river Euphrates.*²⁹⁷⁵ While the covenant was with Abram in terms of benefit, the covenant pact was between those passing through the avenue between the halved carcasses: the 'smoking furnace' and the 'burning lamp.' All the while this was happening, Abram was in 'a deep sleep.'²⁹⁷⁶ Paul identifies the covenanters: *'Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ. And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect.'*²⁹⁷⁷ The K.J.V. here has a translation wanting: the underscored phrase should read, *'that was confirmed before of God to Christ.'*²⁹⁷⁸ The 'smoking furnace' was God the Father, and the 'burning lamp' was the Word, who later was to become incarnate as our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. These were the contracting parties. The Targum of Onkelos bolsters the extension of this in terms of the covenanted benefit: *'He²⁹⁷⁹ made a covenant between Abraham and His Word.'*²⁹⁸⁰ Paul's distinction of the singular 'seed' in Christ was both well founded, and, contractually, completely accurate. The Abrahamic covenant could have had no higher basis, for it is a covenant between the two Divine Beings called Jehovah, between God the Father and God the Word / Jesus Christ. It has a beneficiary: *'Abraham and his seed,'* plural, as *'numerous as the stars of heaven.'* In this sense, in the sense of benefit, the covenant was unilateral; Abram had nothing to do with it in the contractual sense (he was asleep), and Abram had to do nothing to purify it, for it was already perfected. There were no conditions or obligations imposed upon him. Even the faith of Abram was counted unto him as righteousness.²⁹⁸¹ In other words, Abram's righteousness was not earned by him by his merit; it was gifted.

The covenant was confirmed to Abram (Abraham) fifteen years later, as stated by Paul, *'the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ,'*²⁹⁸² where the Greek word translated *'confirmed before'*²⁹⁸³ means

²⁹⁷⁴ the 'river of Egypt' (cf. Num 34:5; Josh 15:4; I Kings 8:64), nachal mitzrayim, is often taken to be a reference not to the Nile but to the Wadi el Arish, although some connect it with another wadi nearby. That said, the early Targums (Jerusalem, Jonathan, Nefetiti, and the fragment Targums) all identify the river as the Nile, and this is the safest interpretation since it allows the land of Goshen to be included, and is likely a reference to the old easternmost river branch in the Nile Delta, the Pelusiac.

²⁹⁷⁵ Gen 15:4-18 (sublinear emphasis added); YHWH is the covenant name of the dyad, God the Father, God the Word.
²⁹⁷⁶ in Jewish tradition, receiving a vivid foresight of his heirs' history; cp. John 8:56.

²⁹⁷⁷ Gal 3:16,17 (sublinear emphasis added)

²⁹⁷⁸ Greek: eis, 'to' or 'into' (sublinear emphasis added)

²⁹⁷⁹ God the Father.

²⁹⁸⁰ Gen 17:2, Targum of Onkelos.

²⁹⁸¹ Gen 15:6

²⁹⁸² Gal 3:17a

'ratified previously.' The confirmation—this time with an obligation on Abraham and his seed—is recorded in Genesis: *'And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the Lord appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect. And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly. And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with him, saying, As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations. Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee. And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee. And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God. And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore thou, and thy seed after thee in their generations. This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee; Every man child among you shall be circumcised....and my covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenantBut my covenant will I establish with Isaac [rather than with Ishmael], which Sarah shall bear unto thee at this set time in the next year. And he left off talking with him, and God went up from Abraham.'*²⁹⁸⁴ This confirmation laid on Abraham's progeny the obligation of circumcision, as an hereditary, outward sign or marker of the covenant, and of obedience to God's Law. Abraham was enjoined to walk uprightly before God, which he did, but this still left the covenant, fifteen years previously, unilateral in its issuance. At the point of the original covenant pact, between the Father and the Word, the benefit was in God's gift, with Abraham and his seed the named beneficiaries. The confirmation, fifteen years later, imposed the rite of circumcision as an outward sign or marker of the covenant, a reminder of the need of obedience under the Law, with the benefits crystallizing through the seed of Isaac, his natural-born son, and not Ishmael, his son by his wife's handmaid.

In addition to this unconditional initial covenant, and of equal interest here, was a conditional covenant, often referred to as the Old Covenant. Now this Old Covenant was an agreement, a formal contract, a solemn covenant, entered into between two parties: God, and the congregation of Israel. It included laws and statutes, sacrifices and offerings, to be kept by Israel, and recorded in chapters twenty through twenty-three of Exodus. The other part of the contract was that God would be their God, and they would be His people: He would bless and protect them, and fight against their enemies, and they would possess the Promised Land.²⁹⁸⁵

The agreement of the people to it is recorded in Exodus, *'And Moses came and told the people all the words of the Lord, and all the judgments: and all the people answered with one voice, and said, All the words which the Lord hath said will we do. And Moses wrote all the words of the Lord, and rose up early in the*

²⁹⁸³ Greek: prokuroo.

²⁹⁸⁴ Gen 17:1-10,13b,21,22

²⁹⁸⁵ Ex 23:20f.

morning, and builded an altar under the hill, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel. And he sent young men of the children of Israel, which offered burnt offerings, and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen unto the Lord. And Moses took half of the blood, and put it in basons; and half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar. And he took the book of the covenant, and read it in the audience of the people: and they said, All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient. And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the Lord hath made with you concerning all these words.'²⁹⁸⁶ And by this means the covenant was sanctified in blood, also recorded by Paul: For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book and all the people. Saying, This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you. Moreover, he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry.'²⁹⁸⁷ The Greek translated 'enjoined'²⁹⁸⁸ means to 'charge' or 'command.' God charged or commanded the children of Israel to keep the Old Covenant.

Sacrifices

But what of the sacrifices? 'Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; Put your burnt offerings unto your sacrifices and eat flesh. For I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices: But this thing commanded I them, saying, Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people: and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well unto you.'²⁹⁸⁹ That is clear and can be explained quite simply. It is not saying that the Old Covenant sacrifices and offerings were added later, almost as an afterthought, and have been done away with since. Rather, God says that with all the heinous sins of the people, even to the point of making apostate offerings in the form of '*cakes to the queen of heaven*,'²⁹⁹⁰ the people might as well sacrifice to the deities of their pagan adoration, and eat the sacrifices, for the sacrifices are not of themselves the core of the covenant. The covenant was not solely about sacrifices. The whole Law is the core, and its very essence, and the people had comprehensively repudiated their contract, so what worth their residual vacuous sacrifices?

²⁹⁸⁶ Ex 24:3-8 ; '*book of the covenant*' containing all the Law written in 1599BC, q.v. '7,000-year Chronology,' inf.

²⁹⁸⁷ Heb 9:19-21

²⁹⁸⁸ Greek: entellomai.

²⁹⁸⁹ Jer 7:21-23

²⁹⁹⁰ mentioned in Jer 7:18; Babylonian Ishtar; Assyrian Astarte, also known as the fertility goddess Ashteroth, whose worship involved sexual immorality, all of which gave rise to the pagan festival of Easter; Ishtar—or Ninni, or Innina—was the daughter of Sin, or the moon-god. She was the goddess of love, but in one of her forms her lovers suffered pain and death. Also a goddess of battle, she was Anunitu and goddess of Akkad. She was also held to be the wife of the god Ashur, war-god of the Assyrians.

Jeremiah certainly did not deny the sacrifices, as some erroneously claim, for they had been instituted by God.²⁹⁹¹

Paul notes in Hebrews²⁹⁹² that, *'Then verily the first covenant had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary.'*²⁹⁹³ Paul does not speak derogatorily of the Old Testament tabernacle. He gives it its rightful dignity, for it had been ordained by God, and was a type of the heavenly tabernacle. God established very precisely both its physical features and its service. The use of the phrase *'worldly sanctuary'*²⁹⁹⁴ does not reveal anything concerning its spiritual status, but rather its role in the world. It had been made by the hand of man, from earthly elements.²⁹⁹⁵

At the very core of the Law lies the Ten Commandments—apodeictic,²⁹⁹⁶ absolute, categorical, and unconditional—*'And the Lord said unto Moses, Write thou these words: for after the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with thee and with Israel....and he wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the ten commandments,'*²⁹⁹⁷ and, *'And he declared unto you his covenant, which he commanded you to perform, even ten commandments; and he wrote them upon two tables of stone.'*²⁹⁹⁸ Other references, amongst many, attesting to this are found in Kings, *'And I have set there a place for the ark, wherein is the covenant of the Lord, which he made with our fathers, when he brought them out of the land of Egypt';*²⁹⁹⁹ in Chronicles, *'And in it have I put the ark, wherein is the covenant of the Lord, that he made with the children of Israel';*³⁰⁰⁰ and, finally, in Hebrews, *'Then verily the first covenant had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary. For there was a tabernacle made; the first, wherein was the candlestick, and the table, and the shewbread; which is called the sanctuary. And after the second veil, the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of all; which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant; And over it the cherubims of glory shadowing the mercyseat; of which we cannot now speak particularly.'*³⁰⁰¹

And now it can be discerned why the Old Covenant included sacrifices and offerings, by reference to Hebrews: *'And almost all things by the law are purged by blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission. It was therefore necessary that the pattern of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ is not entered into the holy places made*

²⁹⁹¹ recorded in Leviticus chpts. 1 through 7.

²⁹⁹² Hebrews probably dictated by Paul and written down by an amanuensis, or someone of similar ilk; alternatively, it is a paraphrase by the same route.

²⁹⁹³ Heb 9:1

²⁹⁹⁴ Greek: kosmikon.

²⁹⁹⁵ Heb 8:2,9:11

²⁹⁹⁶ unquestionably true by virtue of demonstration.

²⁹⁹⁷ Ex 34:27,28

²⁹⁹⁸ Deut 4:13

²⁹⁹⁹ I Kings 8:21

³⁰⁰⁰ II Chron 6:11

³⁰⁰¹ Heb 9:1-5

with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.³⁰⁰² Paul is saying here that the Law requires purification by blood, and there is no 'remission,'³⁰⁰³ meaning 'forgiveness,' without shedding of blood. But the sacrifice of perfection, by the Depurator, in propitiation of our sins, and the opening of the route to salvation and the free availability of the Holy Spirit, goes way beyond the prefiguring entry of a sinning priest, ritually but temporarily purified, into the earthly Holy of Holies. It is to Christ, our Mediator, that we look, and Who is risen into the very presence of God the Father, to sit at His right hand until His enemies are made His footstool.³⁰⁰⁴ In a similar way, the prefiguring ritual of recurring sacrifices and sprinkling of blood was but a foreshadow of that same sacrifice of perfection.

'Was it not by submitting to death as the sacrifice and propitiation for sin, that Christ redeemed us? Was it not by being "made sin for us?" by being "wounded for our transgressions?" and "bruised for our iniquities?" ...[Christ's] death did avail as an atonement for all sin of all men....it removed that obstacle of unforgiven and uncanceled guilt which was the very strength of Satan's kingdom....the void between man and God which was the real and actual impediment between....man and the glorious liberty of the children of God. And therefore we can never consent to speak of Satan's kingdom as unaffected by that great transaction; the death of the Son of God to take away the curse and the debt of sin, and to buy back the world for holiness and for happiness and for God.'³⁰⁰⁵ Christ purified the conditional covenant though living a sinless life and by taking the sins of mankind upon His head, and suffering man's collective death penalty in his stead. In doing so, He did not extinguish the conditional Old Covenant, rather, He was the way of making it good. As a covenant party to the unconditional Abrahamic covenant—as the Word—He was the only party who could do so. He was the link, the only One who could right the wanting occasioned by the abject and continual sin of the hereditary beneficiaries. Only He is able to bestow the Promised Land in perpetuity because not only did He partake in the covenant which had Abraham and his seed as beneficiaries, and also the Old Covenant with the children of Israel as God of the Old Testament, the Word—a covenant which, of necessity, maintains to this very day and beyond, as shall be seen ³⁰⁰⁶—He actually created everything: '*All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made.*'³⁰⁰⁷ Ownership, full legal title, vests in Him.

³⁰⁰² Heb 9:22-24

³⁰⁰³ Greek: aphesis.

³⁰⁰⁴ Psa 110:1

³⁰⁰⁵ Vaughan, C. J., *Christ the Light of the World*, pp.193,194 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets; sublinear emphasis added).

³⁰⁰⁶ cf. Ex 34:33-35 and the veil of Moses, explained by Paul in II Cor 3:11-16, where v.11a should read: '*For if that which is fading away was glorious,*' and especially cp. v.16, where the removal of the veil on the Jews' understanding is yet to happen. What did have an end, of course, was the sacrificial Law, insofar as Judæo-Christians are concerned, in that Christ was our '*once for all*' sacrifice, cf. Heb 10:10; also q.v. inf.

³⁰⁰⁷ John 1:3

Judaic view

The Judaic viewpoint or contention surprisingly often founds on, '*salvation is of the Jews*.'³⁰⁰⁸ But the Greek word translated 'of,' actually means '*out of*,'³⁰⁰⁹ and is so translated in all other instances in the New Testament. Also, the Greek definite article³⁰¹⁰ appears before the word '*salvation*,' so the phrase should actually read: '*the salvation is out of the Jews*,' a clear reference to Christ, who was of the tribe of Judah, and not a reference to any self-professed autosoteric salvators in Judaism.

It is abundantly clear in Scripture that salvation is not specifically 'for' the Jews, but for all mankind: '*For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe*.'³⁰¹¹ Salvation is not from the Jews in the sense that they, or their religion, are somehow the source of it. The source of salvation is abundantly clear: '*Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved*,'³⁰¹² and, '*For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ*,'³⁰¹³ and finally, '*For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men*.'³⁰¹⁴

Jesus told a parable to the chief priests and the elders of the people that illustrates the plan of God for Israel and the extent He would go to in trying to reach them: '*Hear another parable: There was a certain householder, which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, and digged a winepress in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country: And when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it. And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another. Again, he sent other servants more than the first: and they did unto them likewise. But last of all he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son. But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance. And they caught him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him. When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen?*'³⁰¹⁵ Jesus asked his audience what the Lord of the vineyard would do to those husbandmen, and they answered, '*He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons*.' It was as if they had pronounced their own doom and the end of their role in the plan of God for

³⁰⁰⁸ John 4:22b

³⁰⁰⁹ Greek: ek.

³⁰¹⁰ Greek: ho.

³⁰¹¹ I Tim 4:10.

³⁰¹² Acts 4:12

³⁰¹³ I Thes 5:9

³⁰¹⁴ Titus 2:11

³⁰¹⁵ Mat 21:33-40

Israel.³⁰¹⁶ Then Jesus said to them: *'Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes? Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.'*³⁰¹⁷

John, writing about the coming of the Messiah, said: *'He came unto his own, and his own received him not.'*³⁰¹⁸ The meaning here is that He came to His own people and His own people did not receive Him. If we could identify one point where the Jews formally rejected their national role as God's people it would be when they had a choice clearly laid out before them and they chose a different king: *'But they cried out, Away with him, away with him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Cæsar.'*³⁰¹⁹ Thus, they withdrew from the theocracy and so was fulfilled the parable of the wicked husbandmen,³⁰²⁰ which culminated in God's rejection of Israel and the pronouncement: *'Therefore I say unto you, the kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.'*³⁰²¹

There were prophecies that told of the consequences if they did not follow Him: *'If thou do at all forget the LORD thy God, and walk after other gods, and serve them, and worship them, I testify against you this day that ye shall surely perish. As the nations which the LORD destroyeth before your face, so shall ye [speaking of Israel] perish; because ye would not be obedient.'*³⁰²² *'O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter?....at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it; If it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good, wherewith I said I would benefit them.'*³⁰²³

These prophecies showed that the plan of God for Israel was conditional. Unfortunately, they did not meet the conditions, and therefore reaped the consequences.

The mere existence of sin sacrifices indicates that sins of weakness would not invalidate the covenant if repented of, but unrepented wilful sin, repeated over and over, most certainly would; and did. A brief summary of the judgement against the people, is recorded in Jeremiah: *'Do they provoke me to anger? saith the Lord: do they not provoke themselves to the confusion of their own faces? Therefore thus saith the Lord God; Behold, mine anger and mine fury shall be poured out upon this place, upon man, and upon beast, and upon the trees of the field, and upon the fruit of the ground; and it shall burn, and shall not be quenched.'*³⁰²⁴ The children of Israel not only wilfully broke the covenant, they ripped it asunder with arrogant disdain.

³⁰¹⁶ King David did a similar thing when Nathan the prophet confronted him with a parable about his sins concerning Bathsheba and Uriah the Hittite.

³⁰¹⁷ Mat 21:42,43

³⁰¹⁸ John 1:11

³⁰¹⁹ John 19:15

³⁰²⁰ Mat 21:33-44

³⁰²¹ Mat 21:43

³⁰²² Deut 8:19,20 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

³⁰²³ Jer 18:6-10

³⁰²⁴ Jer 7:19,20

Since Christ had not yet died for all the sins of mankind, past, present, and future, the Old Covenant required sacrifices and offerings as an atonement, or covering, for the people's sins. Immediately after God gave Israel the Law, Moses went up into the mountain to receive instructions for constructing the tabernacle, where the sacrifices and offerings were to occur. God did not add sacrifices and offerings as some form of after-thought; rather they were to be an integral part of the covenant. The Old Covenant simply could not operate without sacrifices and offerings, for the Law demanded a continual atonement for sin: *'For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins. But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.'*³⁰²⁵

Some legalists, seeking to substantiate their own vain predilections, attempt to divide the Law into 'convenient and discreet elements,' by saying, for example, that the statutes and judgements and sacrifices were shadows, and no longer apply, while only the Ten Commandments represent God's love towards man. But this is mere dissembling, a seeking after the smooth and palatable, and not the truth, for, as has been seen, the Law is a coherent whole, and is not subject to man's whims. When Christ accused the scribes and Pharisees—who were to prove to be the forerunners of rabbinical Judaism—of being 'hypocrites,'³⁰²⁶ the word He used means a dissembler, amongst other things. Christ also said, *'Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.'*³⁰²⁷ Clearly the sacrificial system is to maintain until then.

Old to New

The Law is here described as a shadow of things to come, not as the final reality or very image. While Judæo-Christians are bound by the Law, there is more than Old Covenant Law in the purview and purpose, since the keeping of the Old Covenant Law is not the ultimate goal of the true Christian. In the fullness of time, the Old Covenant itself will pass away, and be replaced by something superior: *'For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the*

³⁰²⁵ Heb 10:1-4 (sublinear emphasis added)

³⁰²⁶ Luke 11:44; Greek: hupocrites.

³⁰²⁷ Mat 5:17,18 (sublinear emphasis added)

*hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my law into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away.'*³⁰²⁸

It is clear from the description of the conditions pertaining during the New Covenant, recited above, that the New Covenant is not in force at the present time, other than in its prefatory mortal stage with the 'elect.' This is seen in Christ's words at the Last Supper, on that Passover evening in 30AD: '*And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it: For this is the blood of my new covenant [testament], which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.*'³⁰²⁹ The New Covenant, then about to commence in its lower mortal manifestation, will consummate, for the 'elect,' in its spirit manifestation at the wedding feast '*in the air.*'³⁰³⁰

The Old Covenant Law is in force at the moment, and will continue in terms of the essentials of the Law, but the sacrifices and offerings, as will be discussed later, do not carry through into the New Covenant, neither are Judæo-Christians in the current dispensation to offer ritual sacrifices for sin.³⁰³¹ Paul gives the foundation of this New Covenant: '*But now hath he [Christ] obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises.*'³⁰³²

The Old Covenant marriage set up the nation Israel as the wife of our Lord, the Creator of all: Jesus Christ. When Israel rebelled, it was the northern nation of Israel, and not the southern Judah, that received the bill of divorcement from God, as recorded in Jeremiah, '*And I saw, when for all the causes whereby backsliding Israel committed adultery I had put her away, and given her a bill of divorce; yet her treacherous sister Judah feared not, but went and played the harlot also,*'³⁰³³ but note that the Eternal also said, '*Backsliding Israel hath justified herself more than treacherous Judah.*'³⁰³⁴ Despite this, Judah was not issued with a similar writ, for of Judah was to come the Messiah, as promised in the Scriptures.

³⁰²⁸ Heb 8:7-13

³⁰²⁹ Mat 26:26-29 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets); Greek: diatheke, 'testament,' 'covenant.'

³⁰³⁰ I Thes 4:16,17

³⁰³¹ Heb 10:10, '*By which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.*'

³⁰³² Heb 8:6 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

³⁰³³ Jer 3:8

³⁰³⁴ Jer 3:11

A wife is described as 'treacherous' in Jeremiah³⁰³⁵ in departing from her 'husband,' or 'master.'³⁰³⁶ *'But as a wife betrays her husband for her lover, so you have betrayed me, O house of Israel—says the Eternal.'* K.J.V.: *'Surely as a wife treacherously departeth from her husband, so have ye dealt treacherously with me, O house of Israel, saith the Lord.'*³⁰³⁷

While both nations went into captivity, only one was formally divorced, and even then, a reconciliation was prophesied. Speaking to the northern tribes: *'Turn, O backsliding children, saith the Lord; for I am married unto you: and I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion: And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding. And it shall come to pass, when ye be multiplied and increased in those days, saith the Lord, they shall say no more, The ark of the covenant of the Lord: neither shall it come to mind: neither shall they remember it; neither shall they visit it; neither shall that be done any more. At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the Lord; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of the Lord, to Jerusalem: neither shall they walk any more after the imagination of their evil heart. In those days the house of Judah shall walk with the house of Israel, and they shall come together out of the land of the north to the land that I have given for an inheritance unto your fathers. But I said, How shall I put thee among the children, and give thee a pleasant land, a goodly heritage of the hosts of nations? And I said, Thou shalt call me, My father; and shalt not turn away from me. Surely as a wife treacherously departeth from her husband, so have ye dealt treacherously with me, O house of Israel, saith the Lord.'*³⁰³⁸

Israel's sin, that of both the northern and southern tribes, is graphically illustrated in the relationship of Hosea to his whore wife, Gomer. There is a divine intervention in the prophet's personal life, insofar as he is commanded by God to take a wife who will become an adulteress, have children to whom symbolical names are given, and then bring his wife back from her adulteries to become his wife once more. Just like Gomer, Israel has gone into (spiritual) adultery, and a promise of future restoration is given if they will return from their lovers unto their True Husband. And just as Hosea continues faithful towards, longs for, and will restore Gomer, so God continues faithful towards, longs for, and will bring Israel to spiritual restoration.

'The old covenant had, for its content and basis, the Decalogue....thus the need for a new law to supersede the Decalogue would not have been felt by Jeremiah. Jeremiah³⁰³⁹ promises a new covenant, but not a new Law.

The new covenant is new not in the sense that it introduces a new [supplanting] moral and religious code, but that it confers a new and inward power [the gift of the Holy Spirit, otherwise man is left in a condition

³⁰³⁵ Jer 3:20; Hebrew: bagad, to act covertly, secretly, to deal deceitfully, and, by implication, to plunder.

³⁰³⁶ Hebrew: baal.

³⁰³⁷ Jer 3:20, Moffatt translation.

³⁰³⁸ Jer 3:14-20; treachery is the betrayal of trust.

³⁰³⁹ Jer 31:31-34

of ignorance and unenlightenment]³⁰⁴⁰ of fulfilling the law and code already given.³⁰⁴¹ The law ceases to be a standard external³⁰⁴² to the individual, and becomes an integral part of his personality. [Compliance with the law thus becomes as natural as drawing breath. In both cases, the antipole leads to death]....Israel's inveterate disobedience had annulled the old covenant, but the law stood [for they could not annul the Law]....Jeremiah had elsewhere spoken of the '*circumcision of the heart*,'³⁰⁴³ he had communicated the Divine promise: '*I will give them an heart to know me, that I am the Lord*,'³⁰⁴⁴ and announced their return to Him with their whole heart.

As things are, the knowledge of YHWH is derived from external sources, so that one man communicates it to another and he, in turn, to a third. But in the blessed time to come, this knowledge will be the property of each; an inward possession, implanted by God Himself³⁰⁴⁵....By carrying the covenant and its effects '*into the heart*,' it [will become] personal. And because each individual would be righteous, the aggregate that formed the nation [or church] must become righteous too. By this transformation of the idea of religion, the national limitations would be transcended; [all would become incorporated in Israel 'international and universal']. With Jeremiah's [God-revealed] doctrine of the new covenant, [universal Israel crystallised prospectively]. The state could perish, the sacrifice be brought to an end, but the religion could be detached from them [and greatly enhanced, too], and so could survive their passing.³⁰⁴⁶ 'All' that would be needed, in consummation and in the fullness of time, would be the coming of the Messiah—the Word, the creator of all—His death in vicarious atonement, and His resurrection to glory as an earnest of the Father's intent towards mankind, with the body and blood in the form of the bread and wine taken at the Passover observance being symbols of His new covenant, a covenant everlasting.

The Messiah was to be the Declarer, the Publisher, the Mediator of that better covenant, as Moses was of the Old Covenant. The conditions prevailing when that covenant will come into effect are vividly presaged in Jeremiah: '*Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that the city shall be built to the Lord, from the tower of*

³⁰⁴⁰ John 6:60 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets), "*Many therefore of his disciples, when they heard [Jesus' discourse on the bread and the wine, and its meaning] said, This is a hard saying; who can hear it?*" Barclay, William, *The Gospel of John*, Vol.2, p.200 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets): 'The Greek word used in the New Testament [for 'parables'] is paroimia—it is the word used for Jesus's parables—but basically it means a saying that is hard to understand, a saying whose meaning is veiled to the casual listener, a saying which demands thought before its meaning can become clear. (It can, for instance, be used for the pithy sayings of wise men with whose pregnant brevity the mind must grapple; it can be used for a riddle whose meaning a man must guess as best he can).'

Barclay, William, *The Gospel of John*, Vol.1, p.226:

'It is little wonder that the disciples found the discourse of Jesus hard. The Greek word skleros means not '*hard to understand*;' but '*hard to accept*.'

³⁰⁴¹ this issue is addressed by Christ in relation to the Jews' de facto doctrine of retaliation; cf. Mat 5:21f., et al.

³⁰⁴² being ethical and supervening.

³⁰⁴³ Jer 4:4

³⁰⁴⁴ Jer 24:7

³⁰⁴⁵ cf. Jer 24:7

³⁰⁴⁶ Peake, A. S., *The Century Bible: Jeremiah II, Lamentations*, pp.100,102-104,106 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

*Hananeel unto the gate of the corner. And the measuring line shall go forth over against it upon the hill Gareb, and shall compass about to Goath. And the whole valley of the dead bodies, and of the ashes, and all the fields unto the brook of kidron, unto the corner of the horse gate toward the east, shall be holy unto the Lord; it shall not be plucked up, nor thrown down, any more for ever.*³⁰⁴⁷ This shows that no matter how defiled by death, and waste, and destruction, land can be brought back to holy use. The same must apply, therefore, to the site of the Foundation Stone, currently lying under the Mosque of Omar. The stone, therefore, will be reconstituted way beyond its former state, to its full and glorious position.

The extent and holy nature of the city of Jerusalem here portrayed has never existed. It is, in fact, a picture of the Millennial city to come. In that city, such will be the power of the Holy Spirit, with the law and the knowledge of God written their hearts, that the inhabitants will no longer be capable of succumbing to sin and so coming into condemnation, relapsing into iniquity, or living and dying in impenitence and unbelief. All of these conditions apply after the Second Coming, in the Millennium of rest; not before. The Holy City will then remain holy, under the Power of God's Holy Spirit and Divine Presence.

New ceremony

But when Christ returns, there will be a new marriage ceremony: a New Covenant. Christ will marry the church, the direct descendant, in church form, of the nation of Israel, the very wife whom He divorced: *'Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And he said unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper*³⁰⁴⁸ *of the Lamb. And he saith unto me. These are the true sayings of God.'*³⁰⁴⁹

This wedding shall be *'in the air,'*³⁰⁵⁰ prior to the return to Jerusalem, in Zion, which will be called the throne of the Lord: *'At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the Lord; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of the Lord, to Jerusalem: neither shall they walk any more after the imagination of*

³⁰⁴⁷ Jer 31: 34,38-40; the bodies and ashes refer to gehenna, or the valley of Hinnom, and not to the aftermath of the battle against the massed forces of the Antichrist in the valley of Jehoshaphat, q.v. sup.

³⁰⁴⁸ Shavuot is a marriage festival, the marriage of the Lamb and His bride, the 'elect' church. This is the wedding ceremony *'in the air'* prefigured by the festival. Pentecost was the *'birth of the church in the wilderness,'* q.v. Acts 7:38. Likewise, it will be the time of the spirit birth of the bride *'in the air,'* in the Holy Spirit, at the time of the changing of the moral elect to immortal beings, evermore to be with Christ.

At the giving of the ten commandments (which the Jews hold to have occurred at Pentecost, a belief which is certainly incorrect, since it was given on the preceeding day, a weekly Sabbath), and through the concomitant covenant on the following day, Pentecost, which was the day of the contract of betrothal between God (the Word, later to be incarnated as Jesus Christ) and Israel, a covenant which Israel later broke wilfully and repeatedly, God's beneficence to His people was demonstrated. The marriage *'in the air'* will see the wedding feast of the union of Christ and the elect church, spiritual Israel—for all in attendance will be spirit beings—as it were, the first and consummate tranche of created spirit beings under the New Covenant.

³⁰⁴⁹ Rev 19:7,8

³⁰⁵⁰ I Thes 4:16,17

*their evil heart.*³⁰⁵¹ Also included in this *'time of blessedness,'* although minor in status by comparison, is *'the great multitude'* who received not the mark of the Beast, nor worshipped him nor his image, *'who came out of the great tribulation,'* and whom *'the Lamb clothed with white robes.'*³⁰⁵² These wait until the one thousand, three hundred and thirty-fifth day; they do not attend the wedding supper, neither are they made immortal in the first resurrection, but they are part of the kingdom, albeit in mortal form, throughout the Millennium of rest.³⁰⁵³

The *'time of blessedness'* described in Daniel³⁰⁵⁴ is here pictured as that timeframe encompassing attendance at this marriage ceremony and the subsequent return to the mount of Olives with the Messiah as part of His kingdom to witness the overthrow of Satan's forces in the Valley of Decision. In addition, there are the *'intermediate peoples'* who do not attend the feast *'in the air'*—despite being termed *'a great multitude'*³⁰⁵⁵—but of whom (relatively speaking, in terms of the extant world population of the time) not many will be of the house of Israel proper—namely, by descent—and enter into the Millennium kingdom as mortal beings: *'Go and proclaim these words towards the north, and say, Return, thou backsliding Israel, saith the Lord; Turn, O backsliding children, saith the Lord; for I am married unto you: and I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion.'*³⁰⁵⁶

Some might choose to contend that a wife who is divorced is not free to remarry, at least until the death of her husband, but even here Scripture proves unassailable: Christ not only died, He died for His church, His *'wife,'* and, as a result, she is free. And so Christ, Israel's husband, died, not only to redeem Israel, and usher in the free availability of the Holy Spirit, but also to render Israel free to remarry. Christ's first coming was to redeem; not to restore. The complete restoration comes with the implementation of the New Covenant, confirmed at the marriage ceremony described in Revelation chapter nineteen.

This is love unsurpassed.

Levitical priesthood

The superiority of Christ's ministry over that of the Levitical priesthood, confirmed in Hebrews,³⁰⁵⁷ is a parallel to the superiority of the New Covenant, still in the future, of which Christ is the Mediator, to that which the Word mediated and gave to Moses, after the covenant made with Abraham: *'And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more*

³⁰⁵¹ Jer 3:17

³⁰⁵² Rev 7:9-17

³⁰⁵³ for most; any who die during that time will be termed a *'child'*; cp. Isa 65:20.

³⁰⁵⁴ Dan 12:12

³⁰⁵⁵ Rev 7:9-17, *'of all the nations.'*

³⁰⁵⁶ Jer 3:12,14

³⁰⁵⁷ Heb 7:11-22

of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise. Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator. Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one. Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law.'³⁰⁵⁸ And not only that, the Law is not the foundation of the promise given to Abraham on foot of an unconditional covenant, the confirmation of which, in any event, pre-dates the codified Law given through Moses by four hundred and thirty years. The Law has its own specific function; it is different in nature and purpose. It is not opposed to the promise; it is not competitive, but complementary. But the New Covenant is superior because it possesses better promises. While the Law has a ministration of condemnation—for the Law does not give power to subdue sin—grace has a ministration of righteousness, 'For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect: Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression. Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all, (As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were.'³⁰⁵⁹

Now, 'If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the law,) what further need was there that another priest should arise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron? For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the

³⁰⁵⁸ Gal 3:17-21; the 'added law' referred to is the detailed sacrificial Law (Exodus chpt. 38, with its 'altar'; Leviticus chpts. 1-8) which was added owing to the sin of the children of Israel at Horeb (cf. Exodus chpt. 32), for the ten commandments were in force from the beginning, but not codified; Gal 3:19, 'Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator.' Does Paul mean that, without the sin at Horeb, there would have been no sacrificial Law? Most certainly not! The detailed description of the sanctuary's altar of sacrifice, given in Ex 27:1-8, has the intended use stated in v.3a: 'And thou shalt make his pans to receive his ashes,' ('his' does not appear in the Hebrew). Gill's Commentary notes that the pans were 'to gather up the various sacrifices' ashes in, and carry them away, and that done every morning about cockcrow, not much sooner nor later.' So the sanctuary, from the off, was configured to facilitate a sacrificial system, although not necessarily that which came about.

Gal 3:19a (with added comment and clarification in square brackets), 'Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions [i.e., 'iniquity' or, better, 'lawlessness,' arising out of sin], till the seed should come to whom the promise was made.' God—the 'Alpha and the Omega,' Rev 1:8,11,21:6,22:13, Who sees the end from the beginning, and the beginning from the end—foresaw the need of recurring vicarious blood sacrifices for recurring sin. So while the cadence was the Law→the covenant→the sin of the children of Israel, a cadence which resulted in God's introducing the sacrificial system, it would have been present in any event, such was the propensity of the children of Israel to sin.

This does not mean that the Law was eviscerated on the appearance of Jesus Christ, for He kept the Law, and taught that it should be respected and kept, but the sacrificial Law ended for Judæo-Christians with His 'once-for-all' sacrifice, cf. Heb 10:10-18, made for those who accept Him as their personal Saviour. The rest, who as yet do not, still fall under the ritual sacrificial system, a system that will maintain until the end of the Millennium of rest, q.v. sup.

³⁰⁵⁹ Rom 4:13-17

law. For he of whom these things are spoken pertaineth to another tribe, of which no man gave attendance at the altar. For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Judah; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood. And it is yet far more evident: for after the similitude of Melchisedec there ariseth another priest. Who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life. For he testifieth, Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec. For there is verily a disannuling of the commandment going before for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof. For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope, by the which we draw nigh unto God. And inasmuch as not without an oath was he made priest: (For those priests were made without an oath; but this with an oath by him that said unto him, The Lord sware and will not repent, Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec:) By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament.³⁰⁶⁰ This change in the Law not only refers to that pertaining to the actual priesthood, but can also be considered as encompassing what some term the change, or more accurately in this particular context, the fulfilment, sometimes referred to as the 'royal law.'

'Royal Law'

Christ, *'that prophet'*—the Lawgiver—prophesied in Deuteronomy³⁰⁶¹ and later confirmed in John,³⁰⁶² gave a new commandment: *'A new commandment I give unto you, That thou love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.'*³⁰⁶³ John inextricably links the Law to love: *'And this is love, that we walk after his commandments. This is the commandment, That, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it.'*³⁰⁶⁴ They are not mutually exclusive, as some so-called Christians maintain. Referring back to Hebrews, *'This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them,'*³⁰⁶⁵ it is clear that the Law runs through to the New Covenant. The New Covenant does not do away with the Law, it actually incorporates it as part of something far superior: a shadow of greater things to come.

James speaks of the 'royal law' in the following terms: *'If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well.'*³⁰⁶⁶ The term 'royal law' means Law that is truly royal in its quality,³⁰⁶⁷ because the definite article is absent in Greek, indicating that quality is emphasised. It is royal or kingly in its relation to other Laws. The Greek word James used for 'royal'³⁰⁶⁸ means belonging to the sovereign.

³⁰⁶⁰ Heb 7:11-22

³⁰⁶¹ Deut 18:15-19

³⁰⁶² John 6:14

³⁰⁶³ John 13:34

³⁰⁶⁴ II John 1:6

³⁰⁶⁵ Heb 10:16

³⁰⁶⁶ James 2:8

³⁰⁶⁷ cf. Lenski, Richard C. H., *The Interpretation of the Epistle to the Hebrews and the Epistle of James*, p.570

³⁰⁶⁸ Greek: is basileikos.

Christ said that this and the first commandment are so fundamental that on them, *'hang all the law and the prophets,'* *'But when the Pharisees had heard that he had put the Sadducees to silence, they were gathered together. Then one of them, which was a lawyer, asked him a question, tempting him, and saying, Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.'*³⁰⁶⁹ The *'royal law'* is the framework on which the whole Law hangs or is supported, for if man abide by these two, then, inescapably, man does all. The *'royal law'* is the very nature of God's love, reflected in the first instance in man's love for God, and then in his love for his fellow man.

The element of fulfilment inherent in this *'royal law,'* over even the Ten Commandments, can be discerned by reference to Romans, *'Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God. For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter. What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but for the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet. But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead.'*³⁰⁷⁰ The word here rendered *'occasion'*³⁰⁷¹ has the meaning of a base for military operation, indicating the forces ranged against Paul. The *'royal law'* is part of the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, not only in overcoming the clutch of those forces, but in its extending way beyond the limits of the codified Law of the Old Covenant. Paul places the matter in proper order: *'Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator.'*³⁰⁷²

The *'royal law'* portrays the fulsome love of God. Judæo-Christians are commanded to go beyond the letter of the Law, and to live the *'royal law.'* True Christians have to love their neighbour as themselves, with this imperative, in Luke, *'But I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you, Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you. And unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek offer also the other; and him that taketh away thy cloak forbid not to take thy coat also. Give to every man that asketh of thee; and of him that taketh away thy goods ask of him not again. And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise. For if ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? for sinners also love those that love them. And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye?*

³⁰⁶⁹ Mat 22:34-40

³⁰⁷⁰ Rom 7:4-8; *'concupiscence'* meaning *'strong desire,'* in context, the lusts and desires of the lower appetites.

³⁰⁷¹ Greek: aphorme.

³⁰⁷² Gal 3:19

for sinners also do even the same. And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again. But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil. Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.³⁰⁷³ The ultimate act of love, in absolute accordance with the '*royal law*,' is recorded in John: '*Greater love hath no man than this, than a man lay down his life for his friends.*'³⁰⁷⁴

'And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. Whereof the Holy Spirit also is a witness to us: for after that he had said before, *This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin.*'³⁰⁷⁵ It should be noted that both uses of the word '*is*' in the last verse appear in italics, added by the translators; they do not appear in the Greek. Given the content of the two previous verses, both of which are in the future perfect tense throughout, a better rendering would be: '*Now where there will be remission of these, there will be no more offering for sin.*'³⁰⁷⁶

The proscription on anyone adding to or detracting from the Law is well known, and appears not only in the Old Testament,³⁰⁷⁷ but in the New Testament too. Moreover, Christ said that, '*not one jot or tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, until all things be fulfilled.*'³⁰⁷⁸ So the question begged here is simple: Is the '*royal law*,' as it is often termed, not an addition to the Law? And if it is, does this condemn Christ in terms of the prohibition contained in Deuteronomy?

In the first instance, it should be noted that the term '*royal law*' is not a formalised term, and does not appear in the New Testament thus; rather, it is an abstraction from a verse in Scripture. For this reason it is shown in italicised quotation form. The '*royal law*' contains two elements which can be very briefly stated:

1. Love God; and,
2. Love your neighbour.

³⁰⁷³ Luke 6:27,38

³⁰⁷⁴ John 15:13

³⁰⁷⁵ Heb 10:11-18

³⁰⁷⁶ Heb 10:18, corrected translation

³⁰⁷⁷ Deut 12:32

³⁰⁷⁸ Mat 5:18b

As previously noted, when questioned by the scribes and Pharisees on which commandment was the greatest, for they were intent upon finding something of which to accuse Him, the response given by Our Lord as to the two most important commandments was: loving God, the foremost, and, following this, loving mankind, the second. Christ also said that *'I come not to destroy the Law, but to fulfil it.'*³⁰⁷⁹ So, again, is this *'royal law'* an addition to the Law, fulfilling or completing it, and, if it is, does this then import the condemnation over adding to the Law?

Looking at the two elements of the *'royal law,'* it is clear that the first was in place long before it was uttered by Him, as it is seen, for example, in Deuteronomy, where Moses said, *'I command thee this day to love the Lord thy God,'*³⁰⁸⁰ but it had not been specified in such an instructive form until given by Christ. Indeed, it is generally accepted in a surprisingly wide variety of religious beliefs that the Ten Commandments and other aspects of the Law were in force long before they became codified in what is known as the Law of Moses. To love God above all things is our highest calling, and has been ever since Adam, but it was not formally specified in such detail until written in the New Testament, as it was enunciated by Christ, who, as the Word, handed down the Ten Commandments and other aspects of the Law to Moses.

Now by way of illustration from the Old Testament, one can ask whether King David loved God. The answer is, of course he did, and in so doing he kept the primary element of what is termed the *'royal law.'* So there is no addition to the Law here, but it is a fulfilment, as will be seen a little later.

The second element is perhaps a little less simple, because, if one were to pose almost the corollary, did King David love his neighbour? then the answer would have to be: not always, or, at least, not in absolute terms.³⁰⁸¹ Loving your neighbour, per the New Testament, involves, as shown in Matthew and Luke: *'praying for those who hate you, and despitefully use you,'*³⁰⁸² described further in the instruction to, *'love your enemies, bless them that curse you.'*³⁰⁸³ Did King David so love his enemies? Not in the book of Psalms, unless it is an obscure example of Oriental hyperbole, where he wrote of those who hated God: *'I hate them with perfect hatred, and I count them my enemies.'*³⁰⁸⁴ He also had the bitter experience of having his love returned to him in a very unwanted form, *'for my love they are become my enemies.'*³⁰⁸⁵ Indeed, the ones whom he described as hating God also happened to hate him, as would be expected, for King David had been afforded the then rare gift of the Holy Spirit, in some measure. The Old Testament commandment, *'Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart: thou shalt in any wise rebuke thine neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him. Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I am the*

³⁰⁷⁹ Mat 5:17

³⁰⁸⁰ Deut 30:16

³⁰⁸¹ cf. Psalms 69:28

³⁰⁸² Mat 5:44d

³⁰⁸³ Luke 6:28a

³⁰⁸⁴ Psalms 139:22

³⁰⁸⁵ Psalms 109:4a

*Lord,*³⁰⁸⁶ apparently was then taken to be restricted to the children of Israel, through concentration on the phrase, *'thy people,'* but even so there must have been a disregard for, *'For the Lord your God is God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty, and a terrible, which regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward: He doth execute judgment of the fatherless and widow, and loveth the stranger, in giving him food and raiment. Love ye therefore the stranger: for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.'*³⁰⁸⁷ Just as Judæo-Christianity opened up the prospect of salvation to all mankind, so compliance with the commandment blossomed to its full and original meaning: unrestricted love, even of our worst and most implacable enemies, irrespective of whether Israelite or Gentile. And that is not easy!

So does this mean that loving one's neighbour in the widest sense was a new and wholly additional commandment introduced by Christ? By no means, for if one loves God, one loves man, the creation of God in the likeness of God. One cannot have love in the Holy Spirit and limit it to God alone: it is outpouring, and outgoing, and comprehensive, and inclusive. In no wise can it be exclusive, selective, or restrictive. The logical extension or ramification from loving God is the love of all and for all.³⁰⁸⁸

The conclusion of all of this is that the *'royal law'*³⁰⁸⁹ did not add to the Law, or for that matter detract from it, but it specified, explained and clarified that which was already in existence, in a somewhat similar way to that which the codifying of the Law of Moses had done in its time. It certainly focused the Law, and it is the ultimate exposition of the Law. And so Christ came and fulfilled or completed the written Law, by codifying and defining the nature, intent and scope of proper love in the form which is often called the *'royal law.'* There was no condemnation from the scribes and the Pharisees on this point: *'You have said well'*³⁰⁹⁰ was the response. There is nothing in the New Testament that even infers that the scribes and Pharisees ever accused Jesus of adding to or detracting from the Law. They frequently accused both Him and His followers of breaking it, such as when His disciples plucked and ate ears of grain on the Sabbath while walking through a field, to which the reply was that David had eaten the shewbread.³⁰⁹¹ It is interesting to recall that the eventual charge levelled against Christ by the Jewish authorities was a quasi-political one, and trumped-up at that, and did not relate to any addition or detracting on His part from the Law.

The fundamental importance in this is that certain aspects of the Law are codified and explained in much greater detail, for the avoidance of doubt, to define proper Judæo-Christian love. It is written, and, as it constitutes the detailed command of God, it has to be obeyed, as disobedience is sin, and wilful disobedience is

³⁰⁸⁶ Lev 19:17,18

³⁰⁸⁷ Deut 10:17-19 (sublinear emphasis added)

³⁰⁸⁸ but not unconditional love, q.v. sup.

³⁰⁸⁹ during the British coronation ceremony, a Bible is presented to the new monarch with the words: "We present you with this book, the most valuable thing this world affords. Here is wisdom. This is the Royal Law. These are the lively oracles of God."

³⁰⁹⁰ Luke 20:39

³⁰⁹¹ I Sam 21:3f.; Mat 12:4; Mark 2:26; Luke 6:4

wilful sin. It is this that makes Judæo-Christianity so difficult. Loving those who happen to love you is easy: loving those who viscerally hate you, and who do all manner of evil against you, is extremely difficult, and goes completely against human nature. And despite repenting, being baptised for the remission of sins, and receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit, man is always in danger of being dragged back in the wrong direction by the residuum of base, carnal nature. Neglect or delay in compliance with this Divine imperative is trifling with God, potentially provoking Him to remove His grace and, with it, the Holy Spirit.

So what of the standing of the Old Covenant Law? Is any of it void, reprobate, discarded, or annulled? By no means, as can be seen from the statement made by Paul: *'Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.'*³⁰⁹² Faith in Christ is the proper response to the Law, for what the Law could never do, Christ alone did. The teaching that justification is by faith alone³⁰⁹³ does not, and cannot, destroy the Law, for the removal of the Law removes the only basis for repentance: the realisation that one is a sinner, and this can only be so if there is Law to identify and define sin. The works of a Judæo-Christian, growing in faith, are to be wholly informed by the Law, including the *'royal law.'* Justification thus completes the Law. Christ came to fulfil the Law, not to destroy it, and by doing so gave the Law its proper place and meaning. *'For Christ is the end'*³⁰⁹⁴ *of the law, for righteousness to every one that believeth.'*³⁰⁹⁵ 'To make perfect means to bring to the end, that is, the appropriate or appointed end, the end corresponding to the idea.'³⁰⁹⁶ Faith in Jesus Christ brings the ultimate respect for the Law, and not the utter contempt for it evident on the part of many so-called Christians today.

Patently, there is an ever-stretching vastness in the difference between the fatuous claim to being free of the Law, and that of being set free from the penalty under the Law. While, effectively, the former admits of no power of the Law, the latter acknowledges and respects it, while the death penalty for the sin of the 'elect' has been already paid, vicariously, by Jesus Christ. The failure to understand that Paul rejected the Law as a valid means of salvation but upheld it as a standard of Judæo-Christian conduct has been the root cause of much subsequent 'Christian' misunderstanding of Paul's attitude towards the Law, including the weekly Sabbath, the New Moons, and the Holy Days.

Can Judæo-Christians be free of the Law? Upon total immersion baptism for the remission of sins, and having received the gift of the Holy Spirit, is the Christian then free to return to his or her old sinning ways, free of the Law and immune from any penalty from God? The notion is ridiculous, but many so-called Christians

³⁰⁹² Rom 3:31

³⁰⁹³ man cannot live without faith because his relationship with the future is an affair not alone of thought but also of action; life is a continuous adventure into the unknown. Many have often found themselves compelled, nay instructed, to strike out into experiences and to undertake endeavours whose issue could not have been foreseen save through a few near-subliminal, adumbrated foregleams afforded by God's word. This life's journey is characteristic of all who have adventured for God.

³⁰⁹⁴ Greek: *telos*, 'aim,' 'purpose,' 'perfection.'

³⁰⁹⁵ Rom 10:4

³⁰⁹⁶ Davidson, Professor A. B., *Hebrews*, p.65

believe just that, especially the 'born-again' adherents. Usually, those are easily discerned, telling any willing to listen that they are 'born again,' the 'elect' of God, the elite who will be whisked away in a 'secret rapture' before the onset of the Great Tribulation. In the interim, they can sit back and wait, sinning in their new-found freedom from the Law through the grace of God. But the Bible has it differently: the Christian is not to live in sin! *'What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?'*³⁰⁹⁷

In the parable of the talents,³⁰⁹⁸ the Judæo-Christian is encouraged to do good, to build on it, ultimately being rewarded in proportion to that which has been gained. In that of the pounds or minas, the same is seen for the eras of the church.³⁰⁹⁹ For the reward is according to our works.³¹⁰⁰

In the Sermon on the Mount,³¹⁰¹ Christ shows how the spirit and intent of the Law translates into personal, loving conduct. A true Christian, a Judæo-Christian, will faithfully obey God's commandments: *'If ye love me, keep my commandments,'*³¹⁰² and, *'For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments; and his commandments are not grievous.'*³¹⁰³ Obedience to the Law, and the outpouring of love, must become translated into deeds and actions: *'Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock.'*³¹⁰⁴

The Judæo-Christian's conduct is modelled on Christ: *'And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. but whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him. He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.'*³¹⁰⁵

How then does faith fit into this? Hebrews chapter eleven, often termed the 'faith chapter,' shows time and time again that God's own, the 'elect,' 'by faith' performed the commandments of God. Faith and obedience go hand-in-hand;³¹⁰⁶ *'Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.'*³¹⁰⁷ The matter is summed in Hebrews, *'But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.'*³¹⁰⁸

³⁰⁹⁷ Rom 6:1,2

³⁰⁹⁸ Mat 25:14-30

³⁰⁹⁹ q.v. sup.

³¹⁰⁰ Rom 2:4-8; II Cor 5:10; James 2:10-18; Rev 22:12, et al.

³¹⁰¹ Matthew chpts. 5-7

³¹⁰² John 14:15

³¹⁰³ I John 5:3

³¹⁰⁴ Mat 7:24

³¹⁰⁵ I John 2:3-6

³¹⁰⁶ Heb 11:7-38

³¹⁰⁷ Rev 14:12

³¹⁰⁸ Heb 11:6

Purpose & effect

The Law was intended to bring us to Christ in an appropriately contrite manner: *'But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. For ye are all the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ.'*³¹⁰⁹ Thus this servant was not a teacher or schoolmaster, rather he was there to see that the pupil went to the right place. In the Christian dispensation, our teacher is the Holy Spirit, and the servant leading us to Christ is the Old Covenant Law: *'But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Spirit teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.'*³¹¹⁰ The Holy Spirit is the preceptor.³¹¹¹

Inspiration is never represented in Scripture as verbal dictation where human powers and limitations are suspended, so that like an electronic or mechanical recording the result is a bare reproduction of the words of God. Rather God spoke to men through their experience as they were able to understand Him, so that the

³¹⁰⁹ Gal 3:22-26; Greek: paidagogos, 'schoolmaster' in vv.23,24, is a quite woeful K.J.V. translation, coming from the word meaning 'a servant who guides the pupil to and from school.' 'Teacher' in the Bible is the Greek: didaskelos.

Barclay, William, *A New Testament Word Book*, pp.87-90:

'In Gal 3:24,25 the Authorised Version says that the law was our 'schoolmaster' (paidagogos) to lead us to Christ....but after faith comes we are no longer under a paidagogos. There Moffatt translates the law 'held us as wards in discipline.' And the Revised Standard Version has it that the law was our 'custodian.' None of these translations is fully satisfactory, for the very good reason that the paidagogos carried out a function to which there is nothing precisely corresponding in our educational system.

Up to the age of seven the Greek boy was almost exclusively in his mother's charge. But even then, if there was a paidagogos in the household, he had his say.....It was when he went to school that the paidagogos really took over the management of the boy and retained it until the boy was eighteen. His duty was to accompany the boy to the school each day and to see that he got there safely; to carry the boy's books and his lyre; to watch his conduct in school; to see to his conduct in the street; to train the boy in morals, in manners, and in deportment....He had to teach him all the Greek meant by eukosomia: good manners, good deportment, pleasantness of life. K. J. Freeman says of the paidagogos that he was 'a mixture of nurse, footman, chaperon, and tutor'....Clement of Alexandria had a work called *The Paedagogos* in which he likened the Word to our paidagogos. He says: 'The paidagogos being practical, not theoretical, his aim is thus to improve the soul [sic], and to train it up to a virtuous, not to an intellectual life.' But here we have come to the very point of the matter. Sometimes the slave chosen to be paidagogos was old and trusted. Sometime he had the highest ideal of his task. It is told of a good paidagogos that, when he was asked, 'What is your duty?' he replied, 'My duty is to make the good pleasant to the boy'....Sometimes indeed the paidagogos was a trusted family friend. But far oftener the paidagogos was a most unsatisfactory figure. Far too often he was chosen for his task, as Plutarch complains, because he was too old and feeble for any other. In any event, the paidagogos existed for no other reason than to make his charge independent of his care.'

Barclay, William, *Many Witnesses, One Lord*, p.34 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'[The paidagogos] delivered [the pupil] to one who could teach him. So then the Law brings us to the door of Christ and leaves us there.

What does this mean? It can only mean that the Law drives us to complete despair. It shows us the good; it leaves us helpless to do it; it even wakens the desire to sin. Life is defeated and frustrated, and there is nothing left to do but to come to Jesus Christ and accept what He has to give. The Law can take us so far, but only Jesus Christ can take us the whole way to God [the Father].'

³¹¹⁰ I Cor 2:10,13 (sublinear emphasis added)

³¹¹¹ I Cor 2:10-14

Bible represents alike the inbreathing of the Divine and the limitations of the human. The Holy Spirit in the Bible exposes as the immanent power of the living God Who through human agency—and occasionally through the agency of nature and, indeed, that of the supernatural—shapes human history to His Own ends.

Before the Holy Spirit became generally available, with the Christian dispensation opening up the prospect of the kingdom of God, man stood condemned under the Law, *'For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.'*³¹¹² *'Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law,'*³¹¹³ with the inevitable result: *'For the wages of sin is death.'* But the gift of that Spirit brought in the blessed promise, for *'the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.'*³¹¹⁴

In the New Testament, the Spirit is always the gift of Jesus Christ, whereby man is enabled to participate in that purpose, through which God is fulfilling His promise of creating for Himself an 'elect': His very own, His people. Indeed, Paul could appeal to its miraculous effects with confidence.³¹¹⁵ All this was proof that the old order was in process of giving place to the new, albeit it over a very protracted timescale, in human terms.

Caird has this to say of the eschatological ramifications surrounding the general availability of the Spirit: *'From the time of Ezekiel the promise of the Spirit had been part of Israel's eschatological hope,'*³¹¹⁶ a promise renewed in three prophecies which can be shown to have received particular attention from Christian teachers.³¹¹⁷ This association of the Spirit with the last days was a familiar idea in first century Judaism.³¹¹⁸ In the light of this tradition, it is not surprising that Jesus should have pointed to the obvious activity of the Spirit in his own ministry as a proof that the kingdom of God had arrived,³¹¹⁹ nor that His followers should have found the same argument convincing.

The Holy Spirit in the New Testament is always an eschatological gift, a proof and an anticipation of the coming End. To Paul the Spirit is the earnest³¹²⁰ or firstfruits of our inheritance;³¹²¹ in Hebrews the partaker of

³¹¹² Rom 3:23

³¹¹³ I John 3:4

³¹¹⁴ Rom 6:23

³¹¹⁵ Gal 3:5

³¹¹⁶ Ezek 36:27,37:14,39:29; the first cited is apposite and succinct: *'For I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.'*

³¹¹⁷ Isa 44:3; Joel 2:28-32; Zech 12:10; cf. Dodd, C. H., *The Old Testament in the New*.

³¹¹⁸ *Test. Jud.* xxiv. 2.i.

³¹¹⁹ Luke 11:20; Mat 12:28

³¹²⁰ the gift of the Holy Spirit is an 'earnest,' a down- or first- or part-payment of much more to come. II Cor 1:21,22, *'Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.'*

Barclay, William, *The Mind of St. Paul*, p.131:

'The word which the Authorized Version translates 'earnest' is the Greek word arrabon. This is a word which very frequently appears in contracts and agreements. Amongst the papyri many of these contracts still exist, and this word occurs in them. A woman sells a cow and she receives one thousand drachmae as an arrabon that in due time the remainder of the purchase price will be paid. A troop of castanet dancing-girls are engaged for a village festival; they are paid so many drachmae in advance as an arrabon, with the proviso that this sum will be taken into account when the final payment is made, after the performance has been duly given. An arrabon was an advance payment; it was a

the Holy Spirit is said to have '*tasted....the powers of the age to come*'; in I Peter the Spirit of God rests on those who are following Christ through suffering to glory; in the Revelation the Spirit is the spirit of prophecy which enables the martyrs to bear their last triumphant testimony, and in the Fourth Gospel the coming of the Paraclete has almost taken the place of the Parousia [sic!]³¹²².....[T]he speeches attributed to Peter in Acts, where the gift of the Spirit is intimately connected with the eschatological crisis that has been brought into existence by the death and resurrection of Jesus.³¹²³ The Holy Spirit is the '*comforter,*' the '*teacher,*' and the '*helper*':³¹²⁴ '*But the comforter, which is the Holy Spirit, which the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.*'³¹²⁵

Confirming Jesus' anointing with the Holy Spirit: '*How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.*'³¹²⁶ '*The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised.*'³¹²⁷ The '*elect,*' too, are anointed with the Holy Spirit: '*Now he which establisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God.*'³¹²⁸ '*But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you; but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him. And now, little children, abide in him; that when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming.*'³¹²⁹

first instalment; it was a part-payment which was a pledge and a guarantee that in due time the full payment would be made.

Here we have a great thought. The gift of the Holy Spirit is the first instalment of that perfect blessedness which God has prepared for those who love him.'

That 'perfect blessedness' will be as Spirit beings in the kingdom of God, here on earth.

The gift of the Holy Spirit is an earnest, or down payment, pending future fulfilment of a contract of purchase: Eph 1:13b, 14, '*Ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.*' The Holy Spirit is the promise, leading to eternal life, which will be effected when we are changed into spirit beings as members of God's kingdom. Our purchase price was paid by Christ, who took the indictment against us on His sinless head and died for our sins on the cross. This is a contract, the greatest unilateral contract of all time.

³¹²¹ II Cor 1:5,22; Rom 8:23; Eph 1:14; in Eph 1:17 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets), the Holy Spirit is described as, '*the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of [God],*' for without the gift of the Spirit, wisdom and knowledge of the Father is impossible.

³¹²² Heb 6:4f.; I Peter 3:14; Rev 11:3,19:10; John 14:16f.

³¹²³ Caird, G. B., *The Apostolic Age*, pp.58,59 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

³¹²⁴ in ancient Greek times, a paraclete was a helper of an accused in a court; in Roman Catholicism, however, the '*Helper,*' and also '*the sign of hope,*' is said to be Mary, q.v. *Catechism of the Roman Catholic Church*, #972.

³¹²⁵ John 14:26

³¹²⁶ Acts 10:38

³¹²⁷ Luke 4:18

³¹²⁸ II Cor 1:21

³¹²⁹ I John 2:27,28

Despite this, there will still be those who maintain that there is nothing wrong with remaining under the Law: after all, it is God's Law. The answer to that contention is found in Matthew: *'And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments. He said unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness,'*³¹³⁰ *Honour thy father any thy mother: and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet? Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me.'*³¹³¹ In essence, the answer Christ gave was, in the first instance, to keep the Old Covenant Law, and then, to keep the 'royal law.' *'For I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.'*³¹³² Those who deny that keeping God's Law is part of true Christianity deny the word of God found in Ezekiel.

To the question, *'what lack I yet?'*³¹³³ Christ responded by identifying what the young man lacked: the love for God and his fellow man that would have motivated him to give to the poor. While he professed outgoing love, it did not issue in charity. The events of Acts, amongst others, show that the conferring of the Holy Spirit is needed to achieve this.

The curse of the Law is seen in James, *'For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law.'*³¹³⁴ The word used here for 'offend'³¹³⁵ literally means 'stumble' or 'trip.' It is clear, therefore, that James awards the party pure motives, granting that the sin appears accidental. Even so, the result, *'guilty of all,'* contradicts salvation by works. Since all men are *'guilty before God,'*³¹³⁶ salvation necessarily is by grace through faith, and this is counted for righteousness.³¹³⁷

In rebuttal, some would be tempted to quote, *'Hear my prayer, O Lord, give ear to my supplications: in thy faithfulness answer me, and in thy righteousness. And enter not into judgment with thy servant: for in thy*

³¹³⁰ Barclay, William, *The Plain Man's Guide to Ethics*, pp.183,184:

'The ninth commandment runs: 'You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour' (Ex 20:16), and it is repeated in the same form in English in Deut 5:20. Although the English form is in both cases false witness, the Hebrew is different. In the Exodus version, the meaning is lying or untrue; in the Deuteronomy version the meaning is insincere, empty, frivolous. The meaning is not essentially different, but it might be said that the Exodus version thinks rather of the nature of the evidence and the Deuteronomy version thinks rather of the spirit in which it is given.'

³¹³¹ Mat 19:16-21

³¹³² Ezek 36:27

³¹³³ Mat 19:20c

³¹³⁴ James 2:10,11

³¹³⁵ Greek: patio.

³¹³⁶ Rom 3:19

³¹³⁷ Eph 2:8,9; James 2:23; Psalms 106:31; Genesis 15:6

*sight shall no man living be justified,*³¹³⁸ as indicative of a systemised salvation arrangement in Old Testament times, but close scrutiny of the balance of that psalm shows that King David's plea was purely an earthly one: protection from sore enemies. Admittedly, King David did have hope of a resurrection, *'Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope: For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell,*³¹³⁹ but the modus was not yet in place. Christ had not died for the sins of all mankind, and lain open the way to salvation.

Abolished?

In light of the blood sacrifice of Christ, some have claimed that the Old Covenant ritual sacrifices are done away with; others, that they are still in place for all; others maintain that they apply to the Jews, but not to true Christians; others hold that they applied to the Jews but only for a limited period; and others still that they apply to the Jews in the current dispensation, and to all non-spirit beings during the Millennium. While not an exhaustive summary of the range of beliefs, it is sufficient for the purposes of this study, in that it gives a flavour of the nature and spread of opinion in the matter.

In order to discern the biblical imperative, it is useful to start with: *'And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.'*³¹⁴⁰ The phrase *'perfected for ever them that are sanctified'* involves complete cleansing and regeneration. The Greek here translated *'perfected,'*³¹⁴¹ leads to a concept in Titus, *'Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Spirit; Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour,'*³¹⁴² through Christ's once-for-all sacrifice.

This reveals the twofold nature of salvation. The believer possesses an imputed, judicial standing of righteousness and, secondly, a remaining need for a practical, progressive growth in and through the Holy Spirit. Three factors within this make *'perfected'* absolute, suggesting the eternal security of the believer, subject, of course, to the moderation: *'he that endureth to the end shall be saved.'*³¹⁴³ Firstly, the word itself, deriving from the Greek,³¹⁴⁴ involves completion, the bringing of something to its end. Secondly, the use of the perfect tense in the Greek suggests that the imputed perfection has been accomplished and that its beneficial effects and blessings are continuing. Thirdly, the modifier, *'for ever,'* expresses complete security for the believ-

³¹³⁸ Psa 143:1,2

³¹³⁹ Psa 16:9,10; v.9a, *'My flesh shall rest in hope,'* etc., implies a physical resurrection.

³¹⁴⁰ Heb 10:11-14

³¹⁴¹ Greek: teteleioken.

³¹⁴² Titus 3:5,6

³¹⁴³ Mat 10:22b

³¹⁴⁴ Greek: teleioo.

er. The need, however, of a progressive sanctification, a growing in the Spirit, is expressed by the word translated '*sanctified*,'³¹⁴⁵ where the use of the present participle in this instance implies the thought of a continuing process, rather than an attained completion. 'It means '*to set apart for a special task*.'³¹⁴⁶ But [it] means not only to set apart for some special office or task, it also means '*to equip a man with the qualities of mind and heart and character which are necessary for that task*.'³¹⁴⁷

The strong message coming out of Hebrews³¹⁴⁸ is that the once-for-all sacrifice by Christ for the sanctified, in whom no sin is imputed, in other words, the 'elect,' renders the ritual sacrifice redundant; but only for those in the current church dispensation and beyond, principally the 'elect,' and the 'intermediate peoples' and other church members into the Millennium.

To continue, '*Whereof the Holy Spirit also is a witness to us: for after that he had said before, This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin*.'^{3149 3150} This is the still awaited New Covenant made between God and Israel, together with the '*wild vine grafted in*,'³¹⁵¹ referring to the saved of the Gentiles. The firstfruits of all of this are the current dispensation 'elect,' again, for whom, there is already remission through the process of baptism for the remission of sins, and, as a result, for whom, '*there is no more offering for sin*.'

The Lord was specific as to why Abraham and his seed were to be blessed: '*Because Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws*.'³¹⁵² Subsequent to the declaration that the promise was made to Abraham and his seed, Paul says: '*And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise: but*

³¹⁴⁵ Greek: hagiazomoenous.

³¹⁴⁶ Greek: hagiazerein: '*to sanctify*.'

³¹⁴⁷ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of John*, Vol.2, p.216 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

³¹⁴⁸ Heb 10:11-14

³¹⁴⁹ Heb 10:15-18 (sublinear emphasis added)

³¹⁵⁰ sacrificial blood system: under the 'old' system, for the poor, flour to atone for (atoneable) sins, q.v. Lev 5:11-13.

³¹⁵¹ Rom 11:23

³¹⁵² Gen 6:5; Keller, Werner, *The Bible as History*, pp.397,398 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'Much discussion has centred around an extremely obscure reference which until a few years ago was understood by nobody: "He made him [Israel]....that he might eat the increase of the fields: and he made him to suck honey out of the rock, and oil out of the flinty rock," Deut 32:13. The riddle was solved when in the Negeb they came across thousands of little circular stone walls. There was no water in the neighbourhood, neither springs nor any pools of underground water worth speaking about. When the sand was shovelled out of them they found the remains of the roots of ancient olive trees and vines. The stone walls had served their ancestors as valuable collectors of dew.

Their construction indicated an astonishing practical knowledge of the process of condensation. The stones in the circles were loosely stacked to ensure that the wind could blow through them. In this way the moisture from the air was deposited inside. This moisture was enough to feed an olive or a vine. Inside each wall there was always one tree only. The sweet juice of the grapes was often extolled in ancient times as "honey." The olive tree produces oil. Honey and oil were sucked "out of the rock....out of the flinty rock." Present day Israelis set great store by these serviceable little dew-collectors in the redevelopment of their agriculture.'

God gave it to Abraham by promise. Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made.³¹⁵³ The commandments and statutes were in force in Abraham's day,³¹⁵⁴ and were given in codified form to the seed of Abraham at Mount Horeb. Thus this Law, added³¹⁵⁵ four hundred and thirty years after the confirmation of the covenant with Abraham, 'because of transgressions,' could not be the core 'my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws.'³¹⁵⁶

While Moses was on the Mount receiving the written tablets of stone, and because in the eyes of the people he was delayed in returning to the camp of the Israelites, they demanded that Aaron make them gods to be worshipped. Accordingly, Aaron consented to the casting of the golden calf or calves and the people lapsed into idolatry.³¹⁵⁷ When Moses returned, he broke the tablets of stone, signifying the breaking of the covenant by

³¹⁵³ Gal 3:17-19 (sublinear emphasis added)

³¹⁵⁴ Gen 6:5

³¹⁵⁵ Edersheim, Alfred, *Bible History*, bk. 3, chpt. 3:

'Num 28:1. Now that the people were about to take possession of the land, the sacrificial ordinances were repeated and once more commanded to the Israelites, with fuller details added. The daily morning and evening sacrifice had already been instituted in connection with the altar of burnt-offering (Ex 29:38-42). To this daily consecration of Israel were now added the special sacrifices of the Sabbath—symbolic of a deeper and more special dedication on God's own day. The Sabbath and the other festive sacrifices were always brought in addition to the daily offering.

Again, the beginning of every month was marked by a special sacrifice, with the addition of a sin-offering, while the blast of the priests' trumpets was intended to bring Israel's prayers and services in remembrance before the Lord. If the beginning of each month was thus significantly consecrated, the feast of unleavened bread (from the 15th to the 21st of Abib), which made that month the beginning of the year, was marked by the repetition on each of its seven days of the sacrifices which were prescribed for every new moon. The Passover feast (on the 14th of Abib) had no general congregational sacrifice, but only that of the lamb for the Passover supper in each household.

Lastly, the sacrifices for the feast of weeks were the same as those for the feast of unleavened bread, with the addition of the two "wave-loaves" and their accompanying sacrifices prescribed in Lev 23:7-21. This concluded the first festive cycle in the year.'

³¹⁵⁶ Gen 6:5

³¹⁵⁷ in direct contravention of God's command in Ex 20:23, 'Ye shall not make with me gods of silver, neither shall ye make unto you gods of gold,' the children of Israel ignored it. Acts 7:41-43: 'And they made a calf in those days, and offered sacrifice unto the idol, and rejoiced in the works of their own hands. Then God turned, and gave them up to worship the host of heaven; as it is written in the book of the prophets, O ye house of Israel, have ye offered to me slain beasts and sacrifices by the space of forty years in the wilderness? Yea, ye took up the tabernacle of Moloch, and the star of your god Remphan, figures which ye made to worship them: and I will carry you away beyond Babylon.' The related reference in Acts to the 'star of your god Remphan', Acts 7:43,44 (Remphan also known as Saturn) is to what is now called in Hebrew: Magen David, viz., 'star of David!' The golden earrings etc. had probably been 'borrowed' from the Egyptians at the time of the Exodus departure from Egypt, cf. Ex 12:35,32:2,3, since slaves don't have jewels. Much can be said about the six-pointed star. For a start, it is widely recognized as one of the most powerful occult symbols. It comprises of six lines, six peripheral triangular sections, and six points; in short, it is a hermetically-coded representation of '666.' The triplification of an occult sacred number is the highest possible symbolic intensification of that number, so accordingly, '666,' 'the number of the beast,' is the identifier or marker of the Antichrist, q.v. Rev 13:18. The six pointed star is associated with Saturn worship and known as the hexagram. This (6-pointed star) was the first sign or hieroglyphic of Amsu. In the Astro-Mythology of the Egyptians, we find belief in the first man-god (Horus I), and his death and resurrection as Amsu—the risen Horus—the first man-god risen in spiritual form. The six-pointed star was used in mystery religion initiation rites.

Hoffman, Michael, *Judaism Discovered*, p.784, citing Plaut, Rabbi W. Gunther, *The Magen David*:

'The Israeli national talisman....was "bequeathed" to rabbinic leaders in the fourteenth-century by the Hermaticist, King Charles IV of Bohemia and formally adopted as "the star of David" at the second Zionist Congress in Switzerland, in 1898AD... Kabbalistic doctrine brought the hexagram into rabbinic tradition (a fact given official recognition by the Bohemian king).'

the children of Israel, and thereupon was a great slaughter of those adherents of idolatry, after which the Laws contained in ordinances were added, with their sacrificial requirements. It was also of this added Law that Paul was speaking about to the Galatians, *'Wherefore the law [added due to transgressions]³¹⁵⁸ was our school-master [servant] to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster [servant].'*³¹⁵⁹

Veil rent

At the time of the crucifixion of Christ, in confirmation that the observance of the ordinances of worship were no longer required for those to be under the then imminent Judæo-Christian dispensation, the veil of the Temple was rent from top to bottom: *'And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent.'*³¹⁶⁰ While this also signified the ending of the separation between man and God, this is so only for those of the Judæo-Christian dispensation. It is particularly important

Cripps, Richard S., *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Amos*, pp.199-201, and footnotes (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'Amos 5:26, 'Yea, ye have borne Siccuth your king and Chiun your images, the star of your god, which ye made to yourselves.'

Sikkuth: (or better, Sakkuth) from the vocalisation of the Hebrew shiqqus, means 'abomination,' the term of reproach applied by the Jews after Amos' day to heathen deities or their images in general. [Daniel's '*abomination of desolation*,' Dan 11:31,12:11, uses the same word]. Sakkuth was the proper name of the war god Adar-Malek ('king') Saturn, otherwise known as Ninurta (Ninib). The words '*your king*' (1) probably allude to the royal title of the god, whose name Adrammelech ('Adar is king') occurs in II Kings 17:31; or (2) they may refer to the king of Israel in king- ("Moloch-") worship. The syncretised worship would thus be of Sakkuth-Melech. (3) The LXX saw a reference to the Ammonite (?) god Moloch ('*the tabernacles of Moloch*')!

Chiun: or, rather, Kaiwan, appears to be another name for the same god, with reference especially to the planet Saturn. In an Assyrian text also, the names Sakkuth and Kaiwan have been found together. The form Kaiwan occurs in the Peshitta rendering of this verse. (The view held by Smith, Professor William Robertson, should perhaps be recorded. He maintained (in *Moses and the Prophets: The Old Testament in the Jewish Church*, edn. 2, p.402) that Kaiwan should be taken not as a proper noun, but as signifying a piece of religious apparatus—a pedestal or image-stand. Similarly with the other word, this scholar accepted the translation 'tabernacle,' i.e., portable shrine (as in LXX, Peshitto, Vulgate, A.V.) rather than Sakkuth).

'[T]he star of your god.' (1) The '*star*' may be some representation of the star (Saturn). (2) The translation '*your star god*,' though tempting, and a popular one, would seem to be unsupported by Hebrew grammatical usage. It seems certain that the service of Jehovah was never really abandoned even at the times when the Hebrew nation may be said, in the language of the prophet, to have '*forsaken*' Him (e.g. in Jer 2:13,5:19, etc.), or to have '*changed their God*' (Jer 2:11). Such prophetic language may refer only to the lessening of the people's attention to Jehovah [i.e., '*whoring after strange gods*'] consequent upon their having admitted another deity beside Him. Smith, (Professor William Robertson, *Moses and the Prophets: The Old Testament in the Jewish Church*, p.140), though not allowing in the present passage a reference to the gods Sakkuth and Kaiwan, recognised the existence of astral worship in Israel, and at the time of Amos. He observes: "From the connection it cannot have been a rival service to that of Jehovah, but probably attached itself in a subordinate way to the offices of His sanctuary."'

³¹⁵⁸ q.v. sup. for fuller explanation.

³¹⁵⁹ Gal 3:24,25

³¹⁶⁰ Mat 27:51

to note that the veil was not wholly removed: it is still there as a barrier to those not of the true Christian dispensation, and, consequently, for those, the ceremonial and ritual practices under the Law remain extant.³¹⁶¹

Early writers attest to the violence of the rent act. Jerome in a letter to Hedibia relates that the huge lintel of the Temple was broken and fell, and he connects this with the rending of the veil. Writing in the nineteenth-century, Edersheim says: 'It would seem an obvious inference to connect again this breaking of the lintel with an earthquake.'³¹⁶²

The lintel was massive; about ten metres long,³¹⁶³ and weighing over thirty tonnes. The Temple veils were twenty metres long,³¹⁶⁴ ten metres wide,³¹⁶⁵ ten centimetres thick,³¹⁶⁶ and wrought in seventy-two squares. They were so heavy that reportedly it took about three hundred priests to manipulate each one. Only the hand of God could have rent this massive veiling asunder. It is also reported in the Talmud that the massive bronze doors, which took many priests to open and close, opened of their own accord,³¹⁶⁷ despite being securely fixed with massive keepers embedded in a huge single stone threshold, although Josephus notes this as occurring shortly before the destruction of the Second Temple.³¹⁶⁸ Josephus also reports the mysterious extinction of the middle and chief light of the golden candlestick, forty years before the destruction of the Temple.³¹⁶⁹ If true, this would serve as an indication of God's extreme displeasure, nay, wrath over the events which had then just transpired: the ultimate crime of fallen man against his loving and beneficent Creator and Provider, One who was soon to become the 'first-born of the first-born' upon His ascension. In other words, it constituted a most excellent witness against the religious leadership of the time that had conspired to extinguish the life of our only Redeemer and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

As noted, the sacrificial offerings for sin apply to all in the current dispensation, bar the church, principally the 'elect.' The 'lapsed-enlightened' of Hebrews, *'For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Spirit, And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance;*

³¹⁶¹ regardless, in this context, of whether they observe to do it.

³¹⁶² Edersheim, Alfred, *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, p.610

³¹⁶³ 33 feet.

³¹⁶⁴ 66 feet.

³¹⁶⁵ 33 feet.

³¹⁶⁶ 4 inches.

³¹⁶⁷ cp. Zech 11:1

³¹⁶⁸ both occurrences could be valid, of course; one need not negate the other. At the time of crucifixion, the doors were indeed opened and the veil rent. Opening the doors of the Temple has a correlation with the ceremony of the Red Heifer (which presaged Christ, q.v. sup.) where the doors were opened at the time of the sacrifice of the heifer on a temporary altar located on a small perturbation on the west side mount of Olives, overlooking the Temple.

³¹⁶⁹ others report the western lamps of the Menorah refused to burn during the forty years' probation of the Jews, leading up to the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple. Why the western? Perhaps: Salvation cometh from the east, in Christ's return, while in the west, the Jews, were spiritually dead. The western lamps were also spatially closer to the Holy of Holies.

seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame,³¹⁷⁰ have denied the great sin offering, and are condemned. 'Once'³¹⁷¹ means 'once-and-for-all,' signifying singularity and finality. There is no repercharge.

The phrase 'very elect' in, *'For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect,'*³¹⁷² has caused some difficulty and disputation over its meaning. Taken in tandem with, *'for many be called, but few chosen,'*³¹⁷³ and then related back to Hebrews,³¹⁷⁴ it is clear that the 'very elect' are those who have their names written in the 'book of life' from the foundation of the earth. This can be gleaned from, *'And I entreat thee also, true yokefellowand with my other fellowlabourers, whose names are in the book of life,'*³¹⁷⁵ in tandem with, *'And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.'*³¹⁷⁶

Unless in the highly unlikely event that they fall away, the 'very elect' have their names indelibly written in the book of life. The antipathetic, those who are hypocritical, or actors, do not have their names written in the 'book of life,' no matter how good the 'performance' happens to be; God is not fooled. The 'elect,' *'He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.'*³¹⁷⁷ Some have thought that this form of predestination was subject to a moderation or revision, based on this tract. This is not the same as, *'Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and not be written with the righteous,'*³¹⁷⁸ which is a plea made by David of God against his sore enemies. There is nothing here that alters or qualifies the principle.

Despite what some seem to think, it is clear that there will be no 'plea bargaining' come the Day of Judgement: *'Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.'*³¹⁷⁹ There is no plea in mitigation here; no bribing the judge; no last, impassioned, emotion-ridden appeal for clemency: just the silence of the guilty.

³¹⁷⁰ Heb 6:4-6

³¹⁷¹ Greek: hapax.

³¹⁷² Mat 24:24; the converse is interesting, for while miracles, signs, and wonders from heaven do not convert the heart of the ungodly to righteousness, q.v. Psalms 78:1f., as only the working of the Holy Spirit can do this, they do influence the gullible and the wicked to furtherance of their wickedness, q.v. Revelation 13:13.

³¹⁷³ Mat 20:16

³¹⁷⁴ Heb 6:4

³¹⁷⁵ Philp 4:3

³¹⁷⁶ Rev 13:7,8

³¹⁷⁷ Rev 3:5

³¹⁷⁸ Psalms 69:28

³¹⁷⁹ Romans 3:19

But this, in itself, introduces a difficulty during the current dispensation. The veil was rent, and, forty years later, the entire Temple was destroyed. For those forty years the thread of crimson wool, tied to the doors of the Temple court on Yom Kippur, had failed to turn white, indicating that there had been no remission of the sins of the people.³¹⁸⁰ Since the Temple was the earthly manifestation of God dwelling with His people in the physically-built form, the rent, the thread, and the destruction signified God's total withdrawal. This withdrawal applies today with equal relevance, and the conclusion begged here is that when the Third Temple is built, under the 'good offices' of the Antichrist, it cannot become the dwelling place of God, for, in reality, it is utterly profaned from the beginning, even before the setting up of the Abomination of Desolation. This is another reason why the 'elect,' the separated true Christian church,³¹⁸¹ is pictured as the Holy Temple to which Christ returns, for all else is profane and unclean, and the then extant physical Temple must first be cleansed.

Rabbinic sacrifice system

The likely nature of rabbinic control of the Antichrist-facilitated Third Temple is evident: 'The rabbinic writings contain detailed commentary on the various sacrifices and offerings. Many have supposed that the Rabbis, writing after the destruction of the Second Temple, wanted to insure that nothing would be forgotten. That supposition, however, misses the crucial issue of authority.

The rabbinic writings contain only the views of the Rabbis on how the sacrifices and offerings were to be conducted. They do not contain the views of the priests who had conducted them. The Rabbis rejected all Sadducean views, and the priests were primarily Sadducean.

The rabbinic writings are a de facto declaration that the Rabbis are the ones with the authority. If the Temple were ever rebuilt, the priests would have to operate under rabbinic law.

A truly Jewish kingdom had to focus on the Temple. A rebuilt Temple would mean an active priesthood. The Rabbis needed a way to keep an active priesthood from reasserting its natural, biblical authority. The purpose of the rabbinic writings on the priestly domain was not to preserve a cherished system, but rather to create a radically different one.

In fact, much of the entire Talmud deals with areas such as ritual purity, holiness, holy days, and sacrifices, which in the Bible are clearly the domain of the priests. The Pharisees had already rejected some of the priestly practices. The Rabbis laid down the law for the priests.

This was a major transformation. Even during the time of the Great Revolt, the priests were recognised as the only authority in such matters. When the conflict arose over accepting or refusing the Emperor's sacrifice, Josephus records that, "And as they said these things, they produced those priests that were skilful in the cust-

³¹⁸⁰ *Yoma* 6.8; *Shabbath* 9.3; *Rosh hashanah* 31b; cf. *Isa* 1:18

³¹⁸¹ *Rev* 11:2

oms of their country, who made the report, that all their forefathers had received the sacrifices from foreign nations."³¹⁸²

If the Temple were not rebuilt, the Rabbis had prepared a new religious framework which had no place at all in it for the priests. "The daily synagogue service, which had originated quite independently of the Temple, probably without the consent of the priesthood, had been transformed into substitutes for the abolished services."³¹⁸³

Whatever need there had been before for priests was now met within a rabbinic context. Whatever priestly functions were not taken over by the Rabbis could only henceforth be conducted under rabbinic regulation. This became the rabbinic pattern for dealing with all existing Jewish authorities.³¹⁸⁴

Finally, there is also a moot point concerning access. While the operation of the Temple will depend, to some extent, on the exact terms flowing from the confirmed seven year covenant, it has to be remembered that the Second Temple had stone plaques, some in Hebrew and Aramaic, some in Greek, which had the following prohibition: 'No Gentile is to approach within the balustrade round the Temple and the peribolus. Whosoever is caught will be guilty of his own death which will follow.'

If the same were to be repeated, given the Jewish interpretation of 'Gentile,' then a large part of Judæo-Christian access probably would be proscribed in any event. Such a regime would not impact upon either of the two witnesses' access, however, as witnessing is to occur during the time of the Abomination,³¹⁸⁵ when the entire Temple will be profaned even in the eyes of the bulk of the Jews.³¹⁸⁶

Current bar on sacrifices

From the textual evidence led,³¹⁸⁷ it is apodictic that there is no more need of ritual sacrifices and attendant ceremonial Law for the current dispensation 'elect,' and, in consequence, no need either for the spirit beings of the Millennium and thereafter, as these are the consummation deriving from the sacrifice of Christ. This is not to denigrate the ritual sacrifices: it is simply that, together with man's attempt at compliance with the Law, they are unable to bring man to salvation, and are pointless for spirit beings in the kingdom.

But some, in riposte, would claim that the early Judæo-Christian church in the time of Paul still made ritual sacrifices, by referring to Acts, where Paul was talked into participating in a ritual purification and sacrifice with four other men: *'What is it therefore? the multitude must needs come together: for they will hear that thou*

³¹⁸² Josephus, *Wars of the Jews*, bk. II, ch 17, §2,3,4

³¹⁸³ Finkelstein, Louis, *Akiba: Scholar, Saint and Martyr*, p.217

³¹⁸⁴ Gruber, Daniel, *Rabbi Akiba's Messiah: The Origins of Rabbinic Authority*, pp.96,97 (sublinear emphasis added)

³¹⁸⁵ cf. 'The Seven Seals of Revelation' spreadsheet and sup., actually starting before the setting up of the abomination.

³¹⁸⁶ this implies that not all Jews will regard the Temple as wholly profaned, since Kabbalists, e.g., might well regard it as occult and valid.

³¹⁸⁷ Latin: ecce signum.

art come. Do therefore this that we say to thee: We have four men which have taken a vow on them: Them take, and purify thyself with them, and be at charges with them, that they may shave their heads: and all may know that those things, whereof they were informed concerning thee, are nothing: but that thou thyself also walkest orderly, and keepest the law. As touching the Gentiles which believe, we have written and concluded that they observe no such thing, save only that they keep themselves from things offered to idols, and from blood, and from strangled, and from fornication. Then Paul took the men, and the next day purifying himself with them entered into the temple, to signify the accomplishment of the days of purification, until that an offering should be offered for every one of them. And when the seven days were almost ended, the Jews which were of Asia, when they saw him in the temple, stirred up the people, and laid hands on him, Then the chief captain came near, and took him, and commanded him to be bound with two chains; and demanded who he was, and what he had done. And some cried one thing, some another, among the multitude: and when he could not know the certainty for the tumult, he commanded him to be carried into the castle.³¹⁸⁸ It must be noted that the days of purification did not complete, precluding his ritual sacrifice.

The offering referred to here is described in Numbers.³¹⁸⁹ According to the Law, this involved a seven day purification, the '*shaving of the head of their separation, a he-lamb for a burnt offering, an ewe-lamb for a sin offering, and a ram for a peace-offering,*' together with other offerings appertaining to them. Many used to do this together, when their vow expired about the same time, either for the greater expedition, or for greater solemnity. Now Paul, having so far of late complied with the Law as to take upon himself the vow of a Nazarite, and to signify the expiration of it by shaving his head at Cenchrea,³¹⁹⁰ according to the custom of those who lived at a distance from the Temple, they desired him to go a little further, and to join with those four in offering the sacrifices of a Nazarite; '*purifying thyself with them according to the law,*' and be willing, not only to take the trouble, but to '*be at charges with them,*' in buying sacrifices in the solemn occasion, and to join with them in the sacrifice.³¹⁹¹ This, they thought, would eventually stop the mouth of calumny, and every one would become convinced that the report of Paul teaching the Jews among the Gentiles to disregard the Law was false, that Paul was not the man he was represented thus to be, but rather did not teach the Jews to forsake Moses, and that he himself, being originally a '*Jew, walked orderly, and kept the law.*'³¹⁹² The belief was that then all would be well.

Well can the mind of man devise such stratagems, but no matter how forcefully they commend to his way of thinking, if they are not found conformed to the will of God, they will founder. In this case, Paul did not get even so far as to offer the sacrifice: God not only prevented it, the situation was used as the first part of the

³¹⁸⁸ Acts 21:22-27,33,34 (sublinear emphasis added)

³¹⁸⁹ Num 6:13-20

³¹⁹⁰ Acts 18:18e

³¹⁹¹ Acts 21:26

³¹⁹² Acts 22:3

road that would eventually lead Paul to Rome, and ultimate martyrdom. Thus God achieved two objectives in one, and there is no record in the New Testament of the early apostolic church being involved in ritual sacrifice, for the simple reason that the once-for-all sacrifice had already been made for the 'election' of the Judæo-Christian church. In fact, the only scriptural record we have is of God actually intervening to prevent such a ritual sacrifice being made. Paul's growth in understanding can be seen from the fact that while in Acts he had wanted to sacrifice in the Temple, he had it righted by the time of writing in Hebrews, '*Now where there is forgiveness of these things, there is no longer any offering for sin.*'³¹⁹³

Of course, the current lack of a Temple in Jerusalem does act as a bar, albeit a temporary one, to any ritual sacrifices. But this will be removed, near the end, as indicated in Bible prophecy. And, therefore, given these soon-coming events and circumstances, it is important that Judæo-Christian doctrine concerning the ritual sacrifices should be clearly defined. Doubtless, the re-constituted ritual sacrifices will be undertaken by the proper authorities and parties, subject, of course, to rabbinical control, but Judæo-Christians can have no truck with that.

Prince of Ezekiel

However, there is one point which has still to be clarified in relation to the conduct of ritual sacrifices. This is sometimes referred to as the matter of the prince of Ezekiel.³¹⁹⁴ This prince, a poor translation of the Hebrew meaning, '*an exalted one*,' or '*a king*,'³¹⁹⁵ features quite heavily in Ezekiel.³¹⁹⁶ As to the identity of this '*prince*,' some have considered him to be the Messiah, but this is impossible, since he needs to offer a sin offering,³¹⁹⁷ and he has sons.³¹⁹⁸ According to Ryrie,³¹⁹⁹ he is a human, mortal representative of the Messiah in the government of the kingdom. But is this correct in the details?

The outward sanctuary is to remain shut after the Lord's entrance through it, lest a mortal should desecrate it: '*Then said the Lord unto me; This gate shall be shut, it shall not be opened, and no man shall enter in by it; because the Lord, the God of Israel, hath entered in by it, therefore it shall be shut.*'³²⁰⁰ This also indicates that the Divine Presence in the Most Holy Sanctuary, the Messiah, Christ, will never depart from His people. However, even the '*prince*' is not to use this gate, but he is permitted to eat the sacrificial meal in the vestibule, sometimes referred to as a minor side gate, as confirmed in, '*It is for the prince; the prince, he shall sit in it to*

³¹⁹³ Heb 10:18

³¹⁹⁴ Ezekiel prophesied to '*the house of Israel*,' but he uses that phrase in contradistinction to '*the whole house of Israel*.' Curiously, he uses the former to describe the Jews, the latter to describe the Israelites as a whole.

³¹⁹⁵ Hebrew: nasiv.

³¹⁹⁶ Ezekiel chpts. 44–46,48

³¹⁹⁷ Ezek 45:22

³¹⁹⁸ Ezek 46:16

³¹⁹⁹ Ryrie, Charles Caldwell, *The Ryrie Study Bible*, p.1208

³²⁰⁰ Ezek 44:2

eat bread before the Lord; he shall enter by way of the porch of that gate, and shall go out by the way of the same.'³²⁰¹ Given the composition of the Royal Priesthood in the Millennium, that of spirit beings, the closest in terms of propinquity that a sin sacrifice for sins of error and omission, but not wilful sins, of those keeping themselves outside the church in the time of the Millennium is permitted to approach to the Lord's Sanctuary is this '*porch of that gate*,' in the person and function of the '*prince*.'

Ezekiel gives the role of the '*prince*.' '*And it shall be the prince's part to give burnt offerings, and meat offerings, and drink offerings, in the feasts, and in the new moons, and in the sabbaths, in all the solemnities of the house of Israel: he shall prepare the sin offering, and the meat offering, and the burnt offering, and the peace offerings, to make reconciliation for the house of Israel.*'³²⁰² It also shows that this '*prince*' offers up a sin offering for himself, and then for the people: '*In the first month, in the fourteenth day of the month, ye shall have the passover, a feast of seven days; unleavened bread shall be eaten. And upon that day shall the prince prepare for himself, and for all the people of the land, a bullock for a sin offering. And seven days of the feast he shall prepare a burnt offering to the Lord, seven bullocks and seven rams without blemish, daily the seven days; and a kid of the goats daily for a sin offering.*'³²⁰³

The Ezekiel '*prince*' or king sacrifices for his own sins, on a recurring basis, as one of his duties is that of making continuing sacrifices. Taken in the context of them making '*reconciliation for the house of Israel*,' this means that the '*prince*' or king is a legitimate—as opposed to many illegitimate former incumbents—but abdicated, human heir to the throne of David at the Millennium, after He Who cometh, '*whose throne it is*' takes His throne. This '*prince*' or king and his progeny will be sinners and sensibly outside the church, as he has to make a sin offering for himself, and cannot enter in at the eastern gate, but may only go as far as the threshold because of sin. Therefore, the sins in error and of the simple continue throughout the Millennium. For those not covered by the atoning blood of the Lamb, a sacrificial oblation must be made.

The priests officiating in this are the spirit-born priests of the altar: '*And the chamber whose prospect is towards the north is for the priests, the keepers of the charge of the altar: these are the sons of Zadok among the sons of Levi, which come near the Lord to minister unto him.*'³²⁰⁴ This means that the Old Covenant Law runs through until the end of the Millennium, after which the sacrificial Law no longer applies to anybody, for none will be outside the church and sinning. Then, finally, the Old Covenant will be done away completely, for

³²⁰¹ Ezek 44:3

³²⁰² Ezek 45:17

³²⁰³ Ezek 45:21-23; he cannot be King David, also mentioned as a prince in Ezek 34:11f, especially v.24a, for he will be immortal by that time through being included in the previously-risen '*dead in Christ*,' q.v. sup.

³²⁰⁴ Ezek 40:46; the ceremonies described in Ezek 45:19,20—the blood of the sin sacrifice being put upon the posts of the entrance to the house of God and upon the four corners of the altar, and also the '*offering on the seventh day of the first month for the erring and the simple*' to expiate the side-slips of the humans then alive in order not to violate the holiness of the Sanctuary and of its resident, Christ—are Millennial Temple ceremonies, and are not commanded in the Torah. Suggestions that these be enacted nowadays are in profound error, as is the strange, utterly unbiblical notion that the latter be accompanied by a fast.

all time, at the end of the Millennium, because the New Covenant, the kingdom of God, will have arrived in full. Notwithstanding this, the Law will run through into the New Covenant, but in a new form, as can be seen from, *'For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws in their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest.'*³²⁰⁵ Thus the Law will be complete and purified, no more a written code on stone tablets, but indelibly imprinted in the minds of all mankind. There will be no sin, ever, ever, again. Christ left a Testament, of the New Covenant, much better than the Old Covenant, and which is still to come, partly at the end of this dispensation, for the firstfruits, and, fully, at the end of the Millennium, for all who are saved and who enter into the kingdom of God.

By way of intimation of the linking through of the Old Covenant to the New Covenant in terms of the Law, and the immediacy of the New Covenant, there is an interesting and telling adjustment in Romans, wherein Paul cites Deuteronomy³²⁰⁶ but substitutes the word '*Christ*' for the eventual return of Israel to Palestine in terms of the Old Covenant and the Torah: *'But the righteousness which is of faith speaks on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:) Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is to bring Christ up from the dead.) But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach,'*³²⁰⁷ compared with, *'And it shall come to pass, when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee, and thou shalt call them to mind among all the nations, whither the Lord thy God hath driven thee. And shalt return unto the Lord thy God, and shalt obey his voice according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children, with all thine heart, and with all thy soul'*³²⁰⁸....*If thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to keep his commandments and his statutes which are written in this book of the law, and if thou turn unto the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul. For this commandment which I command thee this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven, that thou shouldst say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldst say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it. But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it.'*³²⁰⁹

³²⁰⁵ Heb 8:8-11

³²⁰⁶ Deut 30:11-14

³²⁰⁷ Rom 10:6-8

³²⁰⁸ Hebrew: nephesh, in context, '*mind*.'

³²⁰⁹ Deut 30:1-3,10-14

Now continuing through to Ezekiel chapter forty-six, there is given a listing of ritual sacrifices and observances which do not conform to the Mosaic observances, and apparently were never observed by the Jews during the time of the Second Temple.³²¹⁰ Nowhere in the history of the latter part of the Jewish Temple worship is there any indication that they were governed by these ordinances, but only by the Law of Moses. Apparently, the Jews were then looking upon the Ezekiel ordinances to be observed in the next age after, as mystical, in their view, and not literal.

If this be a true recital of fundamental Jewish belief, it only serves to demonstrate the wanting, for it is clear that the ordinances in Ezekiel compose a still future picture of the millennial Fourth Temple and its rites. The '*prince*,' or '*elevated one*,' of Israel is a mortal being, of the line of David, living during the Millennium. He has sons,³²¹¹ and thus a lineage after him, throughout the Millennium. But it is known that the throne of David will be taken by the Messiah on His return, as it is rightfully His: '*I will overturn, overturn, overturn it: and it shall be no more, until he come whose right it is; and I will give it him.*'³²¹² The then mortal incumbent, as King David was never to want a man to sit on his throne, confirmed in, '*I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant, Thy seed will I establish forever, and build up thy throne to all generations. Selah,*'³²¹³ will have to hand over the throne of David to the Messiah: Christ. Despite this, the human lineage continues, and the role then performed by the '*prince*,' or '*elevated one*,' of Israel is that of offerings on behalf of himself and the people, as recited above. Accordingly, the '*prince*' of Ezekiel is the abdicated king who formerly occupied the royal throne of David, and, in this sense, '*prince*' is a slightly less unreasonable translation. It should also be noted that the Messiah Himself is referred to in translation in Daniel as the '*Prince of princes*,'³²¹⁴ and as, '*Messiah the Prince*,'³²¹⁵ and that neither of the Hebrew words employed by Daniel automatically imports the meaning '*king*,'³²¹⁶ although he is also designated '*King of kings and Lord of lords.*'³²¹⁷

A few final aspects of the Law, as applying at the moment to Judæo-Christians, and which have again resulted in some considerable confusion, are dealt with below: dietary Law, the Law regarding circumcision, and such matters as fringes and tassels, mezuzah, and phylacteries.

Dietary Law

Some legalists claim that the dietary Law is both applicable, and serves as a filter, or gate to salvation, with non-compliance, whatever the circumstance, resulting in the immediate loss of salvation. The less extreme

³²¹⁰ Ezek 46:15f.

³²¹¹ Ezek 46:16

³²¹² Ezek 21:26,27

³²¹³ Psa 89:3,4

³²¹⁴ Dan 8:25c

³²¹⁵ Dan 9:25b

³²¹⁶ Hebrew: sar ('*ruler*,' '*leader*,' or '*chieftain*') and nagivd (nasiy) respectively.

³²¹⁷ Rev 19:16

hold that wilful failure to comply results in loss of salvation. Liberals would hold that the entire has been swept away. But is any a correct doctrine, or merely an invention of man intended to place needless obstacles in the path of salvation? Or maybe there is a prescriptive level, beyond which salvation is lost?

Surprisingly, perhaps, one of the simplest examples of the actual meaning of the Law pertaining to clean and unclean foods, and its application, can be gleaned from the proscription placed on the eating of mice and the like. The Law is given in Leviticus: *'These also shall be unclean unto you among the creeping things that creep upon the earth; the weasel, and the mouse, and the tortoise after his kind.'*³²¹⁸ The result of sin involving the eating of mice is given: *'They that sanctify themselves, and purify themselves in the gardens behind one tree in the midst, eating swine's flesh, and the abomination, and the mouse, shall be consumed together, saith the Lord.'*³²¹⁹

It is clear from this text that the sin prefigured here is a compounded one—basically that of apostate religion—also happening to involve the eating of prohibited swine's flesh and the mouse; such will be the extent of pagan belief and practice in the time of the end. Plutarch says: 'The Egyptians were of the opinion that darkness was prior to light, and that the latter was produced from mice, in the fifth generation, at the time of the new moon.'³²²⁰

In a similar way, pagan religious beliefs and practices involving idolatry have inevitably led to immoral acts and sexual depravity. But the eating of any prohibited 'foodstuff' under the Law in itself cannot present a bar to salvation, as even King David ate the shewbread when hungry, *'At that time Jesus went on the sabbath day through the corn; and his disciples were an hungred, and began to pluck the ears of corn, and to eat. But when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto him, Behold, thy disciples do that which is not lawful to do upon the sabbath day. But he said unto them, Have ye not read what David did, when he was an hungred, and they that were with him; How he entered into the house of God, and did eat the shewbread, which was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them which were with him, but only for the priests?'*³²²¹ The passage here referred to is in Samuel.³²²² Christ makes it clear that in the case of necessity, the peripherals of ceremonial Law might be overruled. The Law on suitable and unsuitable food was actually set both for the physical wellbeing of man and to engender obedience.

There are far weightier matters to be considered, as seen from Christ's warning: *'Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth the man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man. Do ye not yet understand, that whatsoever entereth in at the mouth goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the draught? But*

³²¹⁸ Lev 11:29

³²¹⁹ Isa 66:17

³²²⁰ Plutarch, *Symposiaca*, Qæst. 5 vol. ii., p.670, B; as an explanation of what appears profoundly enigmatic, the 'fifth generation' was Nimrod (with Noah counted 'twice-born' by pagans); their new moon being the first visible-light crescent.

³²²¹ Mat 12:1-4

³²²² I Sam 21:1-6

*those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart: and they defile the man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: These are the things which defile a man: but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man.*³²²³ While Christ was here speaking against the Pharisaic ruling prohibiting eating with unwashed hands, and not unclean food per se, the contention remains solid: there are far weightier matters.

That said, it must be appreciated that wholesale and wilful disregard for God's dietary laws brings down upon the offender a twofold curse:

1. That of ill health occasioned by eating foods not intended for us by our Lord and Creator; and,
2. The consequences of patently wilful disobedience so offensive to God, and this possibly allied to apostasy.

To the Judæo-Christian by far the greater danger lies in the latter, as repeated / unrepented wilful sin removes the converted sinner from grace, returning the sinner to being under the curse of the Law, which is death.

Only God can decide whether obtuse or near-wholesale dietary disobedience on the part of the individual merits this penalty, as He alone knows whether the act is wilful, as opposed to accidental, or of weakness, or of dire necessity in the case of hunger. He also knows whether it is allied to and compounded with other sins of an altogether more serious nature. It should be appreciated, however, that there can be no 'permissible prescription,' as any such regime would simply serve to make a mockery of the Law. The path to salvation is hard enough without having to contend with the futility of barriers arising from the additions and imports of man.³²²⁴

Circumcision

As to the matter of circumcision, and compliance on the part of the Judæo-Christian, especially if of a Gentile background, Paul supplies the answer: *'Is any man being called being circumcised? Let him not become uncircumcised. Is any called in uncircumcision? Let him not be circumcised. Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the [important matter is] keeping of the commandments of God. Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called,'*³²²⁵ and, *'For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love,'*³²²⁶ and finally, *'For circumcision verily profiteth, if thou keep the law: but if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision. Therefore if the uncircumcision keep the righteousness of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be counted for circumcision? And shall*

³²²³ Mat 15:11,17-20 (sublinear emphasis added)

³²²⁴ also cf. 'Food Laws' in Appendix.

³²²⁵ I Cor 7:18-20 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

³²²⁶ Gal 5:6

*not uncircumcision which is by nature, if it fulfil the law, judge thee, who by the letter and circumcision transgress the law? For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.'*³²²⁷

*'Then came he to Derbe and Lystra: and, behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timotheus, the son of a certain woman, which was a Jewess, and believed; but his father was a Greek: Which was well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium. Him would Paul have to go forth with him; and took and circumcised him because of the Jews which were in those quarters: for they knew all that his father was a Greek.'*³²²⁸

At first pass, this seems to contradict everything that Paul wrote on the subject of circumcision, and its worthlessness when done retrospectively for Jews, and under any circumstances for Gentiles. The Law was perfectly clear and very precise: circumcision was for male babies of the Israelites on the eighth day. Anything else—other than in the most extreme circumstance (for adult males of the children of Israel immediately before entry into the Promised Land, for circumcision had not been done during the time of wandering in the wilderness)—was of no worth. So why did Paul do it here? Was it an aberration?

The reason given in Scripture is: *'because of the Jews which were in those quarters: for they knew all that his father was a Greek.'*³²²⁹ The Jews regarded their nationality and race as descending from their mothers. Since Timothy's mother was Jewish, they would regard him as Jewish. But there was a surmounting difficulty, for his father was a Greek, and the Greeks did not circumcise their male offspring, neither would they have allowed them to be circumcised, for that would have placed the child firmly among the Jews, not among the Greeks. In turn, an uncircumcised son of a Jewish mother would be regarded by Jews as deficient in his Jewishness, and certainly not someone to be regarded as in any way qualified to preach to them on matters relating to the Law and the prophets.

Paul's 'solution' to that particular problem was to circumcise retrospectively, in the knowledge that Timothy would not regard such an act as placing him legalistically under the Law and removing him beyond God's grace. He was Judæo-Christian, and would know that the myopic Pharisaic view of the Law was deeply misplaced, and could not bring salvation. Only faith in Jesus Christ could do that. And so the retrospective act would have no theological effect on Timothy, but would have a substantial effect on the Jewish unbelievers *'in the region,'* enabling Timothy to speak and preach to them about Christianity.

Therein, however, lies the basic wanting in Paul's thought and action. Barclay identifies it, inadvertently: 'No one would ever dare to say that Paul was a weak character. But this inflexible Paul was able to yield on

³²²⁷ Rom 2:25-29 (sublinear emphasis added)

³²²⁸ Acts 16:1-3

³²²⁹ Acts 16:3b

matters which he regarded as non-essential or for the greater good of the community. Everyone knows what Paul thought of circumcision, yet he circumcised Timothy simply because he knew that Timothy circumcised would find opportunities for the spread of the gospel which would be closed to Timothy uncircumcised.³²³⁰

The fact remains that Paul (and, by implication, Timothy, a leader of a local church) was apostle to the Gentiles.³²³¹ He did not have a general remit to the Jews. Any Jews who were in the churches of the diaspora, in Greek or Roman societies, would have access to and knowledge of the Law and the teaching of the church to rely upon, with the latter ensuring that the traditional Jewish prejudice against uncircumcised sons of Jewish mothers received short shrift.

It was Paul's philosophy, being '*a Jew to the Jews and a Greek to the Greeks*,' that he considered the best way to spread the gospel as widely and as quickly as possible. What it misses, however, is the fact that only those selected by God are drawn to true Christianity. 'Marketing,' of which this could be seen as an early form, has nothing to do with any benefit deriving from the spreading of the gospel. It can increase the short-term spread in a given diaspora locality, but there is nothing to suggest that it ever produced one additional real convert.

The same approach is seen in Acts, 'addressing the Areopagus,'³²³² where Paul identifies the '*unknown god*'³²³³ as the true God. But that '*god*' had a pagan altar erected to him, so there was a decided risk in the association. That it worked, to an extent, is evident,³²³⁴ where certain people believed, but it should be noted that the only names mentioned among them are Greek, not Jewish.

A vastly different approach was needed to interface with pagan Gentiles than with Jews. What Paul appears to have done is to attempt to apply his 'Greek ploy' to the Jews of the diaspora in his circumcising of Timothy. And, in context, that 'Jewish ploy' is questionable. Paul misunderstood the cessation of ritual sacrifices under the Law, as can be seen in his decision to take the vow of the Nazarite,³²³⁵ and also it seems that he misunderstood or wittingly misapplied the settled position on retrospective circumcision. In the previous chapter of Acts, retrospective circumcision, '*according to the custom of Moses*,'³²³⁶ in order for one to be saved, was

³²³⁰ Barclay, William, *Ethics in a Permissive Society*, p.63

³²³¹ Rom 11:13,15:16; Gal 1:16,2:1-10; Eph 3:1,8; I Tim 2:7; II Tim 2:11

³²³² Acts 17:22-34; or Areios Pagos, the 'Rock of Aries.'

³²³³ Acts 17:23c

³²³⁴ Acts 17:24

³²³⁵ q.v. sup.

³²³⁶ Ex 4:24-26 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets): '*And it came to pass by the way in the inn, that the Lord met him [Moses], and sought to kill him. Then Zipporah [his wife] took a sharp stone, and cut off the foreskin of her son [Gershom], and cast it at his feet, and said, Surely a bloody husband art thou to me. So he let him go: then she said, A bloody husband thou art, because of the circumcision.*'

Interestingly, Moses had not had his son circumcised according to the Law. Zipporah's action made good that wanting, so far as it could be made good. In addition, the fact that the Lord met Moses with a view to killing him, as punishment for murder, indicates that Moses had not fully repented of it, even after forty years' probation in the land of Midian. Again, Zipporah's action came to his aid, with the circumcision of Gershom standing as substitutionary blood (there was no ritual sacrificial Law at that time, for that did not appear until the events at the mount of Horeb).

proposed by certain Jews who came down from Judæa.³²³⁷ That nonsense was thrown out by the Jerusalem Council,³²³⁸ and that same rational and ruling should have impacted upon and prevented Paul from circumcising Timothy.³²³⁹

The fact that the Philistines are singled out in the Old Testament as *'uncircumcised'*,³²⁴⁰ implies that some other peoples with whom the Israelites were brought in contact practiced circumcision. This is known with reference to the Egyptians from Herodotus³²⁴¹ and where Joshua, after he had circumcised the Israelites, says, *'This day have I rolled away the reproach of Egypt from off you.'*³²⁴² By *'reproach of Egypt'* he meant their uncircumcised condition, which made them an object of contempt to the Egyptians. Edom, Ammon, and Moab, tracing a form of common descent with Israel, might have been presumed to have practiced it, even if the passage does not give definite information to that effect. The Arabs traced descent from Ishmael, whose circumcision is recorded in Genesis.³²⁴³ Josephus attested the practice of it by the Arabians.³²⁴⁴ The phrase, *'circumcision in their uncircumcision,'* means those who are circumcised in the flesh but not in the heart, and has an interesting corollary in the writings of Paul.³²⁴⁵ Judah could not rely on a rite shared, perhaps not in its absolute detail but certainly in its generality, with the heathen. Indeed, the corresponding inward circumcision is seen to be as lacking in Judah as it was in the surrounding heathen tribes. The phrase, *'all these nations are uncircumcised, and all the house of Israel are uncircumcised in the heart,'*³²⁴⁶ therefore, must be taken in the spiritual sense, in that the outward, physical rite had had no inner effect, and as a result, standing alone, was worthless and void.

As for the newly-converted adult Gentiles in the early New Testament church, circumcision, which by definition would have been a retrospective act, was unnecessary, as Paul and the other apostles point out.³²⁴⁷ There was no retrospective imperative under the Law, nor any God-given sanction by way of derogation or special permission. The circumcision of adult males, recorded in the book of Joshua, was of Israelite-born males who had not been circumcised under the Law during forty years' wandering in the wilderness. To unite the Israelite-born and the Promised Land, and to remove the reproach of the heathen, circumcision was performed retrospectively, but that was a wholly unique circumstance and not set up as an ordinance.

³²³⁷ Acts 15:1

³²³⁸ Acts 15:6-29

³²³⁹ *Jer. Bk. Vol. 1 p.169; Jer 9:25,26, 'Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will punish all of them which are circumcised in their uncircumcision; Egypt, and Judah, and Edom, and the children of Ammon, and Moab, and all that have the corners of their hair polled, that dwell in the wilderness; for all the nations are uncircumcised, and all the house of Israel are uncircumcised in heart.'*

³²⁴⁰ Judg 14:3b; II Sam 1:20b

³²⁴¹ Herodotus II. 104

³²⁴² Jos 5:9

³²⁴³ Gen 17:23-26

³²⁴⁴ Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, I. xii.2

³²⁴⁵ Rom 2:25b

³²⁴⁶ Jer 9:26b

³²⁴⁷ Acts 15:6-29

Despite the mass of background, the whole question of the circumcision of the Gentile converts had arisen in the apostolic church at Jerusalem as a result of agitation by certain converts from the sect of the Pharisees: *'But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying, That it was needful to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses.'*³²⁴⁸

Physical circumcision is both a *'token of the covenant betwixt me [God] and you [Abraham and his progeny],'*³²⁴⁹ and a symbol of spiritual circumcision of the heart, as seen from Deuteronomy, *'Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no more stiffnecked. And the Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live,'*³²⁵⁰ and Jeremiah, *'Circumcise yourselves to the Lord, and take away the foreskins of your heart, ye men of Judah and Jerusalem.'*³²⁵¹ This was an external sign, but God, through Jeremiah, demanded an inner circumcision, a cleansing and dedication of the heart. Such a doctrine naturally points the way to Jeremiah's ultimate contribution to religious and doctrinal development of the New Covenant,³²⁵² in which he approximates to the New Testament. The warning for ignoring this on the part of the men of Judah and failing to take the necessary action is stark indeed: God's judgement against them will be executed.

It is the latter circumcision after which all should seek, that of the heart, for the former, if merely a badge, is unprofitable. And if having attained the latter, for the Gentile converts that is all that is necessary; that is the goal, and the former is mere outward show. Paul describes circumcision in the following terms: *'And he [Abraham] received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also.'*³²⁵³ The position concerning Abraham, and the promises, and circumcision, is germane, for, as has been seen, the promises were delivered by God when, as yet, Abraham was uncircumcised in the flesh. It is evident that he was circumcised in his heart long before, however, for it is the latter which drew him close to God.

The act of circumcision is not only a sign of the Abrahamic covenant made unilaterally by God between Him and His people, sealed in blood,³²⁵⁴ and a sign of the faith that Abraham had in his uncircumcision,³²⁵⁵ it is also a lower signifier of the removal of the penalty of sin by God through substitutionary blood (in Moses' case,

³²⁴⁸ Acts 15:5

³²⁴⁹ Gen 17:11b (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

³²⁵⁰ Deut 10:16,30:6

³²⁵¹ Jer 4:4

³²⁵² Jer 31:31-34

³²⁵³ Rom 4:11 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

³²⁵⁴ Gen 15:1-21,17:1-14

³²⁵⁵ Rom 4:11

this was the substitutionary removal of the death penalty under the Law for his killing the Egyptian forty years earlier).³²⁵⁶

Circumcision demonstrated an initial and singular earnest of God's willingness and ability to forgive future human sin on the basis of a reflective once-and-for-all non-lethal blood sacrifice for each and every new-born Israelite male if allied to a strenuous compliance with the Law on the part of man. Circumcision, of course, could not be repeated for the individual, in contrast to the substitutionary sacrificial Law, so, in that sense, it was superior, both in terms of efficacy (it was done only once), and in blood quality (human versus animal blood). It did not involve death, but the little blood involved can be seen to reflect back to God's unilateral covenant with Abraham, which was sealed in blood.³²⁵⁷ Circumcision's blood is insignificant, of course, in comparison with the fulfilling blood sacrifice of Christ, the only man who did not sin.

Despite the fact that the covenant with Abraham preceded the '*law [which] was added because of transgressions*,'³²⁵⁸ and the miraculous escape from Egypt and the forces of pharaoh, by the time of the events leading to the '*added law*,' the dark sin of the people had become inveterate, as if the hot lustfulness and wild, tumultuous excitement of Baal worship, the delirious raptures of a sensual religion, could ever bring rest, contentment and fulfilment. What matters the mere name of the deity when the rites by which he is honoured are pagan? No lavish ceremonial or costly sacrifices could commend to God's favour a people stained with such sins. It was the debased pagan rites at Horeb, performed, as it were, in the very face of God, as an affront, that prefaced the introduction of expiatory, substitutionary animal blood sacrifices involving death.

The final once-and-for-all blood sacrifice, involving death, that of Jesus Christ, wiped away the need of any further animal blood sacrifices for Judæo-Christians, but the need of circumcision remains, for it is '[God's] *covenant in [our] flesh for an everlasting covenant*.'³²⁵⁹ Male new-borns, the sons of Gentile believers who have been grafted into the church, need to be circumcised according to the Law, as seen by analogy: '*He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised: and my covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant. And the uncircumcised manchild whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant*.'³²⁶⁰ If bought servants / slaves had to be circumcised under the Law, then new-born males of Gentile converts need be too. Adult Gentiles, however, need not, despite the wild contention of '*certain men which came down from Judæa [to Antioch]....and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved*,'³²⁶¹ and, '*That it was needful to*

³²⁵⁶ Ex 2:11,12

³²⁵⁷ Gen 15:9-11,17,18

³²⁵⁸ Gal 3:19b; viz., the sacrificial law added at Horeb following the events involving the golden calf or calves.

³²⁵⁹ Gen 17:13b (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

³²⁶⁰ Gen 17:13,14

³²⁶¹ Acts 15:1 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

*circumcise themselves,*³²⁶² *so to transmit a message to the others*³²⁶³ *to attend carefully the law of Moses.*³²⁶⁴

³²⁶⁵ Again, the K.J.V. has a woeful translation of the last, which when corrected reads: *'To attend carefully the law of Moses themselves, so to transmit a message to the others.'*

Paul's comments on circumcision, take in context and at the time when they were delivered, clearly refer to adult male Gentiles coming into the early church, obviously without having been ritually circumcised when eight days old. For them, circumcision in the flesh was not possible in accordance with the Law, as it had to be conducted on the eighth day after birth, and, in any event, they were circumcised in the heart. It was by that means that they were grafted in, being branches from the wild olive tree, to Israel, the good olive tree.³²⁶⁶ Male offspring of former Gentiles who had entered into the church would be circumcised, of course, in accordance with the Law, for once it can be complied with, it must be: it is the Law. It is the previous uncircumcised state of Abram, while in belief, and with his faith counted as unto righteousness, that provides a means of entry of adult Gentiles into the church as the congregation of the children of Israel, which has a ritual of circumcision under the Law, for as Christ stated, *'Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.'*³²⁶⁷

Certainly is it profitable to continue to physically circumcise newly born males after the Law, those who should be so, but, *'Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision.'*³²⁶⁸ *For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit.'*³²⁶⁹ This proscribes the 'retro-circumcision' or 'mutilation' of male adults, despite Paul's aberrant deed concerning Timotheus recorded in Acts.³²⁷⁰ Paul acted that he might not offend the Jews and obstruct his own usefulness and that of Timotheus in preaching the gospel,³²⁷¹ but it was contrary to the Law. Also proscribed for circumcision are those who have progressed through uncircumcision of the outward type to a circumcision of the heart of the inner man. It also proscribes all forms of female circumcision, of course. A recently-curtailed Jewish practice of exhuming the dead bodies of uncircumcised Jews and then performing a form of 'ritual circumcision' on the remains hardly needs comment, as it is difficult to do justice to its rank absurdity.

Some cite Paul's words in Galatians as authorisation of the cessation of the ritual of circumcision, *'Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yolk of bond-*

³²⁶² Greek: autos.

³²⁶³ Greek: paraggello.

³²⁶⁴ Acts 15:5b, correct translation.

³²⁶⁵ Acts 15:24c is a translator's explanatory addition; *'saying ye must be circumcised and keep the law'* does not appear in the original Greek.

³²⁶⁶ Rom 11:17,19,23,24

³²⁶⁷ Mat 5:18

³²⁶⁸ Greek: katatome, *'mutilation.'*

³²⁶⁹ Phlp 3:2,3

³²⁷⁰ Acts 16:1-3

³²⁷¹ Grabbe, Orlin, letter, late 1973AD, p.5, section on circumcision.

age. Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace. For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith. For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love,³²⁷² but this is a false estimate of what Paul was saying. The Gentiles to whom he principally addressed his remarks were contemplating actions which would constitute turning to living under the curse of the Law. This means that they regarded compliance with the Law as the means of justification and salvation, and, in so doing, they were in danger of falling from grace, and taking upon themselves the *'the yolk of bondage.'* Paul points out that circumcision, or uncircumcision, avails man of nothing, but, rather, it is the faith that is counted for righteousness in Christ Jesus that matters. That Paul was still preaching correct, biblical circumcision, however, is confirmed later in Paul's question, *'And I, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution? then is the offence of the cross ceased.'*³²⁷³ Correct, ritual circumcision was still being preached, for it was, and is, the Law. Retro-circumcision, of Gentile adult males, or dead Jews for that matter, was not, and is not, the Law.

There is one final issue concerning circumcision, and an important one, for that is the day prescribed for the ritual: the eighth day. While circumcision is a 'sign' of the covenant, and looks back to that event, the eighth day has significance too. But it looks forward, in a sense, to the very resurrection of Christ, by which means the New Covenant will become available, in early course, upon His glorious return to earth, for eight is the 'number' of resurrection. Against this there is the contention, by Pfeiffer,³²⁷⁴ which maintains, with support from the Septuagint³²⁷⁵ and the Samaritan Pentateuch, that, in original form, the command in Genesis reads: *'And the uncircumcised manchild whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised on the seventh day, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant.'*³²⁷⁶ This would mean that, *'And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you'*³²⁷⁷ is intended to operate as a form of bar, for no male child could attain his eighth day without having been circumcised. If this were true, then the Jews have been and are circumcising their males on the wrong day. However, given that the New Testament confirms an actual eighth-day circumcision,³²⁷⁸ the non-Hebrew versions are erroneous on this point.

³²⁷² Gal 5:1-6

³²⁷³ Gal 5:11

³²⁷⁴ Pfeiffer, Robert Henry, *Introduction to the Old Testament*, p.103

³²⁷⁵ LXX.

³²⁷⁶ Gen 17:14 (sublinear emphasis added)

³²⁷⁷ Gen 17:12a

³²⁷⁸ Acts 7:8; Phlp 3:5

Fringes & tassels

The wearing of these was instructed by God to the children of Israel.³²⁷⁹ A blue thread is included in the tassels on the Jewish prayer-shawl.³²⁸⁰ As part of the Law, it is binding on Judæo-Christians today as a fringe to a garment, with a blue thread or cord, serving as a reminder to observe God's commandments and refrain from sin. There is, of course, no prayer-shawl in Judæo-Christianity,³²⁸¹ for it is worn over the head while praying; a direct contravention of, *'Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonoureth his head.'*³²⁸² Neither is a kippah, the Jewish skullcap, called yarmulke in Yiddish, permissible, for the same reason.

Mezuzah

It is commanded in Deuteronomy that writings concerning love for God be placed on dwelling-house gates and doorposts. Orthodox Jewish scribes write these on parchment scroll, and Jews insert them in a form of vial, called a mezuzah, and fix them to the gates and doorposts of their dwellings. As part of God's Law, this applies to Judæo-Christians, but only as directly-applied writings, not on scrolls in vials fixed to doorposts.³²⁸³

Phylacteries

These are small leather boxes³²⁸⁴ with binding straps containing certain Scriptures, mainly from Deuteronomy, although with a variety of selected texts depending on the particular Jewish tradition involved, written by scribes on parchment. These boxes are bound physically by Orthodox Jews on the arm and forehead. Deuteronomy's *'binding'* and *'frontlets'*³²⁸⁵ are interpreted in a spiritual manner by Judæo-Christians to mean always loving and remembering God in action and deed (hand, not arm) and in thought (frontlets between eyes), rather than in the Orthodox Judaic practice of applying a physical leather binding while praying.

³²⁷⁹ Num 15:37-41; v. 38, *'Speak unto the children of Israel, and bid them that they make them fringes in the borders of their garments throughout their generations, and that they put upon the fringe of the borders a ribband of blue.'* *'Fringes,'* Hebrew: tsiytsot, need not mean tassels; fringes is much more likely correct. *'Ribband,'* Hebrew: pathiy, is a twisted cord, taken to be of twine or thread. Jewish white and blue tassels are not in conformity with God's command; they are stylized, overemphasised devices, apparently largely for outward show.

³²⁸⁰ Hebrew: tallith.

³²⁸¹ fringes are to be on the edges of ordinary garments; there are no prayer shawls or tallit mentioned in the Bible.

³²⁸² I Cor 11:4

³²⁸³ often exhibiting a sign or letter on the vial, sometimes occult in nature, seen as an amulet.

³²⁸⁴ Hebrew: tefillin.

³²⁸⁵ Deut 6:8

Love and charity

Turning again to the 'royal law' of love, this has other impacts on the Old Covenant Law. Matthew gives an instance: *'The Pharisees also came unto him, tempting him, and saying unto him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause? And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female. And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. They say unto him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away? He saith unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so. And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.'*³²⁸⁶ There is no 'hardness of heart' in Judæo-Christianity. True Christian love, in the Holy Spirit, subject to and guided by the 'royal law,' will not and cannot exhibit itself in conduct akin to those seeking to work to the letter under the Old Covenant Law, or their own variants and predilections.

There is a massive difference here: no general and wide-ranging Pharisaic, 'eye-for-an-eye,' 'tooth-for-a-tooth.'³²⁸⁷ The life we did not create, we have not the right to take. God has that right. God decides, and He alone. In all of the New Testament there is not one case of a life being taken at the hand of anyone in the primitive church. Only two, Ananias and Sapphira, were killed for conspiring and tempting the Holy Spirit, a wilful act,³²⁸⁸ but no human agency was involved. It was done by God.

Above all, for the Judæo-Christian, the love of God, and then, the love of our fellow man, no matter how evil or vile we may think he or she may be, is the essence of the Law when taken in the context of the overwhelming grace of God. For if we do not know with absolute certainty whether we be saved or not, how can we judge others?

Levitical shortcomings

The penalty for a reversion to being under the Law, and so being without the covering of grace, is stated in Hebrews: *'For if we sin wilfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.'*³²⁸⁹ This is expanded in Galatians: *'Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but*

³²⁸⁶ Mat 19:3-9

³²⁸⁷ Deut 19:16-21 applies only to the punishment of false witnesses; Ex 21:23-25 deals with the death of a slave's unborn child through miscarriage; Judæo-Christian conduct is regulated by Mat 5:38-44.

³²⁸⁸ Acts 5:1-11

³²⁸⁹ Heb 10:26-27

*by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified. I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain. For as many are as under the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, the just shall live by faith. For ye are all the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ. For as many of you as have been baptised into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's then ye are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. [But] Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.'*³²⁹⁰

Any who wittingly consider that compliance with the Law will gain eternal life in the kingdom of God, or, who, having been granted grace, fall away, resorting to sole reliance on compliance with the Law, are disabused: *'But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things'*³²⁹¹ *shall be added unto you. Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.'*³²⁹² *'For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.'*³²⁹³ *'Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.'*³²⁹⁴

Concerning the question of perfection, *'If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the law,) what further need was there that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron? For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law. For he of whom these things are spoken, pertaineth to another tribe, of which no man gave attendance at the altar. For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Judah; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood. And it is yet far more evident: for that after the similitude of Melchisedec there ariseth another priest, Who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life. For he testifieth, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec. For there is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before, for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof: For the law made nothing perfect; but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God.'*³²⁹⁵

The absolute failure in this regard on the part of the Levitical priesthood is described in Malachi: *'For the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth: for he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts. But ye are departed out of the way; ye have caused many to stumble at the law; ye have corrupt-*

³²⁹⁰ Gal 2:16,21,3:10,11,26-29,5:4 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

³²⁹¹ needed and necessary worldly goods and sustenance.

³²⁹² Luke 12:31,32

³²⁹³ Luke 12:34

³²⁹⁴ Rom 4:8

³²⁹⁵ Heb 7:11-19

*ed the covenant of Levi, saith the Lord of hosts. Therefore have I also made you contemptible before all the people, according as ye have not kept my ways, but have been partial in the law.'*³²⁹⁶

God's intentions for the priesthood here are rehearsed in the first verse. It is a sad commentary on the state of the priesthood of Malachi's day that the priests needed this rebuke and reminder. In terms of the tithes and offerings, mentioned as being robbed in Malachi,³²⁹⁷ the priests were even subverting this restricted money to fund building projects, secular festivals, popular entertainment, business ventures, and speculation of many types. In the times of the Old Testament, the priest was the God-intended means of communication between God and man. His life and message should have been such that man should seek him out to discover what God says. Other than the biblical patriarchs and prophets, no man had a higher privilege than did the priest of the Old Testament.

This focuses attention on the nature of the priesthood of Malachi's day and shows how far they had strayed from the priestly model, which was given in, *'And ye shall know that I have sent this commandment unto you, that my covenant might be with Levi, saith the Lord of hosts. My covenant was with him of life and peace; and I gave them to him for the fear wherewith he feared me, and was afraid before my name. The law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips: he walked with me in peace and equity, and did turn many away from iniquity.'*³²⁹⁸ By causing many to stumble at the Law, the priests of Malachi's day were acting contrary to the actions of Levi, who turned many away from iniquity. The priests were acting in a manner that corrupted the covenant.

Even though Malachi fearlessly delivered this message to the priests of his time, the rebuke was not of his invention; it came from the Lord. By their utter inattention to their duties, the priests had succeeded in neutralising the covenant with Levi and had forsaken the ways of their fathers, thus obliging God to deliver them to shame and contempt. The priests had treated and regarded the service and worship of God as contemptible, *'Ye offer polluted bread upon mine altar; and ye say, Wherein have we polluted thee? In that ye say, The table of the Lord is contemptible. But ye have profaned it, in that ye say, The table of the Lord is polluted; and the fruit thereof, even his meat, is contemptible.'*³²⁹⁹ As a result, they had received retribution in kind for their offence. God humiliated them before all the people.

In their exercise of the duties prescribed by the Law, they were partial, in that they invented ingenious devices and methods whereby they could circumvent the intention and requirement of the Law. Outward idolatry was rendered odious to the people during the Exile, but it was merely replaced by the more refined and insid-

³²⁹⁶ Mal 2:7-9; the covenant of Levi applies to the priesthood, q.v., Jer 33:20-22, *'Thus saith the Lord; if you can break the covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night....Then may also my covenant be broken....with the Levites the priests, my ministers.'*

³²⁹⁷ Mal 3:8,9

³²⁹⁸ Mal 2:4-6

³²⁹⁹ Mal 1:7,12

ious idolatry of 'dead works' righteousness where the people were led to have regard for outward form, rather than inward reality. The attitudes of the priesthood in Malachi's day culminated in the Pharisaic and Sadduceaic hypocrites, or actors, encountered in the time of Christ.

Perfection could never come from that priesthood and the Law. They could not put those who came to them in perfect enjoyment of the good things they pointed out to them; they could only direct them to look further; they could only show them the way. Even that they failed to do. Therefore another priest must of necessity be raised up, after the order of Melchisedec, by whom perfection might be deemed in all who obey Him, and, blessed by God, that all these may, through Christ, have perfection of holiness in the covenant of grace, according to the gospel, for all are complete in Him.

It is asserted, further, by Paul, that the priesthood thus being changed, there must of necessity be a change in the Law, there being so near a relation between the priesthood and the Law that the dispensation could not be the same under another priesthood. A new priesthood must be constituted in another mode, managed in another way, and by rules proper to its nature and order. This is affirmed in the observation that Christ came forth from Judah, and not of the line of Aaron. Moreover, there is a change in the form and order of making the priests: before, in the Levitical priesthood, they were made after the Law of a carnal commandment; but our High Priest before God, of the order of Melchisedec, was both elevated to the order and sustained evermore by the very oath of God: for our High Priest died for our sins, and rose again after three days.

The former was carnal, from the Greek meaning fleshly,³³⁰⁰ or pertaining to the physical, of the law of primogeniture, and which directed their succession, as it did in matters of civil right and inheritance; but the latter is immortal, of the power of an endless life; the ultimate purification. While the former was weak and unprofitable, the latter is the antithesis. What the former could neither convey nor deliver, the latter has in abundance: life eternal, and the free offer of salvation for all.

The Levitical priesthood brought nothing to perfection: it could not justify men's persons from guilt; it could not sanctify them from inward pollution; and it could not cleanse men from dead works. All it could do was to lead men to the antitype. But the priesthood of Christ carries in it, and brings along with it, a better hope, indicating, as it does, the true and secure foundation that the Judæo-Christian has towards God for pardon and salvation. And by this hope man is encouraged to draw nigh unto God, and to live a life in communion with God. In the former priesthood, man was kept at a distance, beyond the veil, and under bondage, bondage to that very Law which could never bring salvation.

Many would contend, therefore, in light of this, that the Levitical line of priests stopped at the coming or elevation of Christ, or, at the very least, ceased to have any relevance. Some go further, contending that the entire Old Covenant suffered a similar and conterminous fate. Adduced for the support of these views is the

³³⁰⁰ Greek: sarkines.

destruction of the Temple forty years after the death and resurrection of Christ, which effectively removed much of the work of the priesthood, in consequence of which the role of the priesthood in the daily life of religious Jews has been greatly diminished.

The position of priests after the destruction of the Second Temple is described by Golb: 'There can be no doubt that a radical shift in both Jewish hegemony and religious and social thinking occurred during the decades following the destruction of the Second Temple. The message of the priests had been that the Jews could count on the Lord to save them if only, in accordance with biblical precepts, the animal sacrifices were faithfully performed; and when this failed to happen [with the destruction of the Temple], the priests suffered a disastrous loss of credibility. Afterward, their actual responsibilities would be limited to the performance or observance of several religious rituals, such as offering the priestly blessing³³⁰¹ in the synagogues, 'redeeming' firstborn male children,³³⁰² not frequenting places of ritual impurity (for example, cemeteries), and not marrying divorcees. In an agreement apparently worked out with the Roman government several decades after the fall of Jerusalem, the Jewish leadership was, instead, vested in a new governing figure, the Palestinian Patriarch, who granted not only religious but also both legislative and judicial authority to the heirs of the Pharisees—that is, the rabbis or, more specifically, the Tannaim.'³³⁰³

A feel for the religious tensions surrounding the Temple in the first-century AD can be gleaned from a comparison of 'the interpretation and practice of the law with that of the Pharisees and Sadducees, as described by Josephus. The Pharisees, according to Josephus, '....had passed on to the people certain regulations handed down by former generations and not recorded in the Law of Moses, for which reason they are rejected by the Sadducæan group, who hold that only those regulations should be considered valid which were written down [in Scripture], and that those which had been handed down by former generations need not be observed.

Josephus described the Sadducees as observing only the letter of the Law, in contrast to the Pharisees who added accumulated oral tradition to it....After the destruction of the Second Temple and the eventual rise of the Tannaitic hegemony, however, the Sadducees lost their power, and were reduced to a minority sect that adopted the basic rabbinic principle of innovative interpretation of the Law. What we perceive in the second century AD rabbinic texts that concern the differences between the Pharisees and the Sadducees is a relatively late record of their debates, and thus one that can hardly be forced to apply specifically to conditions in the early first century or earlier....Josephus too was a relatively late observer, but he had lived a long time in Palestine and, while surely simplifying much of his description so as to make it accessible to his Greek-speaking and non-

³³⁰¹ Num 6:24

³³⁰² Ex 13:13

³³⁰³ Golb, Norman, *Who Wrote the Dead Sea Scrolls?* pp.368,369 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

Jewish readers, can be considered a more reliable witness for the beliefs and practices of the Jewish sects as they were in the earlier first century.³³⁰⁴

Disannulled?

In view of these wantings, there is a tendency among many expositors to point to the wording of, *'For there is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before, for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof: For the law made nothing perfect; but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God,'*³³⁰⁵ where the key word is held to be *'disannulling,'*³³⁰⁶ meaning 'cancellation' or 'putting away,' by which it is contended that the Old Covenant, the Law and the Levitical priesthood have all been consigned to the dustbin of history.

But all such contentions run contrary to Scripture, despite exhibiting the superficial appearance of conformity. As noted previously, the actual text of the second verse in the K.J.V. reads: *'For the law made nothing perfect; but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God.'*³³⁰⁷ However, it should be observed that the word *'did'* has been inserted by the translators into English: it does not appear in the original Greek, and, as a result, it is noted in italics in the K.J.V. This apparently minor addition to the original actually imports a meaning inconsistent with Scripture, specifically, *'For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place been sought for the second. For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws in their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.'*³³⁰⁸ This bears a direct relationship to Jeremiah on the subject.³³⁰⁹ It is clear that this *'hope,'* which is, by definition, yet unrealised, is the New Covenant, which is still to be fulfilled at and beyond the time of the Second Coming.³³¹⁰ This New Covenant signifies a complete, inner, spiritual change

³³⁰⁴ Golb, Norman, *Who Wrote the Dead Sea Scrolls?* pp.205,206 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

³³⁰⁵ Heb 7:18,19

³³⁰⁶ Greek: athetesis.

³³⁰⁷ Heb 7:19

³³⁰⁸ Heb 8:7-12

³³⁰⁹ Jer 31:33,34

³³¹⁰ cp. Jer 31:31; the LXX, and its translation (annotated 38:31 in that form): *'Behold, the days come, saith Yahweh,*

which goes way beyond the scope of the Old Covenant. Such is the change that the mortal takes on immortality, in the 'elect,' being the firstfruits. But if the word '*did*' is added to the text,³³¹¹ then the implication is that this '*better hope*' did make things perfect, which clearly it could not, and did not, as perfection is to come about later.³³¹²

It is now possible to consider the phrase, '*For there is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before,*'³³¹³ in relation to the timing and extent of the '*disannulling.*' Taken in the context of the yet awaited New Covenant with the houses of Israel and Judah, something which patently has not happened to date, and is thus still outstanding, it is evident that '[f]or there is verily a disannulling' is a simple statement of fact. Indeed there is a disannulling, but it is not specific as to timing. It is important to note that it is not phrased in the past tense: it does not say, '*verily, it was disannulled.*' Given the recital of conditions pertaining to the operation of the New Covenant,³³¹⁴ it is evident that the New Covenant is not yet in force, and so the Old Covenant remains extant. The correct removal of the word '*did*' from verse nineteen³³¹⁵ merely serves to reinforce this. And the same can be deduced from, '*Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away.*'³³¹⁶ This was written just before Nero's persecution,³³¹⁷ so it had not yet happened almost three-and-a-half decades after the crucifixion. Given that the New Covenant is not in operation—other than in prefatory mode in the form of the 'elect'—then the Old Covenant must, of necessity, still remain extant.

But there is more than this bound in the actual form and use of the words, '*For there is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before,*' as by lacking specification as to timing, it also allows part of the '*disannulling,*' the priesthood purification, in perpetuity, in the person of Christ, to have taken place. So while the Old Covenant, the Law, and the Levitical priesthood remain extant, the Melchisedec priesthood, in the single

that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah.' Tanakh: '*Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah.*'

It is clear that both the LXX translators, who worked before the time of Christ, and the early Christians themselves, took the words in Jeremiah to mean a new and much better covenant, and not simply a revamped reintroduction of the old one which had been rent asunder with such disdain over the preceding centuries.

Orthodox Judaism usually has it as a mere renewal, and, notwithstanding the wording of the verse, only referring and applying to Judah, not to Israel; or to Judah alone as being either the only part left; or as containing Israel in that Judah and Israel were somehow surreptitiously reunited under the banner of Judah and Judaism.

³³¹¹ Heb 7:19

³³¹² Heb 8:7-12; Jer 31:31-34

³³¹³ Heb 7:18

³³¹⁴ Heb 8:7-12; Jer 31:31-34; while the New Covenant is made with the nation, the religion remains the religion of Israel, but with one crucial difference. Formerly, it was a national religion—the national religion of the Israelites, the people of the covenant, a nation in which Gentile proselytes were sparse—but now it is a universal religion, with Gentiles graft into Israel almost on a wholesale basis. It is open to all, and all become, as one, Israel, for the promises of the New Covenant still vest in God's chosen: Israel. God and Israel are still the contracted parties. The national restrictions have been surmounted with the huge step from nationalism to universalism. Mat 26:28 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets), '*For this is the blood of my new covenant [testament], which is shed for many for the remission of sins.*'

³³¹⁵ Heb 7:19

³³¹⁶ Heb 8:13

³³¹⁷ written c.63–64AD

personage of Christ, is brought about. And it is this higher priesthood, expanded by the '*dead-in-Christ*' and the '*firstfruits*,' that constitutes the upper echelons of the spiritual family of God in the Millennium and beyond, a family described by Peter: '*Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.*'³³¹⁸ The final transformation to become actual members of the family of God will make good that long-standing wanting deriving, in its mortal form, from the Old Covenant, '*Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation.*'³³¹⁹ This covenant was repudiated by Israel, and the opportunity and honour of becoming '*a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation*' was wilfully squandered. But the matter will be made good, in quite superior fashion, and for all time, in '*a royal priesthood, an holy nation*' which will be immortal; the '*royal*' deriving from the royal status of Christ, who will take the throne of David, allied to the priestly order of Melchisedec, by membership of which order the '*royal*' devolves on all who attain the kingdom in the priesthood through a common antecedent.

The Levitical priesthood, commencing in Exodus, is frequently described in the Old Testament as lasting throughout all the generations of Aaron, generations still ongoing, confirmed in, '*And thou shalt bring Aaron and his sons unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and wash them with water. And thou shalt put upon Aaron the holy garments, and anoint him, and sanctify him; that he may minister unto me in the priest's office. And thou shalt bring his sons, and clothe them with coats: And thou shalt anoint them, as thou didst anoint their father, that they may minister unto me in the priest's office: for their appointing shall surely be an everlasting priesthood throughout their generations.*'³³²⁰

It follows that the Levitical priesthood must form part of the '*royal priesthood, an holy nation*,' described by Peter.³³²¹ In order that the lineal priestly descendants of Aaron can form part of this '*royal priesthood*,' they must be part of either the '*dead-in-Christ*' or the '*one hundred and forty-four thousand sealed*.' Thus Aaron, and any of his intervening generations where deemed fit, will be included in the former category, while those descendants of Aaron alive at the time of the coming of the Messiah will be included in the latter category, but only through being among those '*sealed*' by the Holy Spirit, by the grace of God.

End-time descendants of Aaron who are not included in the '*sealed*' will go through the Great Tribulation and hopefully see the error of their ways, and repent unto salvation. Should they do so, they then become

³³¹⁸ I Peter 2:5,9

³³¹⁹ Ex 19:5,6

³³²⁰ Ex 40:12-16 (sublinear emphasis added); the levitical priesthood is to last throughout their generations. That means it is to last until the end of the Millennium of rest, q.v. sup. Beyond that, there is the new heaven and the new earth, with God the Father and God the Son, and the spirit-being church.

³³²¹ I Peter 2:5,9

part of, *'These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.'*³³²² They will become part not of the 'royal priesthood,' the highest calling, but, rather, 'servants,' an elevated but very much lower calling. Perhaps this exhibits a very rough parallel to Ezekiel chapter forty-four where Levites who went away from God were demoted to gatekeepers, yet still remained in a form of ministration, albeit a very much lower one.

It is likely that few Levites will opt for the second death, in lieu, as a wholesale awakening to salvation will occur, with the removal of the veil, seen in Zechariah, *'And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications,'*³³²³ and in Isaiah, *'And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the Lord God hath spoken it. And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation.'*³³²⁴

Therefore, in summary, this 'disannulling' will not complete fully and finally until all are under the New Covenant, and while many will be so in the Millennium, as spirit beings in the family of God, the entire will not be so until after the multitudes flood into the spirit kingdom after The Great White Throne Judgement. Thus the entire process will have taken about three thousand years to perfect, and the mortal failure under the Old Covenant will have been made good in immortal form under the New Covenant. Again, in terms of the Law, this can be seen from, *'Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.*³³²⁵

Transition

Not only many Jews fail to grasp the importance of the timing of the transition to the New Covenant, but many so-called Christians are completely ignorant of the fact that the New Covenant is not, at the moment, in force.³³²⁶ A simple reading of Hebrews chapter eight, however, should clarify the matter: *'Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched,*

³³²² Rev 7:14,15

³³²³ Zech 12:10-14, especially v.10a

³³²⁴ Isaiah 25:7-9

³³²⁵ Mat 5:17,18 (sublinear emphasis added)

³³²⁶ other than in the prefatory sense mentioned sup.

and not man. For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore it is of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer. For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law: Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount. But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises. For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I have made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws in their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away.³³²⁷

The New Covenant, pictured in the marriage of Christ to his bride, the church, as firstfruits of many more to come, is described in Revelation, 'And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they that are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb, And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.'³³²⁸ The passing away of the old, and the ushering in of the new, in terms of heaven and earth, is prophesied, 'And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.'³³²⁹ This vision includes the new Jerusalem coming down to earth.³³³⁰

New Covenant

Only at this point will the Old Covenant, along with the sacrificial Laws pertaining, finally and utterly pass away, despite the New Covenant coming into force at the time of the Second Coming for those elevated to spirit beings. Ultimately, this New Covenant, an immortal, spiritual covenant, applicable only to the family of God, will be all-in-all in the new Jerusalem, for all else will have been destroyed. And a pure spirit family of God, comprising all who have had their names written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, will be wit-

³³²⁷ Heb 8:1-13 (sublinear emphasis added)

³³²⁸ Rev 19:9

³³²⁹ Rev 21:1

³³³⁰ Rev 21:2a

ness to the final consummation, the uniting of heaven and earth in the wedding of Christ and His and the new Jerusalem. This is pictured descending from heaven, and resting for all time to come here on a new earth, surrounded by a new heaven, *'And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.'*³³³¹ Although moot, perhaps, it does seem that the feasts and Sabbaths will no longer maintain in the new heaven and earth, for there will be no need of memory or memorial of the old.

It might be asked why this wonderful truth of the future family of God has been replaced with the lie that God is only one being, or another that he is 'three-in-one,' the so-called 'Holy Trinity' or 'Triune'? *'I have heard what the prophets said, that prophesy lies in my name, saying, I have dreamed, I have dreamed. How long shall this be in the heart of the prophets that prophesy lies? yea, they are prophets of the deceit of their own hearts,'*³³³² supplies the response: it is the vain and vile imaginings of man, sponsored and promoted by Satan, intended to deflect man's gaze from the full glory and beauty of His great plan for the salvation of mankind, and elevation to full membership in the spirit-being family of God. *'For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.'*³³³³

Stiff-necked

The claim of those who seek to deny the continuing validity and application of the Old Covenant Law is frequently founded on: *'Then came to him the disciples of John, saying, Why do we and the Pharisees fast oft, but thy disciples fast not? And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bridechamber mourn, as long as the bridegroom is with them? but the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast. No man putteth a piece of new cloth unto an old garment, for that which is put in to fill it up taketh from the garment, and the rent is made worse. Neither do men put new wine in old bottles: else the bottles break, and the wine runneth out, and the bottles perish: but they put new wine into new bottles, and both are preserved.'*³³³⁴

The fundamental claim runs thus: the implication of a prohibition on mixing new wine with old bottles is that Old Covenant practices, if ever mixed with the New Covenant, would result in the breaking of the Old Covenant bottles. Thus Old and New Covenants should be kept separate, and some maintain further, that both covenants would then be preserved, although this appears to run counter to the earlier argument of the redundancy and inoperability of the Old Covenant; an argument already wholly discredited.

³³³¹ Rev 21:1

³³³² Jer 23:25,26

³³³³ John 3:16

³³³⁴ Mat 9:14-17

But is this of what Christ was talking? The question from the disciples of John was straightforward: *'Why do we and the Pharisees fast oft, but thy disciples fast not?'*³³³⁵ The answer, equally straightforward, was that the time of fasting for his disciples had not yet arrived, but when Christ would leave them, then they would fast.

However, then there was, as it were, an addendum: *'No man putteth a piece of new cloth unto an old garment, for that which is put in to fill it up taketh from the garment, and the rent is made worse. Neither do men put new wine in old bottles: else the bottles break, and the wine runneth out, and the bottles perish: but they put new wine into new bottles, and both are preserved.'*³³³⁶ And it is in the addendum's interpretation that many experience difficulty.

That Christ had no regard for the Pharisees of the day is well attested in Scripture. He referred to them as *'vipers,'*³³³⁷ and *'hypocrites,'*³³³⁸ amongst other things. When Christ accused the scribes and Pharisees of being *'hypocrites,'* what was being said was that they were performing a staged and insincere religion; an outward show, trite and superficial, yet signifying nothing: a froth. It is paradoxical that the Jews held the Hellenistic theatre in utter contempt, so to be accused of being a sham actor was doubly insulting to them. Unfortunately, those sham-acting Pharisees held sway over many of the people.

The repudiation of the gospel by the Jews, acting for all Israel in the eyes of God, is recorded in Acts: *'Then Paul and Barnabus waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles.'*³³³⁹ Matthew and Luke record God's strategy in response to these seemingly adverse conditions: *'At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent,'*³³⁴⁰ *and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for it seemed good in thy sight.'*³³⁴¹ *'Babes,'*³³⁴² or *'silent ones,'* contrasts with an unborn child,³³⁴³ again translated *'babe,'* and used in the synoptic gospels' descriptions of the conception and birth of both John the Baptist and Jesus Christ. That the Pharisees did much talking is well attested in the New Testament, but for all its volume, it had this fundamental weakness: it signified nothing. The *'babes'* in Matthew and Luke³³⁴⁴ is a reference to spiritual babes

³³³⁵ Mat 9:14

³³³⁶ Mat 9:16,17

³³³⁷ Mat 3:7,12:34,23:33; Luke 3:7

³³³⁸ Mat 15:7,16:3,22:8,23:13,14,15,23,25,27,29,24:51; Mark 7:6; Luke 11:44,12:36; Greek: hupokrites, a *'dissembler,'* an *'actor,'* or a *'stage-player.'*

³³³⁹ Acts 13:46

³³⁴⁰ viz., *'sophisticated and cunning.'*

³³⁴¹ Mat 11:25,26; Luke 10:21

³³⁴² Greek: nepios, *'untaught'* or *'not speaking.'*

³³⁴³ Greek: brephos.

³³⁴⁴ Mat 11:25; Luke 10:21

who receive the gospel in simple and straightforward fashion, without guile. For in contrast to the Pharisaic pride in position and 'knowledge',³³⁴⁵ there is no boasting, no cavilling, no stiff-necked, adamant resistance.

'It should be abundantly clear that the new wine, the old bottles and the new bottles, refer, respectively, to the gospel of the kingdom; the Pharisaic or stiff-necked attitude; and that diametrical of Christ's followers. It is simply not possible to put the gospel message and the way of life pertaining into an old, stiff-necked bottle. It will just explode, destroying both, in terms of efficacy, even to the point of sudden and calamitous fracture, as opposed to tabefaction. In some translations the word 'bottles' is sometimes rendered 'wineskins,' from the ancient practice of keeping wine in goatskins. New wine, if placed in an old and unpliant goatskin, would quickly burst it asunder as it stretched to accommodate the fermentation, and both would be lost.'³³⁴⁶

It is the good grace of God to sow the seed of the gospel in the very ground where it will grow, and not fracture and fail, as seen clearly in the parable of the sower: *'But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundred-fold, some sixty, some thirty.'*³³⁴⁷

Modern attitudes

Sadly, the self-same attitudes exhibited by the Pharisees in the time of Christ have been combined with others and elevated almost to an artform today, even by many professing adherence to proper Christian values. The current vogue for the substitution of feeling for thinking—religious emotionalism—the superficial for the profound, the hypocritical for the sincere, allied to a new iconography, with all the paraphernalia of celebrity culture, the worship of the recycled god 'lifestyle,' the clamour for instant and painless gratification—a mindless pursuit of pleasure, comfort and convenience—and an attendant 'dumbed-down,' 'live-for-today,' covetous, uncaring creed with suppression of reason and judgement, all combine to leave no room for Judæo-Christianity. This farrago is popular among a people degraded by a dispassion for the truth; a feeble folk, emotional, excitable, impulsive, frequently hysterical, seeking to manufacture an extravagant mix of the gospel and their own

³³⁴⁵ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol.2, p.15 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets) on intellectual pride:

Mat 11:25, *'At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes [Greek: nepios, 'a minor,' 'an infant,' 'immature.'].'*

We must be very clear what Jesus meant here. He is very far from condemning intellectual power; what he is condemning is intellectual pride....It is not cleverness which shuts out; it is pride. It is not stupidity which admits; it is humility. Jesus is not connecting ignorance and faith; He is connecting lowliness and faith.'

³³⁴⁶ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of John*, Vol.1, p.58

³³⁴⁷ Mat 13:23

insane and incoherent degradations, all to their own self-serving interests and purposes. It can have but one end: inevitable self-destruction. 'No nation has ever outlived the loss of its gods.'³³⁴⁸

Nailed to cross

There is a yet more pernicious attack on the Law, of course, frequently referred to as the doctrine of 'Nailing-the-Law-to-the-Cross.' Some contend that the entire Law was nailed to the cross, and does not apply to Christians, or even, perhaps, to anybody anymore. Others maintain that it is only the sacrificial Law that was nailed to the cross, and that it is this that does not apply to Christians, or even, perhaps, anybody anymore.

The entire of the above is based on a profound misunderstanding of, *'And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross.'*³³⁴⁹ In the East, a bond was cancelled by being nailed to a post. Our bond of guilt, under the Law, was cancelled by Christ, by nailing it to His cross. The sins of the sinner were forgiven, through Christ taking all sins on His Own head, and suffering the penalty of the Law: death. Thus the *'handwriting of ordinances'* is the bond of accusation and judgement against all mankind, based on transgression of the Law: sin. By the removal of the accusing handwriting—the indictment³³⁵⁰—sin is blotted out, trespasses are forgiven. And so it is the penalty under the Law, the death penalty, which was nailed to the cross; not the Law.

If there were no Law, there would be no sin, for *'sin is not imputed when there is no law'*;³³⁵¹ *'through the law comes the knowledge of sin'*;³³⁵² and *'where there is no law, neither is there violation.'*³³⁵³ Therefore, if Christ's death cancelled the whole Law, not just the penalty of the Law assessed for violating it when one accepts His sacrifice by faith, no one could possibly have sinned since His crucifixion.

Fruits of 'Royal Law'

Love, the very basis of the *'royal law,'* has a number of imports. The proper fulfilling love deriving from the *'royal law'* can be gleaned from: *'But I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you, Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you. And unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek offer also the other; and him that taketh away thy cloak forbid not to take thy coat also. Give to every man that asketh of thee; and of him that taketh away thy goods ask them not again. And as ye*

³³⁴⁸ Shaw, George Bernard.

³³⁴⁹ Col 2:13,14

³³⁵⁰ Greek: chieriogriphon.

³³⁵¹ Rom. 5:12

³³⁵² Rom. 3:20

³³⁵³ Rom. 4:15

would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise. For if ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? For sinners also love those that love them. And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? for sinners also do even the same. And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? For sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again. But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil. Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful. Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven: Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.'³³⁵⁴

The love of Christ, pouring out of an individual, through the power of the Holy Spirit, produces faithful compliance with the 'royal law' imperative to love thy neighbour. These are actual, physical deeds. Debts are forgiven, as in '*Forgive our debts, as we forgive our debtors.*'³³⁵⁵ The hand is open, to all who ask, and more, it is open to all those seen to be in need. Possibly, this is the simplest way to recognise God's people, for, as in Matthew, '*Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.*'³³⁵⁶ The fruit of the Holy Spirit is the love of God made manifest.

Contradicting those who deny the Law, the Judæo-Christian life and aspiration is stated by John: '*And hereby do we know that we do know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him. He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.*'³³⁵⁷

Works versus Grace

This leads to a consideration of the age old controversy over 'Works versus Grace.' '*Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.*'³³⁵⁸ The net result of sin is given by Paul, '*For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord,*'³³⁵⁹ and

³³⁵⁴ Luke 6:27-38

³³⁵⁵ Mat 6:12

³³⁵⁶ Mat 7:20

³³⁵⁷ I John 2:3-6

³³⁵⁸ I John 3:4

³³⁵⁹ Rom 6:23

James, *'and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.'*³³⁶⁰ Indeed, everyone is caught up in this classification, *'For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.'*³³⁶¹

Salvation is available, as firstly, a person is redeemed by Christ, who died for the sins of mankind, *'Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us.'*³³⁶² Under the Law, no man is justified, and there is left merely the curse of death resulting from sin. But salvation is available to all through the gift of grace, as a result of Christ's resurrection and ascension to heaven to be the sole advocate and intercessor before God and, also, through the 'elect' being so signified by the conferring of the Holy Spirit, wrought through faith being counted as righteousness: *'Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin....for we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness.'*³³⁶³ However, salvation through grace, once granted, has to be accompanied by long-term growth, *'but he that endureth to the end shall be saved,'*³³⁶⁴ and, *'But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.'*³³⁶⁵ The natural conclusion deriving from this is found in Romans, *'Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law,'*³³⁶⁶ and, *'And if by grace, then it is no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more grace; otherwise work is no more work.'*³³⁶⁷

The modus for this developmental growth in faith is defined by James, *'Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.'*³³⁶⁸ The works mentioned here are the works of the complete Law: both the Old Covenant Law and the *'royal law.'* These are works which bear fruit—fruitful works—and not the works of apostate man, which exhibit no fruit at all before God: *'for ye shall ye know them by their fruits....by their fruits shall ye know them.'*³³⁶⁹ *'The Father without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work.'*³³⁷⁰

The stark contrast between works of the flesh and the fruitful works of the Holy Spirit is brought out very clearly by Paul, *'Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.'*³³⁷¹

³³⁶⁰ James 1:15

³³⁶¹ Rom 3:23

³³⁶² Gal 3:13

³³⁶³ Rom 4:8,9

³³⁶⁴ Mat 10:22

³³⁶⁵ II Peter 3:18

³³⁶⁶ Rom 3:28

³³⁶⁷ Rom 11:6; but man is saved by Grace, justified by Faith, and rewarded according to his works, q.v. sup.

³³⁶⁸ James 2:17

³³⁶⁹ Mat 7:16-20

³³⁷⁰ I Peter 1:17

³³⁷¹ Gal 5:19-23

And it is that growth, enduring to the end, which leads to the ultimate reward: *'For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works.'*³³⁷²

In summary, we are saved by grace, justified by faith, but rewarded according to our works: *'But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; Who will render to every man according to his deeds.'*³³⁷³ Judæo-Christianity is not an infecund, autosoteric religion in which salvation is thought to be founded on an individual's own efforts, for, at its most basic, how can Satan cast out Satan? Rather, salvation is a gift of God, not something conferred on the basis of an individual's gained merit or actual worth. But the reward is according to a person's works.

Vicarious sacrifice

The sacrifice of Christ: *'Grace be to you and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ, Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father.'*³³⁷⁴ Christ voluntarily and vicariously³³⁷⁵ offered Himself on account of our sins: suffering the penalty of death in our stead. The preposition³³⁷⁶ speaks of substitution: instead of, on behalf of. Christ, who knew no sin, but who was made to bear sin for man that man might be made of the righteousness of God in Him, *'For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.'*³³⁷⁷

He exchanged places with the sinner; taking all of the sins and giving all of His righteousness. Christ was both the purchaser and the price of man's redemption. There was no other good enough to pay the price of sin, save He who created all: our Creator and our Lawgiver. He had to be both our Creator and our Lawgiver in order to be able to receive the penalty of sin in His own person in our stead. At Calvary, the question of sin was settled once-and-for-all. Just before Christ bowed His head and died, He said, *'It is finished.'*³³⁷⁸ The Greek so translated is but one word,³³⁷⁹ a commercial word meaning *'debt discharged'* or *'debt paid in full,'* for indeed it was. This is perfect closure. Man's sins made His sacrifice necessary, and His sacrifice is the only ground of man's acceptance with God.

³³⁷² Mat 16:27 (sublinear emphasis added)

³³⁷³ Rom 2:4,5 (sublinear emphasis added); *'the day of wrath and revelation when God will render His judgment on every man'* is not a reference to the initial judgment of the 'elect,' for they do not suffer the wrath of God, but to the later great assize at The Great White Throne Judgment; also cf. vv.6-8.

³³⁷⁴ Gal 1:3,4

³³⁷⁵ vicarious sacrifice ineluctably incorporates the idea of exchange and substitution.

³³⁷⁶ Greek: hyper.

³³⁷⁷ II Cor 5:21

³³⁷⁸ John 19:30

³³⁷⁹ Greek: teleo.

The purpose of His sacrifice was to deliver man, rescue him, and set him free from this present age. It is 'out of,'³³⁸⁰ rather than 'from' this pernicious age, for those delivered had been within the grasp of a vicious enemy. Christ not only delivers the believer from the penalty of sin, but also from the power of sin. Salvation is emancipation from a state of bondage. The word translated 'rescued'³³⁸¹ is used to speak of Paul's rescue from the mob in Acts,³³⁸² and also of Israel being taken out of bondage in Egypt.³³⁸³ Here it imports the connotation of rescue from danger and deliverance from bondage. Sin has endangered and enslaved mankind, but Christ delivers man and sets him free, and all due to His atoning death.

'Whoever says "He bore our sins" says substitution; and to say substitution is to say something which involves an immeasurable obligation to Christ....the sinner's sense of debt....it is that which bars out any ideas of being saved from the consequences of sin while living on in sin itself. It is so profound that the whole being of the Christian is changed by it, *'That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.'*³³⁸⁴

This age is evil, corrupt and corrupting, deceived and deceiving. The word 'evil'³³⁸⁵ means not only evil in its nature but actively and viciously evil in its influence. It is used to describe Satan, the god of this age, who is wholly engaged in corrupting man and dragging him to destruction. The substitutionary sacrifice of Christ alone can liberate man from the clutches of Satan. From *'For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins,'*³³⁸⁶ it is evident that the vicarious sacrifices of animals in place of the death of the sinner does not have the power to remove sin. Such sacrifices have no expiatory power. They are a condition, but not the cause, of pardon. The act of the priests' sprinkling and pouring out of the blood was symbolical, implying that the person who offered the sacrifice had forfeited his life through sin, but that the life of the animal was forfeited instead. As expositors Alford and Ebrard have remarked: '[They were] not the instrument of complete vicarious propitiation, but an exhibition of the postulate of such propitiation.'³³⁸⁷

It is Christ who forgives sins, both those under the Law offering animal sacrifices, and those under grace through His own blessed once-and-for-all vicarious sacrifice: *'And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.'*³³⁸⁸

³³⁸⁰ Greek: ek.

³³⁸¹ Greek: exaireo.

³³⁸² Acts 23:27

³³⁸³ Acts 7:34

³³⁸⁴ Rom 5:21; Denney, James, *The Death of Christ*, pp.60,61

³³⁸⁵ Greek: poneros.

³³⁸⁶ Heb 10:4

³³⁸⁷ Alford and Ebrard, otherwise unattributed (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

³³⁸⁸ Heb 10:11-14 (sublinear emphasis added)

This was all within the foreknowledge of God and in accordance with God's determinate counsel, *'according to the will of God and our Father,'* confirmed in Acts, *'Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain.'*³³⁸⁹ And all this Christ did and suffered, so that each and every person could freely have the honour to stand at the end in the kingdom of God as ruler, and priest or servant; as an immortal member of the God family, a *'son of God.'*³³⁹⁰

³³⁸⁹ Acts 2:23

³³⁹⁰ as a crowned angel (from the great multitude), or crowned cherub (from the elect), or crowned archangel (in the instance of the two witnesses), cf. 'Ranking of Angels.'

Chapter 49

Sin Offerings & ‘The Law Added’

The Law added because of transgressions³³⁹¹ is the sacrificial Law.³³⁹² *‘And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: but this Man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins once for all, sat down on the right side of God.’*³³⁹³ [T]he priests themselves continually changed; their own persons and services needed purification, and their sacrifices needed constant renewal, since, in the nature of it, such substitution could not be perfect.

The fundamental idea of the sacrifice in the Old Testament is that of substitution....[t]he firstlings go for the flock; the redemption money for that which cannot [or need not] be offered [to God]; and the life for the sacrifice, which is in its blood,³³⁹⁴ for the life of the sacrificer. Hence also the strict prohibition to partake of blood.

There are certain critical aspects to the question of sacrifice under the Law:³³⁹⁵

³³⁹¹ i.e., ‘iniquity’ or, better, ‘lawlessness,’ arising out of sin and its consequences, discussed sup.

³³⁹² Gal 3:19a, ‘Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made.’ Christ’s once-for-all sacrifice removed the need of the continual, temple-based, sacrificial system for those covered by His blood sacrifice, cf. Heb 10:10-18.

³³⁹³ Heb 10:11,12

³³⁹⁴ Lev 17:11

³³⁹⁵ North, Gary, *Boundaries and Dominion—An Economic Commentary on Leviticus*, Volume 1, p.50, citing Jordan, James, *The Whole Burnt Sacrifice: Its Liturgy and Meaning*, Biblical Horizons Occasional Paper, No. 11, p.4 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

‘What actually happens is that the animal becomes dead. It is death, the penal judgment for sin, that is put on the animal. The man is given life, a new beginning, because the animal takes the death he deserves. The *effect* of the sacrifice of the animal is that the believer’s guilt and sin are removed, but what is *transferred* to the animal is the

1. It had to be substitutionary, a substitute for the offender; and,

2. It merely 'covered' or hid the sin,³³⁹⁶

leading to redemption and forgiveness. One critical element, however, was still wanting: the sacrifice 'par excellence'—the 'once-for-all' sacrifice of Jesus Christ, to whom all the sacrifices pointed.³³⁹⁷

The taxonomy of the sacrifices in the Law is:

1. Burnt-offering;

2. Sin-offering;

3. Trespass-offering; and,

4. Peace-offering.³³⁹⁸

In addition, there is the Red Heifer-sacrifice,³³⁹⁹ and the related jealousy-offering. Finally, there is a section which deals generally with stand-alone and concomitant meat-offerings.³⁴⁰⁰

sinner's liability to death. Death is both primordial and eschatological. Adam rejected the Tree of Life in order to commit sin, so he chose death before he sinned. Death is also the eschatological punishment for sin – those who choose death are given death. Man's death-nature is the wellspring of his sin, so death must be dealt with before sin is. To put this in systematic theological language: justification comes before sanctification. Justification is initial, juridical *life*, which leads to a life of holiness, and culminates in glorification: eschatological *life*. What the sacrifice removes is not sin but death, the judgment for sin. Death having been removed [by transferring it to the animal], it is now possible to live a righteous life.'

³³⁹⁶ the meaning of the word 'atonement'; it did not remove them or take them away.

³³⁹⁷ Edersheim, Alfred, *The Temple—Its Ministry and Service*, §§5,6 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

³³⁹⁸ also known as Completion-offering; encompassing Thank-offerings and Freewill-offerings or Voluntary-offerings.

³³⁹⁹ q.v. inf.

³⁴⁰⁰ Cripps, Richard S., *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Amos*, pp.196-198 footnote (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'Burnt offerings: The Hebrew: olah signifies, literally, 'that which goes up (in smoke, to God).' Sometimes such offerings are designated 'whole burnt offerings' (kalil), e.g., in Deut 33:10; Psa 51:21. And they were consumed upon the altar (I Kings 18:38); obviously the offerer ate no portion. The olah was supposed to express devotion, or entire consecration. The difference between oloth and 'sacrifices' is illustrated by the passage Jer 7:21, where the prophet ironically urges the worshippers to convert 'burnt offerings' into 'sacrifices' so that they may 'eat' the 'flesh' of both; for Jehovah is as little pleased with either....In [sacrifices where a portion was eaten], the blood and the fat were Jehovah's portion.

Meal offerings: The Hebrew word minhah is used to convey the idea of (1) a present to anyone, (2) tribute to a king, and (3) a gift or 'offering' (animal or vegetable) 'to God.' Instances of (3) are to be found in Gen 4:3-5; I Sam 2:17,26:19; I Kings 18:29,36; and so, perhaps, here [in Amos 21:22] and in v.25. (4) However, it is possible that by the time of Amos the use of the term had already passed into a fourth and latest stage, viz., to signify 'meal offering.' So the R.V. translates here and in v.25 in the margin. The 'meal offering' was of grain, or of its products (bread), and it accompanied the animal sacrifice....Being pre-eminently a 'gift' to the Deity, this offering was either burned upon the altar or assigned to the priests. As with the olah, the offerer ate no share.

Peace offerings: Here [in Amos 5:22] only in the Old Testament the Masoretic Text reads the singular number, 'peace offering' (shelem). The R.V. rightly renders it as the plural shelamim. (1) Possibly the original meaning of 'peace offerings' was to provide a means either of obtaining, or of expressing, peace (or alliance) with God (cf. usual LXX [Greek:] ayrhnikā). In the latter sense such offerings would be here appropriate in days of prosperity after Jeroboam's victories, the worshippers believing that God had recently proved Himself to be well pleased with them. (2) It seems

Burnt-offering

'The burnt-offering—Olah, or also Chalii³⁴⁰¹—derivation of the term Olah, as wholly 'ascending' unto God, indicates alike the mode of the sacrifice and its meaning. It symbolised the entire surrender unto God, whether of the individual or the congregation, and His acceptance thereof. Hence, also, it could not be offered without 'shedding of blood.' Where other sacrifices were brought, it followed the sin-, but preceded the peace-offering. In fact, it meant general acceptance on the ground of previous special acceptance [and, consequently, gave assurance of acceptance by God], and it has rightly been called the sacrifice of devotion and service.³⁴⁰² (In the historical books, however, the term Olah is, however, used in a more general sense to denote other sacrifices also).

Thus day by day it formed the regular morning and evening service in the Temple, while on Sabbaths, new moons, and festivals additional burnt-offerings followed the ordinary worship.

The burnt-offering was always to be a male animal, as the more noble, and as indicating strength and energy. The blood was thrown on the angles of the altar below the red line that ran around it. Then the '*sinews and the thigh*'³⁴⁰³—with neither being allowed to be eaten nor to be sacrificed—and the stomach and the entrails, etc., having been removed (if salted, it was wholly burned)—in the case of birds also the feathers and the wings—and the sacrifice having been duly salted, it was wholly burned.

preferable, however, to connect the term with the [Hebrew] verb shillem, 'to require a good,' or 'to pay'; cf. Prov 7:14; Psa 116:14, 'I will pay my vows.' Shelamim were always [Hebrew:] zebahirim, i.e., slaughtered animals eaten in part by the offerer at the social feast. Not seldom they are associated with burnt offerings, at times of blessing and rejoicing, as, e.g., in II Sam 6:17; and these two classes of sacrifice are mentioned together as early as....Ex 20:24. Whatever be the derivation of the term, this form of sacrifice, in view of its usage, may well be designated '*thank offering*,' as it is in the R.V. margin.'

But what was conspicuous, by its absence, was any sacrifice for unrepented wilful sin.

Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Luke*, pp.142,146 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'But two most important things have to be noted. Firstly, it was never held that sacrifice could atone for deliberate sin, for what the Jews called "the sin of a high hand." If a man committed a sin unawares, if he was swept into sin in a moment of passion when self-control broke, then sacrifice was effective; but if a man deliberately, defiantly, callously and open-eyed committed sin, then sacrifice was powerless to atone.

Second, to be effective, sacrifice had to include confession of sin and true penitence; and true penitence involved the attempt to rectify any consequences sin might have had. The great Day of Atonement was held to make atonement for the sins of the whole nation, but the Jews were quite clear that not even the sacrifices of the Day of Atonement could avail for a man unless he was first reconciled to his neighbour. The breach between man and God could not be healed until the breach between man and man was healed. If a man was making a sin offering, for instance, to atone for a theft, the offering was held to be completely unavailing until the thing stolen had been restored; and if it was discovered that the thing stolen had not been restored, then the sacrifice had to be destroyed as unclean and burned outside the Temple. The Jews [i.e., the Israelites] were quite clear that a man had to do his utmost to put things right himself before he could be right with God.

[This concept appears in the Talmud] "The Day of Atonement" does atone for the offences between man and God. The Day of Atonement does not atone for offences between a man and his neighbour, unless the man has first put things right with his neighbour." Here again we have the basic fact—a man cannot be right with God unless he is right with his fellow-men. A man must so live that the end will find him at peace with all men.'

³⁴⁰¹ Deut 33:10; Psa 51:19 literally rendered '*whole burnt-offering*.'

³⁴⁰² Latin: sacrificium latreuticum.

³⁴⁰³ Gen 32:32; the '*sinew of the thigh*' was neither allowed to be eaten nor to be sacrificed.

The skins belonged to the ministering priests, who derived considerable revenue from this source. The burnt-offerings were the only sacrifice which non-Israelites were allowed to bring.

If they brought a peace-offering, it was to be treated as a burnt-offering, and that for the obvious reason that there was no one to eat the sacrificial meal. Of course, there was no imposition of hands in that case.³⁴⁰⁴

Sin-offering

The sin-offering was the most important of all sacrifices. It made atonement for the person of the offender, whereas the trespass-offering only atoned for one special offence. Hence sin-offerings were brought on festive occasions for the whole people, but never trespass-offerings.³⁴⁰⁵ In fact, the trespass-offering may be regarded as representing ransom for a special wrong, while the sin-offering symbolised general redemption. Both sacrifices applied only to sins '*through ignorance*,' in opposition to those done '*presumptuously*' (or '*with a high hand*'). For the latter the Law provided no atonement, but held out '*a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation*.' By sins '*through ignorance*,' however, we are to understand....not only such as were committed strictly through want of knowledge, but also those which had been unintentional, or through weakness, or where the offender at the time realised not his guilt. The fundamental difference between the two sacrifices appears also in this—sin-offerings, having a retrospective effect on the worshippers, were brought at the various festivals, and also for purification in such defilements of the body as symbolically pointed to the sinfulness of our nature (sexual defilement, those connected with leprosy, and with death). On the other hand, the animal brought for a trespass-offering [which was also retrospective, of course] was to be always a male (generally a ram, which was never used as a sin-offering); nor was it lawful, as in the sin-offering, to make substitution of something else in case of poverty.

However, in reference both to sin- and trespass-offerings....they only atoned³⁴⁰⁶ in case of real repentance. Indeed, their first effect would be '*a remembrance of sins*.'³⁴⁰⁷ All sin-offerings were either public or private (congregational or individual). The former were always male [animals]; the latter always female [animals], except the bullock for the high-priest's sin of ignorance,³⁴⁰⁸ and a kid for the same offence of a 'ruler.'³⁴⁰⁹ They were further divided into 'fixed,' which were the same in the case of rich and poor, and 'varying,' which 'ascended and descended' according to the circumstances of the offerer. 'Fixed' sacrifices were all those for sins 'through

³⁴⁰⁴ Israelites, by contrast, in their sacrifices, had this: they needed imposition of hands, confession, and sprinkling of blood, q.v. inf.

³⁴⁰⁵ cp. Numbers chpts. 28,29

³⁴⁰⁶ i.e., covered or hidden sin.

³⁴⁰⁷ Heb 10:3; on the part of the offerer/s.

³⁴⁰⁸ Lev 4:3

³⁴⁰⁹ Lev 4:22

ignorance' against any of the prohibitory commands; for sin of deed, not of word; or else for such which, if they had been high-handed³⁴¹⁰ would have carried the Divine punishment of being 'cut off.'

The 'varying' sacrifices were those for lepers;³⁴¹¹ for women after childbirth;³⁴¹² for having concealed a '*thing known*';³⁴¹³ for having unwittingly sworn falsely; and for either unwittingly eaten of what had been consecrated, or gone into the Temple in a state of defilement.

Lastly, there were 'outer' and 'inner' sin-offerings, according as the blood was applied to the altar of burnt-offering or brought into the inner sanctuary. In the former case, the flesh was to be eaten only by the officiating priest and within the sanctuary; the latter were to be wholly burnt without the camp or city. In both cases, however, the '*inwards*,' as enumerated in Leviticus,³⁴¹⁴ were always first burned on the altar of burnt-offering. Neither oil nor frankincense were to be brought with a sin-offering. There was nothing joyous about it. It represented a terrible necessity, for which God, in His wondrous grace, had made provision.

[A] symbolic meaning was intended to be conveyed by the sacrificial meal which the priests were to make of the flesh of such sin-offerings as were not wholly burnt without the camp. Unquestionably, Philo was right in suggesting that one of the main objects of this meal was to carry to the offerer assurance of his acceptance, 'since God would never have allowed His servants to partake of it, had there not been a complete removal and forgetting of the sin' atoned for. This view entirely accords with the statement in Leviticus,³⁴¹⁵ where the purpose of this meal by the priests is said to be '*to bear the iniquity of the congregation*.' Hence, also, the flesh of all sacrifices, either for the high-priest, as representing the priesthood, or for the whole people, had to be burnt; because those who, as God's representatives, were alone allowed to eat the sacrificial meal were themselves among the offerers of the sacrifice.

It only remains to explain in detail two peculiarities connected with the sin-offering. First, it differed according to the theocratic position of him who brought the sacrifice. For the high-priest on the day of Atonement,³⁴¹⁶ or when he had sinned, '*to the rendering guilty of the people*,'³⁴¹⁷ that is, in his official capacity as representing the people; or if the whole congregation had sinned through ignorance;³⁴¹⁸ and at the consecration of the priests and Levites a bullock was to be brought. This was the highest kind of sin-offering. Next in order was that of the '*kid of the goats*,' offered for the people on the day of Atonement,³⁴¹⁹ and on other festivals and

³⁴¹⁰ viz., wilful, presumptuous.

³⁴¹¹ Lev 14:21

³⁴¹² Luke 2:24; Lev 12:8

³⁴¹³ Lev 5:1

³⁴¹⁴ Lev 4:8

³⁴¹⁵ Lev 10:17

³⁴¹⁶ Lev 16:3

³⁴¹⁷ Lev 4:3, '*sin according to the sin of the people*.'

³⁴¹⁸ Lev 4:13

³⁴¹⁹ two kid-goats, only one of which was sacrificed under the Law, the other being led into the wilderness and released; latterly, the Jews killed that goat too, pushing it over a cliff to its death, q.v. sup.

new moons;³⁴²⁰ also for the ruler who had sinned through ignorance;³⁴²¹ for the congregation if aught had been committed by any individual '*without the knowledge of the congregation*';³⁴²² and, lastly, at the consecration of the Tabernacle.³⁴²³ The third kind of sin-offering consisted of a female kid of the goats for individual Israelites,³⁴²⁴ and of a ewe lamb for a Nazarite³⁴²⁵ and a leper.³⁴²⁶

Since the high-priest represented the people before God, as a low-type of Christ, the sacrifice offered, a bullock, was paramount. The two kid-goats at Atonement represented Christ, who had no sin, but who bore the sins of mankind on His head, so the sacrifice was in the diminutive, relatively speaking, for He had nothing of which to repent.

The lowest grade of sin-offering was that of turtle-doves or young pigeons offered at certain purifications;³⁴²⁷ or else as a substitute for other sacrifices in case of poverty—extreme cases something resembling to, or '*as a meat-offering*' being even allowed.³⁴²⁸

Trespass-offering

The trespass-offering was provided for certain transgressions committed through ignorance....The offering for certain trespasses covered five distinct cases, which had all this in common, that they represented a wrong for which a special ransom was to be given.³⁴²⁹ The Word of God considers every wrong done to another, as also a wrong done against the Lord,³⁴³⁰ and hence, as needing a trespass-offering.

It forms no exception to this principle, that a trespass-offering was also prescribed in the case of a healed leper,³⁴³¹ and in that of a Nazarite, whose vow had been interrupted by sudden defilement with the dead,³⁴³² since leprosy was also symbolically regarded as a wrong to the congregation as a whole (hence the leper was banished from the congregation), while the interruption of the vow was a kind of wrong directly towards the Lord. But that this last was, at the same time, considered the lightest kind of trespass appears even from this—while ordinarily the flesh of the trespass-offering, after burning the inwards on the altar,³⁴³³ was only to be eaten

³⁴²⁰ one kid-goat; Num 28:15f, 29:5f.

³⁴²¹ Lev 4:23

³⁴²² Num 15:24

³⁴²³ Lev 9:3,15; one kid-goat, together with a calf and a lamb.

³⁴²⁴ Lev 4:48f.,5:6

³⁴²⁵ Num 6:14

³⁴²⁶ Lev 14:10

³⁴²⁷ Lev 12:6,15:14,29; Num 6:10

³⁴²⁸ Lev 5:11-13

³⁴²⁹ Lev 5:15,6:2,19:20 (in these three cases the offering was a ram); Lev 14:12; Num 6:2 (where the offering was a ram).

³⁴³⁰ Psa 51:4

³⁴³¹ Lev 14:12

³⁴³² Num 6:10-12

³⁴³³ Lev 7:3

by the officiating priests within the Holy Place, the lamb offered for such a Nazarite might be eaten by others also, and anywhere within Jerusalem. The blood of the trespass offering (like that of the burnt-offering) was thrown on the corners of the altar below the red line.

Peace-offering

The most joyous of all sacrifices was the peace-offering, or, as from its derivation it might also be rendered, the offering of completion.

This was, indeed, a season of happy fellowship with the covenant God, in which He condescended to become Israel's guest at the sacrificial meal, even as He was always their host....In peace-offerings the sacrificial meal was the point of main importance, hence the name Sevach, by which it is designated in the Pentateuch, and which means 'slaying,' in reference to a meal. It is this sacrifice which is so frequently referred to in the book of Psalms as the grateful homage of a soul [that is, a person] justified and accepted before God.³⁴³⁴ If, on the one hand, then, the '*offering of completion*' indicated that there was complete peace with God, on the other, it was also literally the offering of completeness. The peace-offerings were either public or private. The two lambs offered every year at Pentecost³⁴³⁵ were a public peace-offering, and the only one which was regarded as '*most holy*.' As such, they were sacrificed at the north side of the altar, and their flesh only eaten by the officiating priests and within the Holy Place. The other public peace-offerings were slain at the south side, and their '*inwards*' burnt on the altar.³⁴³⁶ Then, after the priests had received their due, the rest was to be eaten by the offerers themselves, either within the courts of the Temple or in Jerusalem³⁴³⁷....private peace-offerings were of a three-fold kind:³⁴³⁸ '*sacrifices of thanksgiving*,'³⁴³⁹ '*vows*,' and '*voluntary offerings*.'³⁴⁴⁰ The first were in general acknowledgement of mercies received; the last, the free gift of loving hearts, as even the use of the same term in Exodus³⁴⁴¹ implies. Exceptionally in this last case, an animal that had anything either '*defective*' or '*superfluous*' might be offered.³⁴⁴² ['*Sacrifices of thanksgiving*' involved three different grades or types of bread: unleavened cakes mixed with oil; unleavened wafers anointed with oil; and leavened cakes mixed with oil. According to Jewish tradition, there were to be ten cakes of each kind of bread in every Thank-offering].

³⁴³⁴ Psa 51:17,54:6,56:12,116:17,18

³⁴³⁵ Lev 23:19

³⁴³⁶ Lev 3:4,5

³⁴³⁷ Deut 27:7

³⁴³⁸ Lev 7:11

³⁴³⁹ Lev 7:12

³⁴⁴⁰ Lev 7:16

³⁴⁴¹ Ex 25:2,35:29

³⁴⁴² Lev 22:23

Peace-offerings were brought either of male or female animals (chiefly of the former), but not of pigeons; the sacrifice being, of course, always accompanied by a meat- and a drink-offering.³⁴⁴³ As every other sacrifice, they needed imposition of hands, confession, and sprinkling of blood....Then the '*inwards*' were taken out and '*waved*' before the Lord, along with the '*breast*' and the '*right shoulder*' (or, perhaps more correctly, the '*right leg*'). In reference to these two wave-offerings we remark that the '*breast*' properly belonged to the Lord, and that He gave it to His priests,³⁴⁴⁴ while Israel gave the '*right shoulder*' directly to the priests.³⁴⁴⁵ The ritual of waving has already been described, the meaning of the movement being to present the sacrifice, as it were, to the Lord, and then to receive it back from Him.³⁴⁴⁶

The following were to be waved before the Lord: the breast of the peace-offering;³⁴⁴⁷ the parts mentioned at the consecration of the priests;³⁴⁴⁸ the first omer at the Passover;³⁴⁴⁹ the jealousy-offering;³⁴⁵⁰ the offering at the close of a Nazarite's vow;³⁴⁵¹ the offering of a cleansed leper;³⁴⁵² and the '*two lambs presented 'with the bread of the firstfruits,'* at the feast of [Pentecost].³⁴⁵³ The two last-mentioned offerings were '*waved*' before being sacrificed. After the '*waving*,' the '*inwards*'³⁴⁵⁴ were burnt on the altar of burnt offering, and the rest eaten either by priests or worshippers, the longest term allowed in any case for the purpose being two days and a night from the time of sacrifice.³⁴⁵⁵ Of course, the guests, among whom were to be the Levites and the poor, must all be in a state of Levitical purity, symbolical of '*the wedding garment*' needful at the better [wedding]-feast [with Christ, in the air].

Meat-offering

[In closing,] a few particulars about meat-offerings. These were either brought in conjunction with burnt- and peace-offerings (but never with sin- or trespass-offerings) or else by themselves. The latter were either public or private meat-offerings. The three public meat-offerings were: the twelve loaves of shewbread, renewed every Sabbath, and afterwards eaten by the priests; the omer, or sheaf of the harvest, [at] Passover [/Unleavened Bread]; and the two wave-loaves at Pentecost. Four of the private meat-offerings were enjoined by the Law, namely:

³⁴⁴³ Lev 7:11f.

³⁴⁴⁴ Lev 7:30,31

³⁴⁴⁵ Lev 7:32

³⁴⁴⁶ cp. waving of the sacrifices associated with the two witnesses, q.v. sup. & inf.

³⁴⁴⁷ Lev 7:30

³⁴⁴⁸ Lev 8:25-29

³⁴⁴⁹ Lev 23:11

³⁴⁵⁰ Num 5:25

³⁴⁵¹ Num 6:20

³⁴⁵² Lev 14:12

³⁴⁵³ Lev 23:20

³⁴⁵⁴ Lev 3:3-5, etc.

³⁴⁵⁵ this maximum period being half of the time that the two witnesses' bodies will lie dead in Jerusalem.

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1. The daily meat-offering of the high-priest, according to the Jewish interpretation;³⁴⁵⁶
 2. That at the consecration of priests;³⁴⁵⁷ and,
 3. That in substitution for a sin-offering, in case of poverty;³⁴⁵⁸ and that of jealousy.³⁴⁵⁹

The following five were purely voluntary, namely, that of fine flour with oil; unbaked;³⁴⁶⁰ that '*baken in a pan*'; '*in a frying-pan*'; '*in the oven*'; and the '*wafers*.'³⁴⁶¹ All these offerings were to consist of at least one omer of corn (which was the tenth part of an ephah).³⁴⁶²

In all baken meat-offerings, an 'omer' was always made into ten cakes—symbolical number of completeness—in that of the high-priest's daily meat offering, of which twelve cakes were baken, as representative of Israel. Finally, as the Rabbis express it, every meat-offering prepared in a vessel had 'three pourings of oil'—into the vessel, then to mingle with the flour, and, lastly, after it was ready—frankincense being then put upon it. The '*wafers*' were '*anointed*' with oil.'

The subjoined Rabbinical table may be of [interest and] use:

1. Meat-offerings—requiring the addition of oil and frankincense: Of fine flour unbaken; baken in a pan; baken in a frying-pan; baken in the oven; the '*wafers*'; the high-priest's daily and the priest's consecration offering; the flour from the '*sheaf*' offered [during Passover / Unleavened Bread];
2. Meat-offerings—requiring oil without frankincense: All meat-offerings accompanying a burnt- or peace-offering;
3. Meat-offerings—requiring frankincense without oil: The shew-bread; and,
4. Meat-offerings—requiring neither oil nor frankincense: The two loaves at Pentecost; the jealousy offering; and that in substituting for a sin offering.

When presenting a meat-offering, the priest first brought it in the golden or silver dish in which it had been prepared, and then transferred it to a holy vessel, putting oil and frankincense upon it. Taking his stand at the south-eastern corner of the altar, he next took the '*handful*' that was actually to be burnt, put it in another vessel, laid some of the frankincense on it, carried it to the top of the altar, salted it, and then placed it on the

³⁴⁵⁶ Jewish interpretation of Lev 6:20

³⁴⁵⁷ Lev 6:20

³⁴⁵⁸ Lev 5:11,12

³⁴⁵⁹ Num 5:15

³⁴⁶⁰ Lev 2:1

³⁴⁶¹ Lev 2:4-7

³⁴⁶² Ex 16:36

fire. The rest of the meat-offering belonged to the priests. Every meat-offering, except in those of the high-priest and the priest's consecration, was accompanied by a drink offering of wine, which was poured at the base of the altar.³⁴⁶³

Status

'Because a covenant-keeping [and hence God's Law keeping] man in Israel offered the best of his flock as a token of God's absolute ownership of both him and his flock, *he thereby retained lawful title in God's court to everything that remained in his possession*. His life and his possessions were no longer tainted, for his representative sacrificial act removed God's curse in history. By sacrificing the best of his flock, he re-established his claim of legitimate ownership in God's court. Because he personally bore the economic loss, he established lawful title to future benefits from his property. Only someone who has the legal authority to *disown* a piece of property can accurately be said to own it. An Israelite disowned his representative animal—the best of his flock—by sacrificing it. He publicly acknowledged in principle that he owed God everything he owned, and that whatever he retained, he retained by God's grace as a steward in history.

Had he sacrificed a low-value animal, he would have been symbolically asserting that God had lawful title to only the dregs of his capital assets, the leftovers. This would have constituted a rebellion on his part: the theft of God's property, meaning the public repudiation of his delegated position as God's steward. *But this stewardship cannot legally be repudiated*. Man is still held responsible by God for the faithful administration of God's property. Stewardship is therefore an inescapable concept. It is never a question of "Stewardship versus No stewardship"; it is always a question of *stewardship for whom*. This is why Jesus warned: '*No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.*'³⁴⁶⁴ But we cannot serve no master, either. We have to serve someone or something.'³⁴⁶⁵

Red heifer

[Edersheim reports a strange and apparently unsubstantiated] 'Jewish tradition to the effect that King Solomon, who knew the meaning of all of God's ordinances, was unable to understand that of the red heifer.'³⁴⁶⁶

³⁴⁶³ Edersheim, Alfred, *The Temple—Its Ministry and Service*, §§5,6 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

³⁴⁶⁴ Mat 6:24

³⁴⁶⁵ North, Gary, *Boundaries and Dominion—An Economic Commentary on Leviticus*, Volume 1, p.56, citing Harper, F. A., *Liberty: A Path to Its Recovery*, p.106 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

³⁴⁶⁶ Edersheim, Alfred, *The Temple, Its Ministry and Services as they were at the time of Jesus Christ*, p.352 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

'This oblation differed from other sacrifices, in that the red heifer was slain, not in the court of the tabernacle, but without the camp; the greater part of the blood, and all the fat, were burned with the skin and carcase, and the same things were cast into the burning which had been appointed in the case of a leper when cleansed. Yet it is evident that it was in substance an atoning sacrifice, and the typical purifying efficacy of the ashes was derived from the typical expiation made by the spotless animal thus slaughtered. Every circumstance was ordered so as to impress the mind with an idea of the heifer as "extremely polluted and polluting," and thus by carrying the pollution out of the camp, making way for the purification of the people. Even Eleazer, by superintending the transaction and sprinkling the blood, was rendered unclean, as well as he who burnt the heifer; and when a clean person had collected the ashes, he also in some degree partook of the pollution! Thus Christ, our unblemished sacrifice and sanctification, bearing our sins, suffered without Jerusalem by the hands of the Romans, yet by the decree and under the inspection of the chief priests; and though His death was "*according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God,*" yet everyone concerned in it contracted guilt and pollution of the most aggravated kind. The ashes of the heifer thus prepared, and carefully kept apart from those of the wood with which it was burned, were laid up in some clean space without the camp, that the water of separation (or for purifying those who were separated for ceremonial pollution) might be made by putting a small quantity of them into spring water. This water must be frequently wanted by the whole multitude of Israelites: yet, as a little would suffice, the ashes of one heifer might last for some considerable time; and the nature of the ashes which do not easily corrupt, might also typify the "abiding efficacy" of the atonement of Christ.'³⁴⁶⁷

³⁴⁶⁷ *Scott's Commentary, 'Red Heifer'*

Chapter 50

Reflections on Job

In all probability, the book of Job is one of the oldest in the Bible. It is not known who penned it: some attribute it to Moses, some to Solomon, but the author is not identified in the book itself, or elsewhere in the Bible, or in any contemporaneous or ancillary work. This 'poetic'³⁴⁶⁸ book, patently evidencing inspiration by the Holy Spirit, is profound, striking several deep themes and experiences that impact on the Judæo-Christian life and struggle.

³⁴⁶⁸ Hinson, David F., *The Books of the Old Testament, Introduction 2*, pp.98,99,106,107:

'The Introduction and the Conclusion are in prose, while the rest of the book is in poetry.

Does Hebrew poetry use rhyme? The short and simple answer is 'no.' Does Hebrew poetry use metre and rhythm?

Through the ages scholars have discussed this question frequently. Some say one thing, some say another. But it seems to be true that metre is not usually found in Hebrew poetry. In other words, Hebrew poetry does not have a regular pattern of the number of syllables in each line. Some lines are longer and others are shorter, without any formal plan. However, rhythm does play a part in Hebrew poetry. There is a regular pattern of stressed syllables. The irregular length of the lines arises from the fact that the number of unstressed syllables varies, and is not carefully planned. Each line of Hebrew poetry is normally divided into two parts, and the number of stressed syllables on either side of the division is indicated by saying the line has a pattern or rhythm, 3:2, or 4:4, etc.

What is distinctive in Hebrew poetry is its basic concern with setting ideas side by side, rather than with using patterns of words, or with stressed and unstressed syllables. This division of each line and poetry into two sections provides a very useful way of comparing or contrasting ideas. It was also very useful in Temple worship, where two choirs could respond to each other, expressing similar ideas or contrasting ideas.

There are three main ways in which ideas were set side by side in Hebrew poetry:

1. Repeating the same idea;
2. Expressing a contrast of ideas; and,
3. Expressing and then developing an idea.'

Job was a real man; he existed. He is not a mythical figure, or a composition. He is mentioned by Ezekiel and classed as one of the three great men of the Old Testament: Noah, Daniel, and Job.³⁴⁶⁹ He is also mentioned in the New Testament,³⁴⁷⁰ where James speaks of his patience and steadfast endurance. Job lived in the land of Uz, and it is probable that he was a contemporary or near-contemporary of Abraham or his immediate or close progeny—Isaac, Jacob, or Joseph—most likely Jacob.

The opening verse notes that, *'that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil.'*³⁴⁷¹ *'Perfect'* does not mean sinless; Job did not claim to be sinless, neither was this ever claimed for him. He was, however, a man of integrity, wholesome, having a deep and unshakeable faith, and one who shunned evil. He *'feared God,'* that is, he revered Elohim,³⁴⁷² for he was a deeply religious person, and lived this belief to the fullest extent of his being, as he saw it, through the Holy Spirit. He knew the nature of the Godhead. His outward walk conformed to his inner convictions.

In this he prospered, under the constant care and protection of God: *'And there were born unto him seven sons and three daughters. His substance also was seven thousand sheep, and three thousand camels, and five hundred yolk of oxen, and five hundred she asses, and a very great household; so that this man was the greatest of all of the men of the east.'*³⁴⁷³ God gave Job peace, prosperity, and protection from the vagaries of the world and the worldly system. Job was divinely blessed on all counts, and had material possessions second to none. Most certainly, Job was a wealthy, powerful, and important man.

Sickness equals sin?

Now one of the world's earliest beliefs was that goodness and rectitude go hand-in-hand with greatness and prosperity; that the virtues flourish and the wicked are cut down even in this life, and that affliction is a ready sign of divine anger. Job's friends, *'miserable comforters,'* who came to him after his afflictions, were trained in this perspective, and so were otherwise at a loss to explain his misfortunes, especially given the prematurity and rigidity of their perspective. While Job was unaware of any wrongdoing, the comforters³⁴⁷⁴ were convinced that he must be a secret sinner and have brought down upon himself the wrath of God. This has to

³⁴⁶⁹ Ezek 14:14,20

³⁴⁷⁰ James 5:11

³⁴⁷¹ Job 1:1b

³⁴⁷² plural: both the Father and the Word.

³⁴⁷³ Job 1:2,3

³⁴⁷⁴ one of Job's comforters, Bildah, exhibits worldly wisdom and want of feeling. He attributes the death of Job's children to their own evil lives and tells Job that he also must have committed great sins, to be punished so severely. Job's acts in relation to his children was to offer up burnt offerings (q.v. sup.) continually on their behalf, *'in case they had sinned, or cursed God in their hearts,'* q.v. Job 1:5. In this Job erred, of course, for his intention to vicariously justify through sacrificial substitution (a *'burnt offering,'* rather than a *'thank offering'* or a *'sin offering,'* q.v. sup.) his children before God exposed a fundamental wanting in his understanding of man's relationship to God, and God's supreme position, for man is saved by grace, not by some other sinner acting as intermediary on his behalf; justified, not by vicarious sacrifice, but by faith; and ultimately rewarded according to his works, q.v. sup.

be compared to Judæo-Christian belief wherein the adversity of the righteous and the prosperity of the wicked are as alike evanescent, and that before death each reaps the due rewards of his deeds, then comes the judgement.

Even today, notwithstanding all of the evidence from the gospels and the epistles, there are still some self-professed 'biblical Christians' who cling to the early and aberrant belief, despite not being sustained in the least in John: *'And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth. And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind? Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.'*³⁴⁷⁵

Whose sin was it? A common question. To the believer in original sin: the man. To the believer in the sins of the forefathers being visited on the children: the parents. To the believer in esoteric metempsychosis / transmigration of souls / reincarnation: the man in a previous incarnation. To the believer that physical, or, indeed, financial or other material ailments are the result of sin and nothing else: either the man or his parents, or, quite possibly, all of them.³⁴⁷⁶

The Bible, however, has it differently. The only one that is true in a general sense is the sins of the fathers, although it is not germane here. There is no original sin,³⁴⁷⁷ no reincarnation, and, to the believer that ailments are always the result of sin, Christ says, *'Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.'*³⁴⁷⁸ In fact, altogether different reasons for affliction and sickness are found in Psalms, *'It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes';*³⁴⁷⁹ in Job, *'He rescues the lowly from their affliction, and opens their understanding through distress';*³⁴⁸⁰ and in Peter, *'That the trial of your faith....though it be tried by fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.'*³⁴⁸¹

The amount of bile spewed down on the head of innocent people by self-appointed advocates of Christ claiming that any and every misfortune or ailment is direct retribution from God for their sins, is incalculable. Innocent people, not having sinned in a matter, are branded by wholly misguided 'children of Satan' as sinners

³⁴⁷⁵ John 9:1-3

³⁴⁷⁶ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Luke*, p.59 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'[Concerning Luke 5:18-26] What does the passage about forgiving sins mean? To understand it we must remember that sin and suffering were in Palestine inextricably connected. It was implicitly believed that if a man was suffering he had sinned. And therefore the sufferer very often had an even morbid sense of sin. That is why Jesus began by telling the man that his sins were forgiven. Without that the man would never believe that he could be cured. This shows how in debate the scribes and Pharisees were completely routed. They objected to Jesus claiming to extend forgiveness to the man. But on their own arguments and assumptions the man was ill because he had sinned; and if he was cured then that was the final proof that his sins were forgiven. The complaint of the Pharisees had recoiled on them and left them speechless.'

³⁴⁷⁷ q.v. inf.

³⁴⁷⁸ John 9:3b

³⁴⁷⁹ Psal 119:71

³⁴⁸⁰ Job 36:15

³⁴⁸¹ I Peter 1:7

deserving punishment. The innocent, so denigrated, have been said to be cursed by God, sometimes even described as especially cursed by God, that is, singled out for particular punishment, or to be excluded by God, or discarded, and almost always given over to Satan. For poor recipients of such vile, insensitive, and unfounded nonsense, there is comfort: *'All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose.'*³⁴⁸² Thankfully, *'the works of God'* are made manifest in the 'elect.' The 'merchants of bile' have no part in it.

Permissions

The idea that Satan had access to heaven at the time of Job is the product of reading into Job something that simply isn't there: *'Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them.'*³⁴⁸³ This does not say that the convocation took place in heaven; in fact, it could only have taken place on earth, for that is where Satan and his demons were bound after their expulsion from the second heaven following their initial rebellion.³⁴⁸⁴

The Lord praised Job, saying to Satan, *'my servant Job, there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?'*³⁴⁸⁵ Satan answered the Lord, saying, *'Doth Job fear God for nought?'*³⁴⁸⁶ There is always a ready accusing jibe from the king of wickedness. 'How impatient the wicked of hearing the good praised rightly! They are like the Devil, who cannot endure that anyone should be praised but themselves, and grudge at the just share of reputation others have.'³⁴⁸⁷

Satan, in his communing with God over Job, ultimately was given two permissions: the first to strike at what might loosely be termed Job's 'possessions' and, later, to strike him with extreme bodily ailment. Satan could not go beyond the limit of the permission granted by God, therefore the well-meaning but fatuous advices and conclusions given by Job's three 'comforters' were, so far Satan is concerned, beyond his powers,³⁴⁸⁸ and not part or cause of Satan's attack.

After the failure of his first attempt aimed at Job's 'possessions,' Satan's plan was to have the parameter revised, and to strike even the body of Job with plagues. This wicked plan, and its derivatives, repeated time and time again against the 'elect' down through the ages, has but a singular objective: to have the 'elect'

³⁴⁸² Rom 8:28

³⁴⁸³ Job 1:6

³⁴⁸⁴ there are three heavens: first, the sky; second, the cosmos; and third, the throne of God; Job 2:7 does *not* say that Satan had access to the heaven of God; Satan, the fallen cherub, had temporary access to the second heaven, the physical cosmos, for the purpose of waging war *'in the heavens,'* but is now restricted to the lower, earthly realm and its atmospheric, earth-encompassing *'heaven,'* cf. Rev 12:7-9.

³⁴⁸⁵ Job 1:8

³⁴⁸⁶ Job 1:9

³⁴⁸⁷ *Henry's Commentary* on Job 1:9

³⁴⁸⁸ Latin: ultra vires.

curse God, or to regard Him as a liar, or One who does not or cannot keep His promises, or even One who does not care. When under severe pressure and testing, the inclination in base human nature tends to this sort, which Satan knows well. A more subtle variation on this is in inducing doubt over whether one has understood God's word in a matter, or whether God has changed His mind in it over some subsequent trespass or infraction on the individual's part, for, after all, everyone sins. All-in-all, Satan's ploy is to separate man from God by introducing or causing doubt, and then to accuse God of revisionism or infidelity. The answer to the last accusation is given by Paul, *'But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil.'*³⁴⁸⁹

Woe upon woe

When Satan had received the permissions from God,³⁴⁹⁰ there came disasters, thick and fast, as is often the case with Satan-induced disasters. To add to the injury, one of the Bible's less edifying characters, Job's wife, makes a brief appearance and, possibly while under satanic or demonic influence, pragmatically advises him to *'Curse God and die.'*³⁴⁹¹ Job, however, turned aside her advice, with a remarkable degree of tact and restraint, given the extreme circumstances. Pragmatism is antipathetic to the idealistic faith alive in Judæo-Christianity, and to the Judæo-Christian life and struggle. '[The pragmatist's creed is, as ever:] Of what value is consistency?'³⁴⁹²

Despite the severity of the tribulation visited on him by Satan, Job did not curse God. Significantly, the last mention of the appearance of Satan is very early in the book.³⁴⁹³ In fact, after chapter two, he doesn't appear again. But then onto the scene come three 'comforters,' initially offering sympathy, but which soon degenerated into worthless and unfounded conjecture and criticism. The same pertains to this day, only in more formalised garb. Under the malign influence of Freud and others, 'talking things through' with others has been greatly over-rated as a source of enlightenment and consolation, for God is the only source of enlightenment,

³⁴⁸⁹ II Thes 3:3

³⁴⁹⁰ Peake, A. S., *Lamentations*, pp.332,333:

'Lam 3:37-38, 'Who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass, when the Lord commandeth it not? out of the mouth of the Most High cometh there not evil and good?'

cf. Amos 3:6; Isa 45:7. The Most High, the Supreme Lord of the universe, controls the whole course of history; evil cannot be wrought, apart from His permission. Satan cannot touch Job till God gives him leave....Both calamity and prosperity follow His behest (v.38).

Lam 3:39-42: The recognition that suffering is due to sin (v.39) should lead to self-examination and repentance (v.40), followed by prayer (v.41) and penitent confession (v.42).'

³⁴⁹¹ or it may have been that old female curse, pragmatism, q.v. inf.; Job later had his wealth restored to him, many time sover, and had a further seven sons and three daughters. It is not clear from the text whethere these were by his original wife, but the Greek *Testament of Job*, chpts. 21-25,39, while far from unassailable, names Job's first wife as Sitidos (Sitis), and his second, the mother of the ten latter children, as Dinah, cf. Testament of Job 1:6.

³⁴⁹² Calvin John, *Commentary on Daniel*, Vol. 1, p.137 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets); Hitchens, Peter, *A Brief History of Crime*, p.149:

'Facts and logic are overcome by thoughtless emotion.'

³⁴⁹³ Job 2:7

consolation, and salvation. Man's comfort is nothing of the sort. All too often it is little more than the engagement of speculation, insinuation, provocation, pragmatism, presumption, self-interest, insensitivity, wounding, bigotry, and persistent jibery.

The comforters' reasons for Job's woes were predominantly tripartite and overly simplistic. Each presents a different simplified answer to the compound and complex question of why God should so assail a good man. To Eliphaz the Temanite it is impossible to suppose that God could do such a thing and therefore Job must have done something wrong—you reap what you sow, and God is correcting Job for his errors. Later, he observes that Job is crafty and is condemned out of his own mouth, and that all are unclean. Still later, the declension continues, for he states that Job is wicked, indeed, of infinite iniquity, and should return to God and keep the Law.³⁴⁹⁴ Bildad the Shuhite tries to persuade Job that his suffering, deserved or otherwise, would do him good in the end. Since God is just, if Job be perfect, he will be saved, for the wicked perish, caught in their own devices. Finally, he makes the depressing claim that man cannot be justified before God.³⁴⁹⁵ Zophar the Naamathite says it is all a mystery that will be cleared up one day, usually upon death, or after death. Despite this, he states that Job is being punished for his iniquity,³⁴⁹⁶ and that the wicked perish, leaving nothing.

These composite arguments / rebuttals, far from being of comfort and help, merely drive Job to despair and into terrible doubts about God who could inflict such pain and perplexity, but despite the intractability of the comforters' positions, Job did manage some limited advances from time to time based on their remarks.

Elihu

All this worthless comfort—there is indeed much of it for it comprises the greater part of the book of Job—is followed by the words of Elihu, a rather impetuous and idealistic young man, but one who had much to say of worth. He was also a man angry at the lack of progress: *'When Elihu saw that there was no answer in the mouth of these three men, then his wrath was kindled.'*³⁴⁹⁷ His anger was twofold: anger at Job for his questioning of God and His ways, and anger at his three friends over the complete worthlessness of their advices and responses. But Job still needed to know God's attitude toward himself: a matter of personal faith; and the wider question of justice in human life: a matter of theodicy.³⁴⁹⁸

Interestingly, *'Also against his three friends was his anger kindled, because they had found no answer, and yet had condemned Job,'*³⁴⁹⁹ is rendered by Pfeiffer, allegedly in its original form free from Jewish scribal tampering: *'Also against his three friends was his anger kindled, because they had found no answer, and yet*

³⁴⁹⁴ cf. Job chpts. 4,15,22

³⁴⁹⁵ cf. Job chpts. 8,18,25

³⁴⁹⁶ disregarding Job's statement that the just suffer.

³⁴⁹⁷ Job 32:5

³⁴⁹⁸ theodicy: vindication of the justice and goodness of God, in spite of the existence of evil in the world.

³⁴⁹⁹ Job 32:3, K.J.V.

*had condemned God.*³⁵⁰⁰ This is given added support by the eventual excoriation of the three comforters by God, *'And it was so, that after the Lord had spoken these words unto Job, the Lord said to Eliphaz the Temanite, My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends: for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath. Therefore take unto you now seven bullocks and seven rams, and go to my servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering; and my servant Job shall pray for you: for him will I accept: lest I deal with you after your folly, in that ye have not spoken of me the thing which is right, like my servant Job.*³⁵⁰¹

The three comforters' reasons for Job's woes had comprised little more than drivel and trite nonsense, directly or indirectly speaking against God and his plan. The young Elihu, on the other hand, while admitting that sin does bring on suffering, also maintains that sometimes God uses the suffering of basically sincere and diligent people for other reasons, such as discipline, inducement to study His Laws, personal improvement, bolstering of faith, inculcation of patience and complete trust in God, and the like. As Elihu pointed out, God's supervening desire in the instance of man is to *'Deliver him from going down to the pit'*³⁵⁰²—salvation, in other words, leading to a place in the coming kingdom of God.

Despite lacking in years, Elihu knew well how to conduct himself in this matter. Apologising for his youth in the face of such age and experience, and promising not to take sides, he addresses Job, man to man. He counters that despite man's sins, God does have an interest in man, and does not conceal Himself. He states that God is sovereign, and that Job's pretended innocence is being used merely as a bolster to his questioning of God. As a general rule, men reap what they sow in this life. If God delays someone's punishment, it is for a reason. How dare Job question this? Job thus, *'addeth rebellion unto his sin,*³⁵⁰³ and, by arguing against God's justice, by *'multiplying his words against God,*³⁵⁰⁴ he had merely succeeded in making things worse for himself. Job had allowed his pain to turn him into a person with a rebellious spirit and a bad attitude towards God.

Job had said that it doesn't matter whether one is sinful or righteous and cited his own case as an example. Elihu considers that this issue had not been dealt with adequately by the three friends, so enjoins them also to hear him out. Elihu reminds them that God is omnipotent, and has nothing to gain or lose in man's behaviour, and no ulterior motive. Often, when men cry out to God and He does release them from their infirmities, they do nothing but revert straightway to their former wickedness. Why should God respond to those who simply try to use Him and show no genuine repentance? God will not listen to anyone who calls Him unjust. Those crying out to God from pain but not piety will not gain His ear. God knows each person in absolute detail.

³⁵⁰⁰ Pfeiffer, Robert Henry, *Introduction to the Old Testament*, p.83

³⁵⁰¹ Job 42:7,8

³⁵⁰² Job 33:24b

³⁵⁰³ Job 34:37a

³⁵⁰⁴ Job 34:37c

He knows what they have done, what they have thought, what they have omitted. He also knows, in each and every case, what will happen to them in the future. His Will will be done.

If righteous men suffer it is for God's purpose. God's love for man is boundless, and His purpose for man is that he should enter the kingdom of God. And so God reveals their sins to the righteous, that they may be righted, in order that the righteous can attain their place in the kingdom. It is correction through love, and when men respond appropriately, all goes well for them, *'If they obey and serve him, they shall spend their days in prosperity, and their years in pleasures.'*³⁵⁰⁵ It is this lesson from God to Job through suffering, a correction through love, and the complete justice in all that God does, that Elihu promotes to Job, while highlighting the wanting and inherent danger in Job's self-pity and professed innocence.

God answers

Many times Job had asked God to answer him in his travail, to address his questions and his pleadings. So God speaks out of the whirlwind, but the experience is not what Job had anticipated. God does not address Job's vain, philosophical questioning. Rather, He emphasises His position relative to His creation, especially to mortal man. Through the mystery and grandeur of all creation, God shows His might and wisdom. In contrast, man is puny, and weak, and finite, and very limited in understanding.

Happily, this comparison is not lost on Job, who, realising his foolishness and lack of understanding, confesses and repented in dust and ashes.³⁵⁰⁶ God then restores the fortunes of Job, two-fold: *'also the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before.'*³⁵⁰⁷ Job was faithful, and righted his error at the end. Satan was proved wrong. Job, elevated to a position even higher than before, with blessings greater than ever, received the same number of sons and daughters as formerly. He lived a further one hundred and forty years, seeing a further four generations of his line.

Themes of Job

The book of Job shows just how deeply ingrained sin actually is in mortal man. There are sins of action, sins of thought, sins of omission, sins of ignorance, and accidental or unintentional sins. In addition to many overt sins, there are covert sins, some of which man is not even aware, and even sins of such deep subtlety that man can hardly know of them, such as sins arising from lack of trust in God, and His grace, and His mercy. Sin is so deeply rooted. All it took was comforter-induced pressure—without input from Satan—resulting in self-

³⁵⁰⁵ Job 36:11

³⁵⁰⁶ Job 42:6

³⁵⁰⁷ Job 42:10b

pity, to drag Job into despair and questioning of God. Declension into new or further sin is an ever-present hazard to mortal man.

In defence, many would contend that Job had pointed out what should have been evident all along: that the wicked do indeed prosper. *'How oft,'* he demands, *'is the candle of the wicked put out?'* 'It should be obvious to the meanest intelligence that in this world evil men are not dealt with immediately according to merit, for God is long-suffering, gracious, and willing to forgive.' But is this the complete picture? Why do innocent, righteous people sometimes undergo terrible episodes of tragedy, injustice, and suffering?

'Because He is longsuffering, God waiteth long. Unnoticed, the finger moves on the dial-plate of time till the hour strikes. There is a divine grandeur and majesty in the slow, unheard, certain night-march of events under His control. God is content to wait because He reigns, because He can see the end from the beginning, and because He is gracious unto the sinner, affording sufficient time and more for repentance. Man must be content to wait, because he believes.'³⁵⁰⁸

'Long did God strive, by conscience and by Spirit, with that wicked generation to which Noah testified. Even when judgement was resolved upon, and its coming heralded, an interval (it would seem) of one hundred and twenty years was granted to mankind before its execution. *"My Spirit shall not always strive with man; yet his days shall be one hundred and twenty years."*³⁵⁰⁹ *"The long-suffering of God waited,"* Peter says, *"in the days of Noah."*³⁵¹⁰ In the meantime, that sign might be added to prediction, and sight to hearing, a long continued preparation made ready the Ark which was to save one family. *"By it,"* by the Ark, Noah *"condemned the world."*³⁵¹¹ By it he proved his faith, and by it he rebuked the obstinate infidelity of his generation. At that time, all those years, whoever would might *"hear and fear"* and be saved.'³⁵¹²

David has much on this subject in the Psalms and Proverbs, and there is much in the gospels too.³⁵¹³ Lewis once remarked when asked the question, 'Why should the righteous suffer?': 'Why not?'³⁵¹⁴ They're the

³⁵⁰⁸ Barclay, William, quotation.

³⁵⁰⁹ Gen 6:3; correlation with God ceasing to contend with man after completion of 120 jubilees, or 6,000 years.

³⁵¹⁰ I Peter 3:20

³⁵¹¹ Heb 11:7

³⁵¹² Vaughan, C. J., *Christ the Light of the World*, p.42

³⁵¹³ by way of illustration: Psa 34:19, *'Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all.'* Psa 50:15, *'And call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.'* Psa 55:22, *'Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved.'* Psa 81:7a, *'Thou callest in trouble, and I delivered thee; I answered thee.'* Psa 84:11b, *'No good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.'* Psa 85:9, *'Surely his salvation is nigh them that fear him; that glory may dwell in our land.'* Psa 92:12, *'The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree: he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon.'* Psa 107:9, *'For he satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness.'* Psa 111:5, *'He hath given meat unto them that fear him: he will ever be mindful of his covenant.'* Psa 112:4, *'Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness: he is gracious, and full of compassion, and righteous.'* Psa 121:8, *'The Lord shall preserve thy going out and they coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore.'* Psa 124:7,8, *'Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers: the snare is broken, and we are escaped. Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth.'* Psa 145:18-20, *'The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him: to all that call upon him in truth. He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him: he also will hear their cry, and will save them. The Lord preserveth all them that love him: but all the wicked will he destroy.'*

only ones that can handle it.' Paul confirms that: *'There is no temptation taken you but such is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but with the temptation will also make a way to escape,*³⁵¹⁵ *that ye may be able to bear it.'*³⁵¹⁶ The testing will not be so severe as to destroy faith, for that would be wholly counterproductive, although it can be deduced that the greater the faith, the more likely it is to be severe. Job's faith was subject to rigorous testing. Satan was the agent, but the permission and condescension was God's.

Satan's role in the trials and tribulations of the righteous is one that ultimately cannot be pleasing to him. He is limited by the constraints imposed by God, and he is acting as an agent of He whom he despises above all. God's circumscriptions are either direct and specific, as was the case with Job, or a touch more vicarious, conducted through the role of the Restrainer, the archangel Michael. There is no real point in Satan's persecuting his own, for they are active agents of wickedness on his behalf—sub-contractors as it were—and remain so until his use for them has ended, and then he persecutes them. Satan's activity on this earth is well described: *'Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.'*³⁵¹⁷ Satan constantly seeks out and targets the righteous, but he can only do this within the limitations set by God. Despite doubtless wanting to break free of these limitations, Satan is bound and must comply. In this there is great comfort to be had for the righteous.

While in the time of Job, Satan still had a very limited access to God on earth, it was finally denied him when Satan was cast down to the earth for the second time, and Jesus Christ died for our sins, and rose again.³⁵¹⁸ It follows that direct negotiations, such as took place over Job, can happen no more. The boundaries of Satan's powers have been set, and Satan must operate within them. He always operates to the very limit of his evil power, but he is limited nonetheless, with the righteous always under God's protection and care. In the time of the end, the Restrainer will be restricted,³⁵¹⁹ and Satan will be allowed to assume the maximum limits of his earth-bound power over mankind, although even here it is evident that Michael will stand for the righteous.³⁵²⁰ During this extremely perilous time, Satan's ploys and aspirations will be wilder than ever, and his hatred of

Prov 11:31, *'Behold, the righteous shall be recompensed in the earth; much more the wicked and the sinner.'* This is rendered in the Tanakh: *'If the righteous in the earth get their deserts, how much more the wicked man and the sinner.'* Heb 2:2 confirms that *'every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward.'* Mark 10:29,30 has the words of Christ on the subject of righteous suffering: *'And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life.'*

³⁵¹⁴ Lewis, C. S., comment.

³⁵¹⁵ Greek: *ekbasis*, 'exit,' 'end,' 'safe-landing place.'

³⁵¹⁶ I Cor 10:13

³⁵¹⁷ I Peter 5:8

³⁵¹⁸ q.v. sup.

³⁵¹⁹ not wholly withdrawn.

³⁵²⁰ Dan 12:1

the righteous will be heated white hot. But despite his all-consuming malignancy and visceral desire to extend the boundaries, the purlieu has been pre-set. It is not negotiable.

Satan is limited by God in at least three general but critical areas:

1. Spatial—Satan and his demons were cast down to earth. This limits all demons to the earthly realm and its atmosphere. Satan is described as '*lord of the air*.'³⁵²¹ Neither he nor his demons are allowed beyond this spatial limit, save those incarcerated in the bottomless pit;³⁵²²

2. Creational—Satan cannot create living beings. In the lice plague visited on Egypt, Pharaoh's satanically-empowered magicians could not replicate God's miracle where the dust of the earth became lice: '*And the magicians did so with their enchantments to bring forth lice, but they could not: so there were lice upon man and upon beast. Then the magicians said unto Pharaoh, This is the finger of God.*'³⁵²³ Satan could not garner sufficient supplies of substitutionary lice. The dust was more numerous than all the world's lice, and he was beaten. Some may wish to cite the trickery of Jannes and Jambres, the sorcerers of Pharaoh, in changing their staffs into snakes, as being a form of creation, but this can be explained by a limited substitution by a demon—instantaneously removing the sticks and replacing them with imported snakes. These were eaten by Aaron's stick-cum-snake, showing God's superiority, for while the devils sought to replicate Aaron's stick, their devices were inferior. While such '*lying wonders*'³⁵²⁴ wrought to support the kingdom of lies can be frauds and illusions, they can also be miraculous in running contrary to the natural order. The deciding criterion lies not in the apparent miracle per se, but in the accompanying message, or in what it seeks to inculcate. Demons can also inhabit animals, reptiles, etc.—as did Satan in the garden of Eden—but these are possessions rather than new mortal creations. Demons are strictly limited in taking over or possessing human beings or other living things to further their evil ends. If they could change themselves to mortal humans then they would run the risk of being killed. This would defeat their end in the age-ending punishment and destruction in the lake of fire,³⁵²⁵ and God would not permit it. Where Satan and his demons can conjure something is in the realm of the spirit world. There, they can represent themselves as spirit beings in any form that they wish: ghosts, demons, space aliens, ascended masters, humans, Jesus—anyone, or anything, in fact; and,

3. Environmental—Demons can miraculously control the environment, bringing on storms, lightning, and other 'natural' disasters. It is possible that the increase in earthquakes and the like prophesied for the end-time is, in part, to come about as a result of Satan's activities. The False Prophet's ability to bring down fire from heaven is

³⁵²¹ Eph 2:2b, '*prince of the power of the air*.'

³⁵²² q.v., Greek: tartaroo.

³⁵²³ Ex 8:18,19

³⁵²⁴ II Thes 2:8,9

³⁵²⁵ q.v. sup.

actually done by Satan, as is his power to make the Beast's image to speak to induce the world into committing idolatry. But Satan cannot affect the material creation beyond the limit of the earth's atmosphere in which he is bound.

Despite the incitement and agency of Satan, it was God who wrought the destruction on Job, as can be seen from, *'I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace and create evil.'*³⁵²⁶ *I the Lord do all these things,*³⁵²⁷ and, *'And the Lord said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? and still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movest me against him, to destroy him without cause.'*³⁵²⁸ There was no overt cause for this. Job was not overtly sinful.

Neither, incidentally, was Job self-righteous from the beginning. The reference, *'So these three men ceased to answer Job, because he was righteous in his own eyes,'*³⁵²⁹ is found better translated: *'These three men ceased replying to Job, for he considered himself right.'*³⁵³⁰ In other words, they could not convince him with their arguments; Job's view, in that regard, stood immutable. The comforters were not satanically inspired, for Satan is not mentioned in relation to any of them. They were just aberrant humans reasoning as they do: often pragmatically and wrongly.

An even more bizarre case is found in chapter thirty-five: *'Thinkest thou this to be right, that thou saidest, my righteousness is more than God's?'*³⁵³¹ Correctly translated, this gives the question as: *'Thinkest thou this to be the verdict, that you say, I am in the right more than God?'* This removes the oft-claimed 'self-righteousness of Job.' The fact is that he thought himself to be right and lawful, a faithful keeper of God's Law, is clear, and, as a result, Job could not understand why God should punish him so.

There is one final instance of the use of the word 'right,' this time spoken by the Lord: *'for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath.'*³⁵³² Here, the word 'right'³⁵³³ means 'to be erect,' and is the correct usage and almost the completely correct translation: 'upright.'

³⁵²⁶ Hebrew: ra, 'adversity,' 'bad,' 'affliction.'

³⁵²⁷ Isa 45:7

³⁵²⁸ Job 2:3 (sublinear emphasis added)

³⁵²⁹ Job 32:1, K.J.V.; hence the 'self-righteous' punishment notion in the minds of some.

³⁵³⁰ Tanakh translation; a substantial part of the difficulty in comprehending the book of Job arises from the poor translation standards in commonly-used versions. An habitual conflation of diverse Hebrew words into one or two English words gives rise to a number of fundamental misconceptions. The words 'righteous' and 'righteousness' are given as translations for a number of Hebrew words, inf. Thus Job 32:1b should read (with added comment and clarification in square brackets), *'because [Job] was just [Hebrew: tsaddiyg; or 'lawful'] in his own eyes,'* and not *'righteous in his own eyes,'* as the K.J.V. In short, to Job, he kept the Law faithfully. Indeed, the Tanakh translation is based on Hebrew: tsadag, giving: *'because [Job] thought himself to be right,'* again, as a result of keeping the Law. Hebrew translated 'right' is one or other of the following: mishpat, meaning 'verdict'; kuwn, meaning 'to be erect'; while 'righteous' is one of the following: tsaddiyg, meaning 'just' or 'lawful'; tsadag, meaning 'to be right'; tsedeq, meaning 'the right'; tsdaqah, meaning 'rightness.'

³⁵³¹ Job 35:2, K.J.V.

³⁵³² Job 42:7,8; especially v.7c

As to God's view of the arguments of the three comforters, *'the Lord said to Eliphaz the Temanite, My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends: for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath,*³⁵³⁴ although it should be noted that this was after Elihu had spoken and after Job had admitted the validity of what God had had to say. In order to assuage God's anger over what they had said and done, the three comforters were instructed to offer sacrifices³⁵³⁵ and to have Job pray for them, else God would deal with them for their folly—showing that the evil done by the comforters was not wilful—rather it was sin of error, ignorance, or stupidity. None of this even remotely suggests that Job was self-righteous in the face of the claimed profound truths led by the three comforters. Job eventually realised he had been self-confident, complacent, and even, to an extent, proud, questioning God's judgement, and lacking in his regard for God. But he was not self-righteous from the beginning, as many claim. Under pressure from the comforters, his self-pity did turn to self-justification, but this was righted subsequently.

Some difficult points

Some point to apparent capriciousness or callousness in God's allowing the deaths of Job's sons and daughters. Job's sons held feasts, and invited his daughters,³⁵³⁶ and after the days of the feast had run their course, Job sent and sanctified them, offering burnt offerings to God lest his sons had sinned and cursed God in their hearts. These were not sin offerings, for Job could not offer sin offerings on the part of others, and his sons could not repent vicariously through Job. Rather, they were burnt-offerings.³⁵³⁷ But Job showed a profound understanding of the human condition, for human nature is prone to forsaking or ignoring God when things are going well and prosperity abounds. It also tends to assume that blessings are a result of individual effort and merit rather than the gift of the loving and gracious God. Doubtless, it was against this that Job was attempting to guard, although he could never justify his offspring before God.

While not much is said of Job's children, they do seem to have fallen into relaxed, self-centred, and self-satisfied ways, well short of the conduct and thinking appropriate before God. It was assumed that all would continue unchanged; the wealth, and easy living, and that the round of feasting was their appointed lot in this life.³⁵³⁸ In these circumstances it would hardly occur to them that God holds each and every life in His hand. He determines how long one lives, and what that life is to be. Many miss this point, and, in so doing, end up criticising God for perceived failure or lack of care. They do not consider that God is omnipotent, and gracious, and just, and long-suffering, and can see the end from the beginning. In this God can save from worse that would

³⁵³³ Hebrew: kuwn.

³⁵³⁴ Job 42:7,8

³⁵³⁵ Job 42:8

³⁵³⁶ Job 1:4,5

³⁵³⁷ q.v sup.; Job 1:5

³⁵³⁸ typical linear thinking.

follow. God's purpose is toward the perfection of the saints. He acts in our best interests, even when we fail to recognise what these interests happen to be. This is the underlying problem in our senses versus faith. Our senses can deceive us—'lying vanities' as they have been called—but never faith in God, for His promise cannot fail. God can never lie, confirmed in, '*in which it was impossible for God to lie.*'³⁵³⁹

And so back to the well-meaning friends or comforters. Despite what has been led, some might still see in these people the final attack by Satan, the final attempt to ensnare Job. The difficulty with this view, however, is that, as pointed out, Satan completely disappears from the narrative midway through the second chapter, his two permissions from God having failed to capture or reduce Job. Job's friends grieved with him, and wanted to help, and hoped they were helping, and thought they were, but they were seriously misguided, and their so-called 'help' was of no worth. In this they piled on added pressure to Job's already grievous plight, but to assign their misguided deeds and words to yet further malign manipulation and a final attack by Satan reads into the flow of events more of a satanic agenda than actually existed, and, as a result, leaves fatally open-ended the circumscription of God.

Well-meaning people, through error, can and do offer worthless advice. And in so doing, can unwittingly promote evil, but this is far from being under the direct, malign, and manipulative influence of Satan himself. It is admitted that human error can easily decline into doing Satan's work,³⁵⁴⁰ for such is the weakness of human nature, but while human error is all around, not all of it is Satan-inspired or Satan-controlled, for God can and will keep people in darkness. It is His gift of enlightenment through the Holy Spirit that convicts and lifts man out of error. In the days of Job, the Holy Spirit was not freely available to all men, and few indeed were blessed with it. Long after, it took the Saviour's death and resurrection, and the events at Pentecost, to bring that wonderful gift within the reach of all men, if they so desire.

The major part of the book of Job, however, beginning in the third chapter, consists of Job's dialogue with these well-meaning friends. In this there is a ready lesson for the 'elect' who come under trial and extreme pressure and who find themselves advised by friends. While they were seeking only to help their friend, it is in these circumstances, unfortunately, that Job began to decline into self-pity, seeing his life as meaningless, and wishing that he had not survived birth, even to the point of beginning to question God's motives, actions, and justice, '*justifying himself rather than God,*'³⁵⁴¹—a subsequent decline into the maw and depths of self-serving self-justification, a decline that had to be righted, for Job was, as a son, corrected by God.³⁵⁴²

³⁵³⁹ Heb 6:18b

³⁵⁴⁰ Hoffman, Michael, *Judaism Discovered*, p.114:

"All the things in this world carry in them such evident marks of imperfection, are so liable to be infected with error, good is separated from evil by such slight partitions, and the deflection from what is right is so easy, that even undertakings which should seem most exempt from danger are yet insecure in their conduct, and uncertain in their issue." More, Hannah, *Christian Morals*, (1813).'

³⁵⁴¹ Job 32:2

³⁵⁴² Heb 12:7,8

Summary

The content of the book of Job teaches the following important lessons, inter alia:

1. Not to question God's motives and actions;
2. To have patience, and to wait on God;
3. To have faith in God;
4. To trust in God in all things, and to trust in His faithfulness;
5. Not to rely on our own understanding;
6. Nor on the understanding of human nature-informed comforters;
7. To realise our own insignificance;
8. Never to consider ourselves to be without sin;
9. Never to think we know all our sins, for some are deep-rooted;³⁵⁴³
10. Never to be self-confident, complacent, or proud;
11. Never to descend into the trap of self-justification, for it is God who justifies His own;³⁵⁴⁴
12. Never to attempt to justify ourselves or others before God;³⁵⁴⁵
13. Never to question God's justice;
14. Never to dictate to God what His actions should be;
15. Never to become discouraged;

³⁵⁴³ Barclay, William, *The Parables of Jesus*, p.192 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'But there are sins which no one can see except those who live with us, which cannot be punished by any [man-made] law, and yet which produce far more unhappiness for far more people over a far longer period—sometimes for a lifetime—than the sins of the hot heart. There are sins like consistent selfishness, constant meanness, sneering and sarcastic pride, haughty and disdainful arrogance, the over-critical tongue, irritability, and moodiness which can wreck life for those we meet in the privacy of our own homes and about which the world at large knows nothing.'

³⁵⁴⁴ Phil 3:9c, '*the righteousness which is of God.*'

³⁵⁴⁵ mortal man cannot justify himself. God justifies mortal man to or before Him on account of his faith in Him. Man is saved by grace; justified by faith; and ultimately rewarded according to his works.

16. Never to give up; and,

17. To realise that in God's eyes we are precious, and that He loves us, and protects us, no matter how dire the circumstances.

Isaiah sums our lowly position: *'But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.'*³⁵⁴⁶ Without God we are nothing.

Job started out *'perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil,'*³⁵⁴⁷ but there was still much lacking. Abraham was the *'friend of God,'*³⁵⁴⁸ Enoch and Noah *'walked with God,'*³⁵⁴⁹ but Job merely *'feared God.'* In his discourses with the comforters, Job talked about God. He is never recorded as talking with God, until after God's answer, late in the account.³⁵⁵⁰ Job's earlier religious observance seems to have been more formulaic than sound, with Job seeking to earn God's grace and blessing through ritual observance and self-attained or self-maintained purity.³⁵⁵¹ Whilst frequently citing his own moral goodness,³⁵⁵² at the last he attains a full and proper relationship with God, realizing the wantings in his former belief and practice. In this, Job points the way to Christ's message and salvation.

The book of Job is very relevant to the life of the Judæo-Christian today. Many trials and tribulations beset the 'elect.' Given that these are the 'end-times' spoken of so often in the Bible, and that Satan knows he has but little time left to him, and he has been cast down among men,³⁵⁵³ it is not surprising in the least that such are the circumstances. It is not man's own efforts that overcome these difficulties—for man lacks the ability, and the power, being so prone to sin—but rather the Holy Spirit of God working to guide and protect God's own through the minefield of life that overcomes on man's behalf. The end of it all, mercifully, is God's salvation.

³⁵⁴⁶ Isa 64:6

³⁵⁴⁷ Job 1:1b

³⁵⁴⁸ Isa 41:8

³⁵⁴⁹ Gen 5:24,6:9

³⁵⁵⁰ Job 42:1-6

³⁵⁵¹ Job 1:5

³⁵⁵² but not moralism, q.v. inf.

³⁵⁵³ Rev 12:12b, *'Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! For the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.'*

Chapter 51

Throne of David

Concerning the Davidic covenant: *'His seed also will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven. I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant, Thy seed will I establish forever, and build up thy throne to all generations. Selah. If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; If they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; Then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless my loving kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before me. It shall be established for ever as the moon, and as a faithful witness in heaven. Selah.'*³⁵⁵⁴ This covenant is also referred to in Samuel: *'He shall build an house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men: But my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee. And thine house and thine kingdom shall be established forever before thee: thy throne shall be established forever. According to all these words, and according to all this vision, so did Nathan speak unto David.'*³⁵⁵⁵ And King Solomon spoke of it: *'Now therefore O Lord God of Israel, keep with thy servant David my father that which thou hast promised him, saying, There shall not fail thee a man in my sight to sit upon the throne of Israel; yet so that thy children take heed to their way, to walk in my*

³⁵⁵⁴ Psalms 89:3,4,29-37

³⁵⁵⁵ II Samuel 7:13-17

law, as thou hast walked before me. Now then, O Lord God of Israel, let thy word be verified, which thou hast spoken unto thy servant David.'³⁵⁵⁶

Unconditional

The 'seed'³⁵⁵⁷ are David's heirs and successors.³⁵⁵⁸ The promises are unconditional; the dynastic line was established forever, on the authority of God. This throne will be the one taken by Christ on His return: *'And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be called great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.'*³⁵⁵⁹ If the throne of David ended with Zedekiah,³⁵⁶⁰ as some claim, Christ cannot assume the throne and God has broken His word.

David's heirs were to be kings, in an unbroken lineage,³⁵⁶¹ until the Messiah claims the throne. The reason the Messiah can claim the throne is that it was His from the beginning. Christ, as the Word, was the King of Israel before He allowed Saul to ascend the earthly throne. He is merely taking back what is rightfully His. Christ is not sitting on His throne now, *'To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne,'*³⁵⁶² but is sitting with His Father on His Father's throne.

³⁵⁵⁶ II Chron 6:16,17

³⁵⁵⁷ Psa 89:3,4

³⁵⁵⁸ Moffatt translates 'seed' as 'dynasty,' the R.S.V. translates it as 'line.'

³⁵⁵⁹ Luke 1:31-33

³⁵⁶⁰ in 585BC

³⁵⁶¹ this theme of continuity is mirrored by Allen, J. H., *Judah's Sceptre and Joseph's Birthright*, pp.160,161 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'The only conditions to the covenant [between God and David] are such as are entirely beyond the power of man either to control or to break, namely, the faithfulness of God in keeping and fulfilling His word, the holiness of His character—for He cannot lie—and the omnipotence of His power to keep the sun, moon and the earth rolling onward in their present cycles and order until, by the good pleasure of His will, He shall change those ordinances and bring into existence the new heavens and the new earth. Hence, the Holy [Spirit] has inspired Jeremiah to write: *'Thus saith the Lord: If ye can break my covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night, and that there should be not day and night in their season; then may also my covenant be broken with my servant, that he should not have a son to reign upon his throne.'* (Jer 33:20,21).

Previously, in this same chapter, and in the seventeenth verse, the Lord has said: *'David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel.'* Then he adds the following: *'If my covenant be not with day and night, and if I have not appointed the ordinance of heaven and earth, then will I cast away the seed of Jacob, and David my servant, so that I will not take any of his seed to be rulers over the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.'* This, too, after saying: *'As the host of heaven cannot be numbered, neither the sand of the sea measured: so will I multiply the seed of David my servant.'* (Jer 33:22,25,26).'

Heirs to this day are anointed with oil from the land of Israel. The current encumbent, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, was so anointed at her coronation in 1953AD.

³⁵⁶² Rev 3:21

Despite this specific statement, many have perceived an appearance of 'conditionality' in later texts, particularly those surrounding and pertaining to Solomon: 'When the time drew near for David to die, he gave a charge to Solomon his son. *'I am about to go the way of all earth,'* he said. *'So be strong, show yourself a man, and observe what the Lord your God requires: walk in His ways, and keep His statutes and commandments, His laws and requirements, as written in the Law of Moses, so that you may prosper in all you do and wherever you go, and that the Lord may keep His promise to me. If your descendants watch how they live, and if they walk faithfully before Me with all their heart and soul, you will never fail to have a man on the throne of Israel.'*³⁵⁶³ 'David charged Solomon to keep the decrees, commandments, laws, and requirements *"as written in the Law of Moses."* That would guarantee prosperity in every area of his life and continuity of the Davidic kingdom.'³⁵⁶⁴

The belief that God went 'conditional' after the death of David, despite His promise in perpetuity, is remarkably common. But such a view would hold God to be ambivalent, dichotomous, and the breaker of His word. Clearly that is wrong, and the apparent dichotomy in the word of God concerning the status, elevation, and permanence of the heirs to the throne of David can be resolved quite simply—sin would result in Solomon failing to have a man on the throne of Israel, and it did. Solomon sinned: *'Wherefore the Lord said unto Solomon, Forasmuch as this is done of thee, and thou hast not kept my covenant and my statutes, which I have commanded thee, I will surely rend the kingdom from thee, and will give it to thy servant. Notwithstanding in thy days I will not do it for David thy father's sake: but I will rend it out of the hand of thy son. Howbeit, I will not rend away all the kingdom; but will give one tribe to thy son for David my servant's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake which I have chosen.'*³⁵⁶⁵ By reason of sin, Solomon did fail, ultimately, to have a man on the entire throne. Solomon did not have a son on the throne of the house of Israel after Rehoboam, for the throne was rent out of Rehoboam's hand, and Solomon's heir was left but with the throne of the house of Judah.

Many see this as a precise, yet singular, honouring of the Davidic covenant, in that Solomon's son retained the throne of Judah, but, actually, that is incorrect. The throne promised in perpetuity was that of Israel, not Judah. There is more to this, however, as part of the lineage had to continue through Solomon, for that was David's line, even though the throne was to be overturned thrice: *'I will overturn, overturn, overturn it: and it shall be no more, until he come whose right it is; and I will give it him.'*³⁵⁶⁶ When the throne was first overturned, Solomon's descendant at the time was a princess of the line of Phares, not a prince; the throne, however, was given to a man of the line of Zarah. However, God never resiled on His promise to David, *'For thus saith the Lord;*

³⁵⁶³ I Kings 2:1-4

³⁵⁶⁴ Gruber, Daniel, *Rabbi Akiba's Messiah: The Origins of Rabbinic Authority*, p.40

³⁵⁶⁵ I Kings 11:11-13

³⁵⁶⁶ Ezek 21:27

*David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel,*³⁵⁶⁷ *'His seed also will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven.'*³⁵⁶⁸ The throne, alive today, in the house of Israel,³⁵⁶⁹ will continue *'until He who comes whose right it is':* Jesus Christ.

The high frequency of New Testament references to the Old Testament Davidic lineage in perpetuity attests to its importance to biblical theology and messianic prophecy: 'Thus it is that one of these lines holds that sceptre, and wears the crown as a fact, but the Jud[æ]o-David house has a greater son to whom they belong by "right." When he comes, as Shiloh, God will give it to him, for unto him shall the gathering of the people be. At that time the breaches will be healed, and he shall be called "The Restorer of the Breach."' "³⁵⁷⁰

David was of the tribe of Judah, possessor of the sceptre, but not the birthright promise. His '*seed*' was the kingly line, his dynasty, and preserved forever. If the heirs were to stray from God's ways, then punishment would be administered, but the throne would remain.³⁵⁷¹ Some, in error, point to the expression, *'I will stablish the throne in his kingdom forever,'*³⁵⁷² as indicative of the possibility of the re-establishment of a defunct throne by Christ, on His return. This contention is rendered without foundation in the following verse which reads: *'If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men.'* This could not apply to Christ, who is without sin, so '*his*' refers to Solomon, not Christ. The final proof of the matter is found in Chronicles: *'Ought ye not to know that the Lord God of Israel gave the kingdom over Israel for ever, even to him and to his sons by a covenant of salt?'*³⁵⁷³ But that leaves the near six hundred years between Zedekiah and Christ and the near two thousand years since Christ, so where and who is the descendant of David currently ruling over all or part of Israel? The answer is highly pertinent, for it is essential to the correct identification of the recipients of Jacob's trouble.³⁵⁷⁴

It is possible, however, that the throne and the direct lineage of legitimate rulers have become divorced through sexual infidelity down through the years, as, for example, through the heir to the throne fathering a child by, say, a 'below stairs' liaison³⁵⁷⁵ before 'marrying' another—perhaps, a royal princess—and producing 'royal' offspring.³⁵⁷⁶ Secondary or indirect lineal connections would then be needed to restore and maintain the probity of the incumbency.

³⁵⁶⁷ Jer 33:17a, *'David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne,'* is better rendered: *'There shall not be cut off from David a man to sit upon the throne.'*

³⁵⁶⁸ Psa 89:29

³⁵⁶⁹ Israel, not Judah.

³⁵⁷⁰ Allen, J. H., *Judah's Sceptre and Joseph's Birthright*, p.215

³⁵⁷¹ I Kings 11:13

³⁵⁷² II Sam 7:13, *'He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom forever.'*

³⁵⁷³ II Chron 13:5; marginal note gives '*perpetual covenant*' for '*covenant of salt*.'

³⁵⁷⁴ q.v. sup.

³⁵⁷⁵ potentially legitimate under God's Law.

³⁵⁷⁶ illegitimate under God's Law, for the first sexual union forms a valid marriage, q.v. sup.

Two houses

King David's kingdom passed to his son, Solomon. King Solomon, for all his reputed wisdom, married Gentile wives from outside nations and, as a result of their prompting, built groves to strange gods, burnt incense, and sacrificed to Moloch and other idols.³⁵⁷⁷ The punishment meted by God is recorded: *'Wherefore the Lord said unto Solomon, Forasmuch as this is done of thee, and thou hast not kept my covenant, and my statutes, which I have commanded thee, I will surely rend the kingdom from thee, and give it to thy servant. Notwithstanding in thy days I will not do it for David thy father's sake: but I will rend it out of the hand of thy son. Howbeit I will not rend away all the kingdom; but will give one tribe to thy son for David my servant's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake, which I have chosen.'*³⁵⁷⁸ The bulk of the kingdom was to be rent away, only one small part was to remain. Solomon had received God's judgement.

It happened when Rehoboam, Solomon's son, increased taxes: *'my father hath chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions, And so Israel rebelled against the house of David unto this day. And it came to pass, that when all Israel heard that Jeroboam was come again, that they sent and called him unto the congregation, and made him king over all Israel: there was none that followed the house of David, but the tribe of Judah only.'*³⁵⁷⁹ When Rehoboam assembled an army to fight against the house of Israel, the commandment from God was clear: *'Thus saith the Lord, Ye shall not go up, nor fight against your brethren the children of Israel: return every man to his house; for this thing is from me. They hearkened therefore to the word of the Lord, and returned to depart, according to the word of the Lord.'*³⁵⁸⁰ The national name of the ten tribes was, and is, the house of Israel; the national name of Judah³⁵⁸¹ was, and is, the house of Judah. The Jews do not hold the national name of Israel. Judah lost the kingdom of Israel; it could not be otherwise.³⁵⁸²

The people of the northern 'house of Israel,' including the birthright 'house of Joseph' in particular, were divorced and rejected by God.³⁵⁸³ These peoples were conquered and / or dispersed³⁵⁸⁴ because of continued national disobedience and idolatry, becoming *'Lo-ammi'*,³⁵⁸⁵ meaning *'not my people.'* This served to distinguish them from Judah or the Jews, whom God was keeping in covenant relationship³⁵⁸⁶ in preparation for the forthcoming of the Messiah, whom they then rejected!

³⁵⁷⁷ this would have included human sacrifice, in the course of things, for Moloch demanded human blood, especially that of newborns and children, q.v. sup.

³⁵⁷⁸ I Kings 11:11-13

³⁵⁷⁹ I Kings 12:11b,19,20

³⁵⁸⁰ I Kings 12:24

³⁵⁸¹ together with Benjamin and, through time, the vast bulk of Levi, and, quite possibly, some of Simeon too.

³⁵⁸² two harlot sisters of Ezekiel chapt. 23:

Ahola: literally, *'Her own tabernacle.'* (Ezek 23:4, *'Samaria'* standing for the northern kingdom of Israel)

Aholibah: literally, *'My tabernacle is in her.'* (Ezek 23:4, *'Jerusalem'* standing for the southern kingdom of Judah)

³⁵⁸³ Jer 3:8

³⁵⁸⁴ c.721–718BC; the entire of this appears to have taken place over the longer period of 741–718BC.

³⁵⁸⁵ Hosea 1:9

³⁵⁸⁶ Hosea 1:6,7,11:12

Any thought that God had completely finished with the dispersed northern house of Israel, however, would be a grave error. Through the prophet Hosea,³⁵⁸⁷ God shows that in His great love He intended ultimately to make a New Covenant, not only with them, but also with the house of Judah. This eventual uniting of the house of Israel with the house of Judah being confirmed: *'The word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Moreover, thou son of man, take thee one stick, and write upon it, For Judah, and for the children of Israel his companions: then take another stick, and write upon it, For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and for all the house of Israel his companions: And join them one to another into one stick; and they shall become one in thine hand. And when the children of thy people shall speak unto thee, saying, Wilt thou not shew us what thou meanest by these? Say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I will take the stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel his fellows, and will put them with him, even with the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, and they shall be one in mine hand. And the sticks whereon thou writest shall be in thine hand before their eyes. And say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen, whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land: And I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king of them all: and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all: Neither shall they defile themselves any more with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with any of their transgressions: but I will save them out of all their dwellingplaces, wherein they have sinned, and will cleanse them: so shall they be my people, and I will be their God. And David my servant shall be king over them; and they all shall have one shepherd: they shall also walk in my judgments, and observe my statutes, and do them. And they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob my servant, wherein your fathers have dwelt; and they shall dwell therein, even they, and their children, and their children's children forever: and my servant David shall be their prince forever. Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them, and I will place them, and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore. My tabernacle also shall be with them: yea, I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And the heathen shall know that I the Lord do sanctify Israel, when my sanctuary shall be in the midst of them for evermore,'³⁵⁸⁸ and 'Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they break, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord: But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every*

³⁵⁸⁷ Hosea 1:9-11, 11:8-10

³⁵⁸⁸ Ezek 37:15-28 (sublinear emphasis added); two sticks, one for Judah, the other for Ephraim, are bound together, in one, a graphic representation of their uniting in the kingdom of God, for all time.

man his brother, saying, know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.'³⁵⁸⁹ This offer to take back Israel, conditional on an admission of past sins—'*know your iniquity*'³⁵⁹⁰—is found in Jeremiah. It has yet to happen. The essential prefatory stage, the death and resurrection of her husband, Christ, has already occurred. Finally, there is this glorious promise: '*I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah....I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people. Their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.*'³⁵⁹¹

This New Covenant, a covenant '*of everlasting peace,*' involving Israel and Judah, is yet to be brought into force. The first real wave of a protracted process is the 'end-time election' and the 'dead-in-Christ,' and their resurrection has yet to occur.³⁵⁹² Indeed, the entire process does not complete until the end of the Millennium of rest.

Overturnings

Given the immutability of God's word, where, then, in this current age, is a descendant of King David sitting in an essentially unbroken line of kings on the throne of David, ruling over children of Israel?

The root of the answer lies in the thirty-third chapter of Jeremiah. At the time of writing his prophecy, the prophet was imprisoned in Jerusalem and the armies from Babylon were taking the Jews captive. God said, '*Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not.... concerning the houses of the kings of Judah, which are thrown down by the mounts, and by the sword.*'³⁵⁹³ Jeremiah knew that the king's houses in Jerusalem were being destroyed, and the throne of David was being removed from Jerusalem. Those were dark and calamitous times. Reassurance, however, was given: '*Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will perform that good thing which I have promised unto the house of Israel and to the house of Judah.*'³⁵⁹⁴ This promise is to the house of Israel as well as to the house of Judah. Since the division of the children of Israel into two nations, the throne had not been connected with Israel but only with Judah, but the promise to be fulfilled at the coming of the Messiah connects the throne with both Israel and Judah. Jeremiah continues, '*In those days, and at that time, will I cause the Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land. In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely: and this is the name wherewith she shall be called, The Lord our righteous-*

³⁵⁸⁹ Jer 31:31-34

³⁵⁹⁰ Jer 3:11f.

³⁵⁹¹ Heb 8:8-12

³⁵⁹² q.v. sup.

³⁵⁹³ Jer 33:3,4

³⁵⁹⁴ Jer 33:14

ness. *For thus saith the Lord; David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel.*³⁵⁹⁵ The Branch of righteousness is the Messiah, Jesus Christ: *'Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh.'*³⁵⁹⁶ David's line was to sit on the throne of the house of Israel, forever. It should be noted most carefully that it is to be on the throne of the house of Israel, and not on the throne of the house of Judah! The throne of David was to become the throne of all Israel, not merely Judah, and it is this same throne that will be taken by Christ on His return.³⁵⁹⁷

After part of the house of Israel was driven into Assyrian captivity,³⁵⁹⁸ the kingdom of Judah remained, but after Israel had become 'lost,'³⁵⁹⁹ Judah turned from the ways and government of God, going after the ways of the Gentile nations, sinning even worse than Israel, until, finally, God drove Judah into slavery and exile.

Prior to the apostasy of Judah, God had warned, through the prophet Hosea, *'Though thou Israel, play the harlot, yet let not Judah offend.'*³⁶⁰⁰ Later, He said, *'And I saw, when for all the causes whereby backsliding Israel committed adultery³⁶⁰¹ I had put her away, and given her a bill of divorce; yet her treacherous sister Judah feared not, but went and played the harlot also. And it came to pass through the lightness of her whoredom, that she defiled the land, and committed adultery with stones and with stocks. And yet for all this her treacherous sister Judah had not turned unto me with her whole heart, but feignedly, saith the Lord. And the Lord said unto me, The backsliding Israel hath justified herself more than treacherous Judah.'*³⁶⁰² More than a century after the captivity of Israel, God allowed Judah to go into captivity in Babylon: *'And the Eternal said, I*

³⁵⁹⁵ Jer 33:15-17

³⁵⁹⁶ Rom 1:3

³⁵⁹⁷ after the coming of Christ to rule in all power and glory, it is evident that some, at least, in Israel will again make sin offerings, burnt offerings and peace offerings, q.v. In the concluding chapters of Ezekiel, covering the period after Christ's return, these sacrifices are mentioned. The tribe of Levi was to be and, indeed, as we know, has been preserved, as presaged: *'Neither shall the priests the Levites want a man before me to offer burnt offerings, and to kindle meat offerings, and to do sacrifice continually.'*

Other Scriptures show that sacrifices should not be offered by Judæo-Christians after Christ's own sacrifice and, of course, they were not offered by Jews after the destruction of the 2nd Temple. By way of example, Heb 10:8-14 (sublinear emphasis added), *'Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou wouldst not, neither hast pleasure therein; which are offered by the law; Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; From hence-forth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.'*

³⁵⁹⁸ 741–718BC; but only in part, for the bulk of the people had fled beforehand, later to coalesce or reform in the Parthian and Scythian Empires, inter alia.

³⁵⁹⁹ or so it seems to many.

³⁶⁰⁰ Hos 4:15

³⁶⁰¹ Jer 3:20, *'Surely as a wife departeth treacherously from her husband,'* literally, *'her friend.'*

³⁶⁰² Jer 3:8-11

*will remove Judah also out of my sight, as I have removed Israel, and will cast off this city Jerusalem which I have chosen, and the house of which I said, My name shall be there.'*³⁶⁰³

Commission

It was into this maelstrom that God introduced the prophet Jeremiah, giving him a very special commission: *'Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations. See, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant.'*³⁶⁰⁴ Jeremiah was sent to nations, that is, more than one kingdom. God used Jeremiah in warning Judah of impending captivity, and the *'pulling down'* or *'overthrowing'* of the throne of David in the kingdom of Judah. The house of Judah was invaded by the armies of King Nebuchadnezzar; the Jews were taken captive into Babylon; they ceased from being a kingdom, and there was no longer a ruler of David's dynasty on the throne ruling over the kingdom of Judah.

So to the train of events: *'In the ninth year of Zedekiah king of Judah, in the tenth month, came Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and all his army against Jerusalem, and they besieged it. And in the eleventh year of Zedekiah, in the fourth month, the ninth day of the month, the city was broken up. And all the princes of the king of Babylon came in, and sat in the middle gate, even Nergal-sha-rezar, Samgar-nebo, Sarse-kim, Rab-sa-ris, Nergal-sha-rezar, Rab-mag, with all the residue of the princes of the king of Babylon. And it came to pass, that when Zedekiah the king of Judah saw them, and all the men of war, then they fled, and went forth out of the city by night, by the way of the king's garden, by the gate betwixt the two walls: and he went out the way of the plain. But the Chaldeans' army pursued after them, and overtook Zedekiah in the plains of Jericho: and when they had taken him, they brought him up to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon to Riblah in the land of Hamath, where he gave judgment upon him. Then the king of Babylon slew the sons of Zedekiah in Riblah before his eyes: also the king of Babylon slew all the nobles of Judah. Moreover he put out Zedekiah's eyes, and bound him with chains, to carry him to Babylon. And the Chaldeans burned the king's house, and the houses of the people, with fire, and brake down the walls of Jerusalem.'*³⁶⁰⁵ Zedekiah died in prison in Babylon. *'Then he put out the eyes of Zedekiah; and the king of Babylon bound him in chains, and carried him to Babylon, and put him in prison until the day of his death.'*³⁶⁰⁶ The aggregate of all of these events is that the king of Babylon destroyed

³⁶⁰³ II Kings 23:27; King David's sins were covered. In some ways, Judah's not being divorced from her husband (cf. Jer 3:6f.) exhibits some similarity (whereas her sister, Israel, had been put away, divorced, some time earlier by God). The common reason is to be found in the pursuit of the transcending purpose of God: the salvation of Israel and that of mankind through the Messiah, Jesus Christ.

³⁶⁰⁴ Jer 1:5,10

³⁶⁰⁵ Jer 39:1-8

³⁶⁰⁶ Jer 52:11

the royal lineage of David. The throne of David, at least to the casual observer, ceased, with no possible heirs, or sons, to keep the dynasty alive. Certainly, from that time forth, the throne never again existed in Judah, or in Jerusalem, or among the Jews.

It is true that a former king of Judah was at that time languishing in the dungeons of Babylon, and he had sons to continue David's line. Former King Jeconiah, or Jehoiachim, taken to Babylon in chains, was restored to some sort of honour thirty-seven years after the captivity,³⁶⁰⁷ and was even given the title 'king,' along with numerous other vassal 'kings.' One of Jeconiah's sons was Salathiel, who was the father of Zorobabel, the son of royal seed through whom Jesus Christ traced one line of His royal ancestry back to King David.³⁶⁰⁸ And Zorobabel, or Zerubbabel, was the man for whom God caused Cyrus, king of Persia, to make a decree giving him the governorship—but not the kingdom or the crown—permitting him to return to Jerusalem seventy years after the captivity and rebuild the house of God.

Nevertheless, neither Jeconiah nor any of his sons or grandsons ever reigned as king in Judah. God did not permit it. *'As I live, saith the Lord, though Coniah³⁶⁰⁹ the son of Jehoiakim king of Judah were the signet upon my right hand, yet would I pluck thee hence.'*³⁶¹⁰ God had determined an end to this line of kings. He was removing the crown; He was turning over, 'overturning,' the throne to another branch of the family. God told Jeremiah, *'Write ye this man childless, a man that shall not prosper in his days: for no man of his seed shall prosper, sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah.'*³⁶¹¹ Jeconiah did have children,³⁶¹² but as far as the throne of David was concerned, none of his children ever ascended to it. He was, in that context, written childless.

The throne had been removed from the previous ruling line, the Judean or Phares line, with any immediate candidates killed, and Jeconiah languishing in a Babylonian prison, written childless as far as the throne was concerned. In this way, Jeremiah had been enabled to accomplish the first part of his great commission. The throne had been rooted out, the kingdom thrown down, and Judah was now beginning her national punishment. *'See, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant.'*³⁶¹³

As to the second part of the commission, Jeremiah had to be freed from his position among captive Jews. So, *'Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon gave charge concerning Jeremiah to Nebuzaradan captain of the guard, saying, Take him, and look well to him, and do him no harm; but do unto him even as he shall say to thee. And the captain of the guard took Jeremiah, and said unto him....And now, behold, I loose thee this day*

³⁶⁰⁷ II Kings 25:27-30

³⁶⁰⁸ Mat 1:12

³⁶⁰⁹ viz., Jeconiah.

³⁶¹⁰ Jer 22:24

³⁶¹¹ Jer 22:30

³⁶¹² I Chron 3:17; Mat 1:12

³⁶¹³ Jer 1:10

*from the chains that were upon thine hand. If it seem good unto thee to come with me into Babylon, come; and I will look well unto thee: but if it seem ill unto thee to come with me into Babylon, forbear: behold, all the land is before thee: whither it seemeth good and convenient for thee to go, thither go....So the captain of the guard gave him victuals and a reward, and let him go.'*³⁶¹⁴

Jeremiah was set free, with food and money, to go wherever he desired. *'Then went Jeremiah unto Gedaliah the son of Ahikam to Mizpah; and dwelt with him among the people that were left in the land.'*³⁶¹⁵ Gedaliah had been made a governor over a remnant of the Jews by the king of Babylon and, since Jerusalem had been destroyed, he had set up his headquarters in Mizpah. The king of Ammon, however, conspired with a Jew named Ishmael to assassinate Gedaliah. The plot was executed and the governors and part of the Jews were slain. Not only was Jeremiah among the survivors, but, *'Ishmael carried away captive all the residue of the people that were in Mizpah, even the king's daughters, and all the people that remained in Mizpah, whom Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard had committed to Gedaliah....and carried them away captive, and departed to go over to the Ammonites.'*³⁶¹⁶ King Zedekiah had died in prison in Babylon. All his sons had been killed. All the nobles of Judah had been killed.³⁶¹⁷ All possible heirs of Zedekiah to the throne of David had been liquidated, save for the king's daughters. The reason Jeremiah went to Mizpah was the presence there of the king's daughters.

Not long after this, a person called Jonathan replaced Ishmael as leader and, fearful of reprisals from Nebuchadnezzar and the Chaldean army, and despite a warning from God through Jeremiah as to their impending slaughter, they went down into Egypt. On reaching Egypt, God sent another warning: *'And I will take the remnant of Judah, that have set their faces to go into the land of Egypt to sojourn there, and they shall all be consumed, and fall in the land of Egypt; they shall even be consumed by the sword and by the famine; they shall die, from the least even unto the greatest, by the sword and by the famine; and they shall be an execration, and an astonishment, and a curse, and a reproach. For I will punish them that dwell in the land of Egypt, as I have punished Jerusalem, by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence: So that none of the remnant of Judah, which are gone into the land of Egypt to sojourn there, shall escape or remain, that they should return into the land of Judah, to which they have a desire to return to dwell there: for none shall return but such as shall escape. Yet a small number that escape the sword shall return out of the land of Egypt into the land of Judah.'*³⁶¹⁸

³⁶¹⁴ Jer 39:11,12,40:2-5

³⁶¹⁵ Jer 40:6

³⁶¹⁶ Jer 41:10 (sublinear emphasis added)

³⁶¹⁷ Zedekiah's choice / fateful decision is recorded in Jer 38:17-23,28,39:5-9

³⁶¹⁸ Jer 44:12-14,28

A constant companion of Jeremiah at this time was his scribe, Baruch.³⁶¹⁹ God made a promise to Baruch: *'Thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel, unto thee, O Baruch....Behold, that which I have built will I break down, and that which I have planted will I pluck up, even this whole land....but thy life will I give unto thee for a prey in all places whither thou goest.'*³⁶²⁰ Baruch's life, like that of Jeremiah, was under divine protection. Previously, the God had said to Jeremiah, *'Verily it shall be well with thy remnant; verily I shall cause the enemy to entreat thee well in the time of evil and in the time of affliction.'*³⁶²¹ This God honoured.³⁶²² Jeremiah and his remnant, including Baruch, escaped out of Egypt and back into Judah.

The next part of the proceedings was prophesied in Isaiah and Kings: *'And the remnant that is escaped of the house of Judah shall yet again take root downward, and bear fruit upward. For out of Jerusalem shall go forth a remnant, and they that escape out of Mount Zion: the zeal of the Lord of hosts shall do this.'*³⁶²³ Isaiah's prophecy was not to happen in the days of Hezekiah's reign when King Sennacherib of Assyria threatened invasion of Judah. It does refer, however, to a later remnant's escape out of Jerusalem: Jeremiah's escaped with one of the king's daughters. She was to take root downwards, to be replanted elsewhere and then bear fruit upwards, to be built, and thus keep in existence the throne of David.

Breach

The matter is compounded and exposed in part by the resolution of the 'breach' mentioned in Genesis: *'And it came to pass in the time of her travail, that, behold, twins were in her womb. And it came to pass, when she travailed, that one put out his hand: and the midwife took and bound upon his hand a scarlet thread, saying, This came out first. And it came to pass, as he drew back his hand, that, behold, his brother came out: and she said, How hast thou broken forth? this breach be upon thee: therefore his name was called Pharez. And afterwards came out his brother, that had the scarlet thread upon his hand: and his name was called Zarah.'*³⁶²⁴

Such a biblical record of a breach would not have been incorporated into Scripture without good cause. The breach was never healed during the lifetimes of the two brothers.³⁶²⁵ Zarah, of the scarlet thread, had five

³⁶¹⁹ a clay impression has been discovered made by the seal of 'Berechiah, son of Neriah the scribe,' and is thought to date from around the late 7th-century BC. Many believe this to have belonged to the scribe Baruch.

³⁶²⁰ Jer 45:2-5

³⁶²¹ Jer 15:11

³⁶²² Jer 39:11,12,40:2-6

³⁶²³ Isa 37:31,32; II Kings 19:30,31

³⁶²⁴ Gen 38:27-30

³⁶²⁵ Fox, John S., *A Flood of Light upon the Book of Revelation*, pp.54,55 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'Now concerning the patriarch Judah, his family was much larger than most people have generally realised. Amongst other sons Judah had twin sons called Zarah and Phares. From the latter, King David was descended, Mat 1:3-6, and also the Jews subsequently.

Zarah, on the other hand, had five sons of his own, two of whom, Calcol and Darda, became particularly important. Concerning them the Bible reveals first of all that all the time of famine in Canaan when Jacob took his large family

sons,³⁶²⁶ Could it be that some subsequent descendant of the Zarah line would finally ascend to the throne, and in this manner heal the breach? David, Zedekiah, Christ and others were all of the Pharez line; not one was of the Zarah line. There was no transfer of the sceptre from the lineage of Pharez to that of Zarah before king Zedekiah. Given that the line of David, Pharez, is to remain on the throne through all generations, and given the prophesied abasement of the high line and the elevation of the low line, such a resolution could only occur at an overturn of the throne by a marriage between a Pharez heir and one of the Zarah line, thus healing the breach.

Ezekiel gives the overall modus: *'And thou, profane wicked prince of Israel, whose day is come, when iniquity shall have an end. Thus saith the Lord God; Remove the diadem, and take off the crown: this shall not be the same: exalt him that is low, and abase him that is high. I will overturn, overturn, overturn, it: and it shall be no more, until he come whose right it is; and I will give it him.'*³⁶²⁷ The crown was in the possession of king Zedekiah, of David's dynasty, the Pharez line; it was removed. The throne was prophesied to be overturned and, hence, another was to wear the crown. The formerly 'low' line of Zarah was to be elevated and the formerly 'high' line of Pharez abased. The overturnings of this throne were to be three in number and after that there were to be no further overturnings until the return of Christ to reclaim His throne.

Riddle & exposition

The detail of the modus is revealed in Ezekiel chapter seventeen. The message, couched in the form of a riddle and then a parable, is addressed not to Judah but to 'lost' Israel: *'And the word of the Lord came unto*

down to Egypt, these two sons were missing, as shown by the list of names given in Genesis 46:12 of Jacob's descendants who accompanied him when he went down into Egypt, compared with the complete family genealogy as given in I Chron 2:6. They, Calcol and Darda, obviously had separated from their brethren by Divine over-ruling, prior to the famine period: but they are traceable historically, both becoming great as they moved north and west. The descendants of the one, Calcol, settled as a colony in the south of Spain at Sarragossa (Zarah-gassa); meanwhile Darda's descendants settled in the Ægean at the Dardanelles, founding later the famous city of Troy. It was certainly to those Zarah-Judahites in 'Spain,' descended from Zarah's son Calcol, that Paul intended to go, as Rom 15:24,28 *'Whosoever I take my journey into Spain, I will come to you....When therefore I have performed this, and have sealed to them this fruit, I will come by you into Spain,'* to tell them of the Lord Jesus and His redemptive work for Jacob's scattered seed. The Ulstermen of Northern Ireland also, who claim to be 'first cousins' to the Lowland Scots, were descended from Zarah's son Calcol. Zarah himself was that twin son of the Patriarch Judah around whose wrist the midwife tied the red cord at birth. The Ulstermen still retain the 'Red Hand coupled at the wrist,' as their racial banner and emblem [this connection is doubtful, however], and it is most remarkable that through the Irish bards the royal line of Irish kings can be traced back in unbroken succession to Calcol, Zarah, and Judah.

When the city of Troy fell, c.1100BC, Brutus, the king's son, came with his retinue to Britain, landing at Totnes in Devon, the oldest borough town in England, where the famous 'Brutus Stone' can still be seen in the main street [doubtful in its carving]. Thence, as all historians accept, Brutus sailed up the Thames and founded the town of London. He, being a descendant of Darda, therefore also was a direct descendant of the patriarch Judah.

There has long been held to be a very close link between Tara in Ireland, the River Tamar which forms part of the boundary between Devon & Cornwall, and the River Thames which flows through London: all deriving from the same root—Tamar / Tephi.'

³⁶²⁶ I Chron 2:6

³⁶²⁷ Ezek 21:25-27

me, saying, Son of man, put forth a riddle, and speak a parable unto the house of Israel.³⁶²⁸ The riddle is then given: 'And say, thus saith the Lord God; A great eagle with great wings, long winged, full of feathers, which had divers colours, came unto Lebanon, and took the highest branch of the cedar: He cropped off the top of his young twigs, and carried it into a land of traffic; he set it in a city of merchants. He took also of the seed of the land, and planted it in a fruitful field; he placed it by great waters, and set it as a willow tree. And it grew, and became as a spreading vine of low stature, whose branches turned toward him, and the roots thereof were under him: so it became a vine, and brought forth branches, and shot forth sprigs. There was also another great eagle with great wings and many great feathers; and, behold, this vine did bend her roots toward him, and shot forth her branches toward him, that he might water it by the furrows of her plantation. It was planted in a good soil by great waters, that it might bring forth branches, and that it might bear fruit, that it might be a goodly vine. Say thou, thus saith the Lord God; Shall it prosper? shall he not pull up the roots thereof, and cut off the fruit thereof, that it wither? it shall wither in all the leaves of her spring, even without great power or many people to pluck it up by the roots thereof. Yea, behold, being planted, shall it prosper? shall it not utterly wither when the east wind toucheth it? it shall wither in the furrows where it grew.'³⁶²⁹

The meaning is then explained: 'Moreover the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Say now to the rebellious house, Know ye not what these things mean? tell them, Behold, the king of Babylon is come to Jerusalem, and hath taken the king thereof, and the princes thereof, and led them with him to Babylon; And hath taken of the king's seed, and made a covenant with him, and hath taken an oath of him: he hath also taken the mighty of the land: That the kingdom might be base, that it might not lift itself up, but that by keeping of his covenant it might stand. But he rebelled against him in sending his ambassadors into Egypt, that they might give him horses and much people. Shall he prosper? shall he escape that doest such things? or shall he break the covenant, and be delivered? As I live, saith the Lord God, surely in the place where the king dwelleth that made him king, whose oath he despised, and whose covenant he break, even with him in the midst of Babylon he shall die. Neither shall Pharaoh³⁶³⁰ with his mighty army and great company make for him in the war, by casting up mounts, and building forts, to cut off many persons: Seeing he despiseth the oath by breaking the covenant, when, lo, he hath given his hand, and hath done all these things, he shall not escape. Therefore thus saith the Lord God; As I live, surely mine oath that he hath despised, and my covenant that he hath broken, even it will I recompense upon his own head. And I will spread my net upon him, and he shall be taken in my snare; and I will bring him to Babylon, and will plead with him there for his trespass that he hath trespassed

³⁶²⁸ Ezek 17:1,2

³⁶²⁹ Ezek 17:3-10

³⁶³⁰ Pharaoh means 'great house' or 'palace.' It is also given as meaning 'son of the sun.'

against me. And all his fugitives with all his bands shall fall by the sword, and they that remain shall be scattered to all winds; and ye shall know that I the Lord hath spoken it.'³⁶³¹

This riddle and its exposition covers the first half of Jeremiah's great commission. The entire is directed to the 'rebellious house,' ten-tribed Israel: 'Son of man, hath not the house of Israel, the rebellious house, said unto thee, What doest thou?'³⁶³² This house, to whom Ezekiel was sent as a prophet: 'And he said unto me, Son of man, I send thee to the children of Israel, to a rebellious nation that hath rebelled against me: they and their fathers have transgressed against me, even unto this day....and go speak unto the house of Israel.'³⁶³³

In more modern terminology, the meaning of the riddle becomes exposed as follows: a great eagle came to Lebanon and took the highest branch of the cedar. This is explained as representing king Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon who came to Jerusalem and took captive the king of Judah. The cropping off of the cedar's young twigs and carrying them to a land of traffic is explained as picturing the captivity of the king's sons. The phrase 'He also took of the seed of the land' refers to Nebuchadnezzar's taking of the people and of the mighty of the land of Judah. 'He set it as a willow tree. And it grew and became a spreading vine of low stature' refers to the Jews being given a covenant whereby, although ruled over by the Chaldeans, they might live in peace and grow. The other 'great eagle' is explained as representing Pharaoh, upon whom false hope of salvation was raised by the Jews.

The balance of chapter seventeen covers the second part of Jeremiah's mission: 'Thus saith the Lord God; I will also take of the highest branch of the high cedar, and will set it; I will crop off from the top of his young twigs a tender one, and will plant it upon an high mountain and eminent: In the mountain in the height of Israel will I plant it; and it shall bring forth boughs, and bear fruit, and be a goodly cedar; and under it shall dwell all fowl of every wing; in the shadow of the branches thereof shall they dwell. And all the trees of the field shall know that I the Lord have brought down the high tree, have exalted the low tree, have dried up the green tree, and have made the dry tree to flourish: I the Lord have spoken and have done it.'³⁶³⁴

What is revealed in this passage is that God will 'also take of the highest branch of the high cedar,' the cedar previously referring to the nation of Judah and its highest branch to the king of Judah. The riddle precedent spoke of Nebuchadnezzar taking the highest branch, namely, the king. This passage states that God, not Nebuchadnezzar, will take of the highest branch; not take the entire branch but of the branch, of Zedekiah's children. Nebuchadnezzar, however, took and killed all the sons of Zedekiah, and now God, through his prophet Jeremiah, is going to take of this highest branch and set it: 'I will crop off from the top of his young twigs a tender one, and will plant it upon an high mountain and eminent.' A tender young twig in a statement which

³⁶³¹ Ezek 17:11-21

³⁶³² Ezek 12:9

³⁶³³ Ezek 2:3,3:1

³⁶³⁴ Ezek 17:22-24; Hebrew: asah, translated 'done,' is much better rendered 'appointed.'

ascribes the young twigs as the children of king Zedekiah renders a tender one as a daughter of the king.³⁶³⁵ *'And I will plant it'* imports the clear meaning that this Jewish princess will become the royal seed for the planting of David's throne. This planting will be *'upon an high mountain and eminent: In the mountain in the height of Israel will I plant it.'* A mountain in prophecy is a symbol of a nation. The throne of David is now to be planted in Israel, after the downfall of Judah, and the tender young twig, the king's daughter, *'shall bring forth boughs, and bear fruit, and be a goodly cedar.'*

David's throne did not cease with Zedekiah, king of Judah. God did not disregard His covenant. Taking comparison with *'And the remnant that is escaped of the house of Judah shall yet again take root downward, and bear fruit upward. For out of Jerusalem shall go forth a remnant, and they that escape out of Mount Zion: the zeal of the Lord of hosts shall do this,'*³⁶³⁶ there is found a clear correlation. The throne was to be planted in Israel, having been overturned out of Judah, and the Jewish princess was to marry, have children, and her sons were to continue the dynasty of David. The house of Israel, having acquired the throne, would, in time, again become an independent, self-ruling nation and, this time, would spread around the earth gaining dominance and power, inheriting the unconditional promises of the birthright, according to the covenant God had made with Abraham.

Reverting to the language used in Ezekiel, it is speaking of transferring the throne from Judah to Israel: *'Remove the diadem, and take off the crown: this shall not be the same: exalt him that is low, and abase him that is high. I will overturn, overturn, overturn it: and it shall be no more, until he come whose right it is; and I will give it him.'*³⁶³⁷ Israel, headed by the twin-tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh—who possessed the birthright of Joseph—and especially Ephraim, would begin to flourish and become prosperous, in due course, as seen from *'I the Lord have spoken and have done'*³⁶³⁸ *it.*³⁶³⁹

The birthright resides in Israel. Though lost, and supposing themselves to be a Gentile nation, they were the people who were to grow into a great nation and a company of nations, possessing the gates of their enemies, becoming a colonising people, spreading around the world, being blessed with national resources and wealth, as prophesied: *'And God said unto him, thy name is Jacob: thy name shall not be called any more Jacob, but Israel shall be thy name: and he called his name Israel. And God said unto him, I am God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee, and kings shall come out of thy loins.'*³⁶⁴⁰

³⁶³⁵ the gender of the Hebrew is feminine.

³⁶³⁶ Isaiah 37:31,32; II Kings 19:30,31

³⁶³⁷ Ezek 21:26,27

³⁶³⁸ more correctly, *'appointed.'*

³⁶³⁹ Ezek 17:24

³⁶⁴⁰ Gen 35:10,11

Lost tribes

The difficulty with this, from the viewpoint of the worldly-wise, is seen in the following: 'All to no purpose has the globe been ransacked hitherto to discover the hiding place of the Lost Tribes. So totally lost to human knowledge have they been, so unsatisfactory all efforts to find them, that it seemed justifiable to say of them in the words of the poet:

'Like the dew on the mountain,
Like the foam on the river,
Like the bubble on the fountain,
They are gone and for ever.'

But was there any indication of right reason apparent in the conducting of all those researches? The anxious explorers, zealous for the integrity of Scripture, did not see that the integrity of Scripture was just as completely violated if the Ten Tribes had degenerated into the obscure, good-for-nothing specimens of all humanity with which they sought to identify them, as if they had indeed been "cut off like the foam on the river." They did not realise what bitter mockery it was, if in such a manner God's promise of mercy was carried out. There was entirely too much haste in the matter. It was merely noted that the Bible did not allow the supposition that the Ten Tribes had ceased to exist. Steps must therefore be taken to find them. With strange lack of wisdom they neglected to take with them their infallible guide to direct their steps in the prosecution of their search. Thus did they,

'With a clear and shining lamp supplied,
First put it out, then took it as a guide.'³⁶⁴¹

'We have already maintained and insist upon it again, as being the very keynote of our whole treatment of the subject, that it was an essential part of the whole plan that the people should completely lose the knowledge of their own origin. There needs but one consideration to make this good. Think how woefully the significance of their position has been misunderstood by those sons of Israel who have never lost their identity. They have imagined that God's favour was for them alone, to the exclusion of all the rest of mankind; whereas we know that God's intention to extend favour and mercy to all the world, through their instrumentality, was the true reason of their being so distinguished by Him.

If anything of explicitness and certainty seems to be wanting [in any of this], it is only because the powers of language must somewhere find a limit [and our perception is yet '*through a glass darkly*'].³⁶⁴²

³⁶⁴¹ Cowper, William, *The Progress of Error*

³⁶⁴² Tullidge, E. K., *The Lost Tribes of Israel in England and America: Their Identity Maintained*, excerpts (with added comment and clarification in square brackets); I Cor 13:12a.

Whenever these 'lost-to-the-eyes-of-the-world' peoples would become dominant, in line with God's covenanted promises, David's throne would be found amongst them. So where did Jeremiah, with his royal seed for transplanting, go to find the lost house of Israel? How was the breach healed, and how did a son of Zarah ascend the throne?

The prophet Amos wrote in the days of the thirteenth of the nineteen kings of the house of Israel: *'Behold, the eyes of the Lord God are upon the sinful kingdom³⁶⁴³ and I will destroy it³⁶⁴⁴ from off the face of the earthFor, lo, I will command and I will sift the house of Israel among all nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth.'*³⁶⁴⁵ This prophecy is usually applied, erroneously, to the house of Judah, but it has nothing to do with Judah, the Jews. Rather, it refers to the ten lost tribes of the house of Israel, driven into Assyrian captivity, then migrating from there and being scattered amongst other nations, while the Jews were taken in captivity to Babylon. The prophecy says that the people of the nation of Israel, not the Jews, were to be sifted among other nations, even losing their identity, but still under divine protection, *'yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth.'*³⁶⁴⁶

It was during this time that the children of the house of Israel were to *'abide many days without a king.'*³⁶⁴⁷ That these people did sift through the nations is clear, as many New Testament passages confirm, for example: *'These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.'*³⁶⁴⁸ Although many of the house of Israel were still scattered among the nations in the first-century AD, a portion had become established in a definite location of their own by the time of Jeremiah, some one hundred and forty years after their original captivity.

These Israelites, the possessors of the birthright, were to come to a new land of their own; eventually. God said, *'Moreover, I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own, and move no more.'*³⁶⁴⁹ This does not refer to Palestine, but to a different land where these scattered Israelites were to gather after being removed from the Promised Land. After being removed, sifted among the nations, long abiding without a king, and losing their identity, these Israelites were to be planted in a far-off land which was to become their own. And once they were there, they were to be moved no more, in this current dispensation. The house of Israel is yet to return to the Promised Land, just after the time of the Second Coming, and are yet to plant grapes in Samaria, their original lands, but they will in the Millennium of rest.

³⁶⁴³ house of Israel, for Judah had not yet rebelled.

³⁶⁴⁴ the kingdom, not the people.

³⁶⁴⁵ Amos 9:8,9

³⁶⁴⁶ Amos 9:9c

³⁶⁴⁷ Hosea 3:4

³⁶⁴⁸ Mat 10:5,6; Jesus sent out the twelve disciples to the *'lost sheep of Israel,'* vv.5-8a.

³⁶⁴⁹ II Sam 7:10; I Chron 17:9

The northern kingdom of Israel is variously referred to in the Bible as Israel, Jacob, Joseph, Rachel,³⁶⁵⁰ Samaria,³⁶⁵¹ and Ephraim. *'Ephraim....followeth after the east wind.'*³⁶⁵² As an east wind travels west, Ephraim must have headed west from Assyria. When God swore to David that He would perpetuate his throne, He said, *'I will set his hand'*³⁶⁵³ *also in the sea.'*³⁶⁵⁴ Through Jeremiah, He said, *'Backsliding Israel hath justified herself more than treacherous Judah. Go and proclaim these words towards the north, and say, Return, thou backsliding Israel, saith the Lord.'*³⁶⁵⁵ Obviously, Israel was north of Judah while still in the Promised Land, but when these words were recorded by Jeremiah, Israel had been removed, some one hundred and thirty years previously and had long migrated, with their captors the Assyrians, north, and west of Assyria's original location. After saying *'How shall I give thee up, Ephraim?'* God says, *'Then the children shall tremble from the west.'*³⁶⁵⁶ And again, a reference to their disposition: *'Behold, I will bring them from the north country, and gather them from the coasts of the earth.'*³⁶⁵⁷ This prophecy is framed in terms of *'in the latter days ye shall consider it.'*³⁶⁵⁸ *'At the same time, saith the Lord, I will be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be my people.'*³⁶⁵⁹ These prophecies are addressed to *'Israel,'*³⁶⁶⁰ and *'Ephraim,'*³⁶⁶¹ and *'Samaria.'*³⁶⁶² The phrase *'from the coasts of the earth'* is indicative of a people having spread around the world.

Referring to the house of Israel, not Judah, God says: *'Behold, these shall come from far: and, lo, these from the north and the west; and these from the land of Sinim.'*³⁶⁶³ The phrase *'from the north and the west'* means, literally, from the north-west.

Given this, the lead nation of the house of Israel, Ephraim, is to be found in a permanent location north-west of Jerusalem, set in the sea, referred to in Isaiah: *'Listen, O isles, unto me....Thou art my servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified.'*³⁶⁶⁴ In Jeremiah God prophesies: *'They shall come with weeping, and with supplications I will lead them: I will cause them to walk by the rivers of waters in a straight way, wherein they shall not stumble: for I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn. Hear the word of the Lord, O ye nations, and declare it in the isles afar off, and say, He that scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him, as a shepherd*

³⁶⁵⁰ mother of Joseph; but note, Patai, Raphael, *The Jewish Mind*, p.490:

'Rachel....in the intervening centuries attained the symbolic position of the mother of the entire Hebrew nation.'

³⁶⁵¹ northern kingdom's former home and capital.

³⁶⁵² Hos 12:1

³⁶⁵³ i.e., sceptre.

³⁶⁵⁴ Psa 89:25

³⁶⁵⁵ Jer 3:11,12

³⁶⁵⁶ Hosea 11:8,10

³⁶⁵⁷ Jer 31:8

³⁶⁵⁸ Jer 30:24

³⁶⁵⁹ Jer 31:1

³⁶⁶⁰ Jer 31:2,4,9

³⁶⁶¹ Jer 31:6,9

³⁶⁶² Jer 31:5

³⁶⁶³ Isa 49:12; the Vulgate renders *'Sinim'* as *'Australi'* or *'Australia,'* although some translations render it in footnoted form as the exceedingly unlikely *'China.'*

³⁶⁶⁴ Isa 49:1,3

doth his flock. For the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and ransomed him from the hand of him that was stronger than he.'³⁶⁶⁵ Again, in Isaiah, God confirms their position: *'Keep silence before me, O islands....But thou, Israel art my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham, my friend.'*³⁶⁶⁶

The isles, north-west of Jerusalem, across the continent of Europe, set in the sea, are the British Isles, peopled by a seafaring race, a former supreme world power. So powerful, at one time, as to establish and maintain the Pax Britannica worldwide; a nation comprising a company or empire or commonwealth of nations. *'And God said unto him, thy name is Jacob: thy name shall not be called any more Jacob, but Israel shall be thy name: and he called his name Israel. And God said unto him, I am God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee, and kings shall come out of thy loins.'*³⁶⁶⁷

Jacob blessed the sons of Joseph, in the following terms: *'And he blessed them that day, saying, in thee shall Israel bless, saying, God make thee as Ephraim and Manasseh: and he set Ephraim before Manasseh.'*³⁶⁶⁸ Ephraim, the younger, was to become a commonwealth of nations: *'The Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads; and let my name be named on them, and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; and let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth. And when Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand upon the head of Ephraim, it displeased him: and he held up his father's hand, to remove it from Ephraim's head unto Manasseh's head. And Joseph said unto his father, Not so my father: for this is the firstborn; put thy right hand upon his head. And his father refused, and said, I know it, my son, I know it; he also shall become a people, and he also shall be great: but truly his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his seed shall become a multitude of nations.'*³⁶⁶⁹ The prophesied empire or commonwealth of nations is the British Empire / Commonwealth, and the prophesied single great nation is The United States of America.

Britain was 'invaded' by the Norse, Jutes, Angles, Saxons³⁶⁷⁰ and, later, by the Normans. The Normans were of the same stock as the Norsemen, 'Norman' being an abridgement, and, hence, another route via other tribes of Israel for part of Ephraim. The sons of Isaac would thus be known, as prophesied by the word of God to Abraham: *'And God said unto Abraham, Let it not be grievous in thy sight because of the lad, and because of thy bondwoman; in all that Sarah hath said unto thee, hearken unto her voice, for in Isaac shall thy seed be called.'*³⁶⁷¹ This is also seen in the northern tribe of Israel calling itself 'sons of Isaac' before the exile.³⁶⁷²

³⁶⁶⁵ Jer 31:9-11; cp. Jer 23:3, *'And I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all countries whither I have driven them, and will bring them again to their folds; and they shall be fruitful and increase.'*

³⁶⁶⁶ Isa 41:1,8

³⁶⁶⁷ Gen 35:10,11

³⁶⁶⁸ Gen 48:20

³⁶⁶⁹ Gen 48:16-19

³⁶⁷⁰ Saxons, as observed by Dr. W. Holt Yates, is derived from 'the sons of Isaac,' by dropping the prefix 'I'; 'British' Saxons are not to be confused with the generic German Saxons who derived their name from the Old High German word, sahs, meaning a sword, dagger or knife, despite the oft-given etymology of 'Saxon' as being from the Anglo-Saxon seax, meaning a knife or dagger. The only apparent 'German' involvement in 'Israel' is in the Frisian peoples of north-east Holland who also spread along part of the coast of what is now northern Germany.

³⁶⁷¹ Gen 21:12

Of all of the 'lost' tribes of Israel, by far the easiest to locate by means of waymarks is Dan. Jacob, foretelling what should befall each of the tribes, said, '*Dan shall be a serpent by the way.*'³⁶⁷³ Another translation renders it, '*Dan shall be a serpent's trail.*' The tribe of Dan originally occupied a coastal strip on the Mediterranean, roughly west of Jerusalem. Joshua records: '*And the coast of the children of Dan went out too little for them: therefore the children of Dan went up to fight against Leshem, and took it, and smote it with the edge of the sword, and possessed it, and dwelt therein, and called Leshem, Dan, after the name of Dan, their father.*'³⁶⁷⁴ Judges records, '*And there went from thence of the family of the Danites, out of Zorah and out of Eshtaol, six hundred men appointed with weapons of war. And they went up, and pitched in Kirjath-jearim, in Judah: wherefore they called that place Mahaneh-dan unto this day: behold, it is behind Kirjath-jearim. And there was no deliverer, because it was far from Zidon, and they had no business with any man; and it was in the valley that lieth by Bethrehob. And they built a city and dwelt therein. And they called the name of the city Dan, after the name of Dan their father, who was born unto Israel: howbeit the name of the city was Laish at the first.*'³⁶⁷⁵ The tribe did have a demonstrable habit of leaving '*a serpent's trail*' by way of names of places they inhabited; a trail of way-marks.

Before the Assyrian captivity, the tribe of Dan occupied two different districts or provinces in the Holy Land, with one colony on the coast of the Mediterranean. They were principally seamen, as it is recorded in Judges that, '*Dan remained in ships.*'³⁶⁷⁶ When the Assyrians finally captured the city of Samaria³⁶⁷⁷ and totally over-ran the remains of the kingdom of Israel in the following years, these Danites struck out in their ships and sailed west through the Mediterranean and, eventually, north to Ireland. Moses prophesied: '*And of Dan he said, Dan is a lion's whelp: he shall leap from Bashan.*'³⁶⁷⁸ While they were dwelling in the Levant, the Greeks knew these people as the 'Danaans' of the eastern Mediterranean.

Irish annals

Irish annals and history show that the incoming settlers of the island of Ireland were called the Tuatha de Danaan, the tribe of Dan. Sometimes this was abridged and transmuted to Tuatha De, the people of God. Later, in the time of King David, a colony of the line of Zarah arrived in Ireland from the Near East. Some of the northern colony of Dan, however, did not escape the Assyrian invasion and were taken captive, although it would appear that the greater part did manage to flee and migrate north-westwards to safety. Then, at the time

³⁶⁷² Amos 7:9,16

³⁶⁷³ Gen 49:16,17

³⁶⁷⁴ Josh 19:47

³⁶⁷⁵ Judg 18:11,12,28,29

³⁶⁷⁶ Judg 5:17

³⁶⁷⁷ 721BC

³⁶⁷⁸ Deut 33:22

of Jeremiah's transplanting,³⁶⁷⁹ an elderly, white haired patriarch, sometimes referred to as a saint,³⁶⁸⁰ came to Ireland. With him was the princess daughter of an eastern king and a companion called Simon Brach.³⁶⁸¹ The princess had a Hebrew name, Tephi; her full name being Tea-Tephi, a daughter of Zedekiah. This royal party included the son of the king of Ireland, who had been in Jerusalem at the time of the siege,³⁶⁸² and had become acquainted with Tea-Tephi. He married her in Spain, shortly after the fall of the city of Jerusalem, and their young son, about twelve years of age, also accompanied them to Ireland.

Besides the royal family, Jeremiah brought with them a harp, an ark, and a flag. Some also contend that he brought a stone called 'Lia-fail',³⁶⁸³ also known as the 'Stone of Destiny.' This is contentious, as other more compelling 'evidence' suggests that this stone arrived in Ireland some time earlier, and independently of Jeremiah. Irrespective of exactly how it arrived, many of the kings of Ireland, Scotland, England, and Great Britain have been crowned sitting on or over this stone. The Stone of Destiny, which had been relocated from Ireland to Scotland, was taken to England from Scotland by king Edward I of England.³⁶⁸⁴ It now resides in Edinburgh Castle in Scotland but for long was kept in Westminster Abbey in London, where it was housed in a compartment in the coronation chair. A sign beside it labelled it 'Jacob's pillar-stone,' a reference to: *'And Jacob rose up early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put for his pillows, and set it up for a pillar, and he poured oil upon the top of it.'*³⁶⁸⁵ Despite its location in Scotland, the Stone will be returned to London for future coronations of British monarchs. While the Stone was stolen from Westminster Abbey and taken to Scotland,³⁶⁸⁶ it, or, contentiously but erroneously a replica, was later recovered and restored to the compartment in the coronation chair.

The royal husband of the Hebrew princess Tea Tephi, Eochaidh,³⁶⁸⁷ was given the title Herremon upon ascending the throne of his father. This Herremon has been confused by some, on occasion, with an allegedly much earlier Gede Herremon who is said to have married his uncle Ith's daughter Tea in the days of King David. This particular confusion has arisen due to a fundamental deficiency in dating the arrival of Jeremiah in Ireland, leading to the erroneous concept of two Herremons. They are, in fact, incorrectly dated references to the same personage.

The son of Herremon and his Hebrew princess continued on the throne of Ireland, with the lineage continuing unbroken through the kings of Ireland. It was overturned and transplanted a second time in Scotland,

³⁶⁷⁹ 569BC

³⁶⁸⁰ known in Irish annals as Irish: Ollam Fodhla.

³⁶⁸¹ variously spelled Breck, Berech, Brach or Berach.

³⁶⁸² 587BC

³⁶⁸³ a palindrome.

³⁶⁸⁴ in 1295–96

³⁶⁸⁵ Gen 28:18

³⁶⁸⁶ in 1950

³⁶⁸⁷ modern pronunciation: Haughey; Irish: 'horseman.'

and a third time it was overturned and moved to London, England where the royal throne-line continues today in the personage of the British monarch.

Thus this Hebrew princess, a daughter of King Zedekiah of Judah, an heir to the throne of David, was the direct linkage with the Pharez line. The aged patriarch was Jeremiah of the Bible and his companion was his scribe, Baruch. King Herremon was a descendent of Zarah, and, in marrying a daughter of the Pharez line, healed the breach. The throne of David was overturned out of Judah, was overturned out of Ireland, and was overturned a third time out of Scotland. When Christ returns to earth to sit on His throne, He shall take over a live, existing throne; not one which ceased to exist about three millennia years ago. Luke contains this prophecy: *'He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.'*³⁶⁸⁸

Royal lineage

The lineage of the British crown can be traced in a work concerning the Declaration of Arbroath:³⁶⁸⁹

'From the Declaration of Arbroath we discover that Robert the Bruce and his knights whose seals are affixed to that famous document, date their beginnings as a nation one thousand two hundred years after the outgoing³⁶⁹⁰ of the "people of Israel." Thus, they claim descent from the Israelites in Egypt. The validity of such a claim is supported by many historians who point to an Israelite presence in the British Isles³⁶⁹¹ at a very early date, even before the Exodus.

All the Israelites in Egypt did not accompany Moses into the Promised Land. Hecataeus of Abdera says: "The most distinguished of the expelled foreigners from Egypt followed Danaus and Cadmus into Greece; but the greater number were led by Moses into Judea."³⁶⁹² According to Petavius,³⁶⁹³ Danaus was the son of Bela,³⁶⁹⁴ a sojourner in Egypt. His brother was Egyptus. Danaus was informed by an oracle that his brother will slay him; he fled, taking with him his daughters,³⁶⁹⁵ and came to Greece three years after the death of Joseph. This was about one hundred and forty-eight years before the Exodus.

Moore³⁶⁹⁶ says that the ancient Irish, called the 'Danai' or 'Danes,' separated from Israel around the time of the Exodus from Egypt, crossed to Greece and then invaded Ireland.³⁶⁹⁷ Historians call these people the

³⁶⁸⁸ Luke 1:32,33

³⁶⁸⁹ declaration of Scottish independence, as a sovereign state, dated 6 April, 1320AD, in a letter to Pope John XXII.

³⁶⁹⁰ Exodus.

³⁶⁹¹ In particular, of Dan and Judah.

³⁶⁹² 6th century BC historian, quoted by the Greek historian Diodorus Siculus, 50BC; 1,27,46,55.

³⁶⁹³ Petavius, *History of the World*

³⁶⁹⁴ Belus.

³⁶⁹⁵ as colonists.

³⁶⁹⁶ Moore, *History of Ireland*

‘Tuatha de Danaan.’³⁶⁹⁸ The ‘Book of the Conquests of Ireland,’³⁶⁹⁹ gives their earlier name as ‘Tuatha De,’ meaning ‘People of God.’ Gladstone’s “Juventus Mundi” and the “old Psalter of Cashel” both state that some of the Grecian Danai left Greece and invaded Ireland. Petanius³⁷⁰⁰ speaks of the Danai as being Hebrew people, originally from Egypt, who colonized Ireland.

The Milesians, who invaded Ireland³⁷⁰¹ and subjugated the Tuatha de Danaan, were also a branch of the Hebrew stem. It was from a later group of Milesians³⁷⁰² that Ireland received one of its earliest names—‘Scota.’ The Milesians in general were commonly called ‘Scotti’ or ‘Scots’ by the early Latin historians and poets. It was said that the name ‘Scots’ came from ‘Scota,’ a daughter of a far-eastern king³⁷⁰³ who married Gathelus, a Milesian prince. It was from this union that the kings of Tara³⁷⁰⁴ were descended. The marriage is said to have occurred during the reign of a Pharaoh who was ‘drowned’ in the Red Sea. This would have been the Pharaoh Hophra³⁷⁰⁵ who provided refuge for Jeremiah and the daughters of King Zedekiah of Judah. The Pharaoh was later murdered in his boat.³⁷⁰⁶

The Chronicles of Scotland record the story of their ancestor Gathelus leaving Egypt with his wife³⁷⁰⁷ and friends this way: ‘[Rather than] to abyde ye manifest wengenance of goddis’³⁷⁰⁸ and travelling by sea,³⁷⁰⁹ after, “lang tyme he landit in ane part of Spayne callit Lusitan.” (later called Partungall). After this he built the city of Brigance³⁷¹⁰ and “callit his subdittis³⁷¹¹ Scottis in honour and affeccoun of his wyiff.”

Many historians, today, erroneously refer to the Milesians as ‘Celts’ and ‘Gaels.’ Actually, they were only the forerunners of the Celtic tribes that would find their way across Europe from the east, turbulently meeting and finally blending in amity, and flowing onward in one great Gaelic stream into the island of Britain. The Celts were kinsmen but mainly of the later westward migrations of the Israelites as they left the regions of the upper Euphrates gorge.³⁷¹² Most of them crossed the Black Sea to the Carpathean Mountains, called ‘Arsareth’

³⁶⁹⁷ Ptolemy’s ancient map of Ireland, in the north-eastern corner of the island, shows such names as ‘Dan-Sowar’ (Dan’s Resting Place) and ‘Dan Sobhairse’ (Dan’s Habitation).

³⁶⁹⁸ tribe of Dan.

³⁶⁹⁹ Gaelic: Leabha Gabhala.

³⁷⁰⁰ 6th-century BC historian.

³⁷⁰¹ c.1000BC

³⁷⁰² c.5th-century BC

³⁷⁰³ Zedekiah.

³⁷⁰⁴ viz., Ireland.

³⁷⁰⁵ XXI dynasty.

³⁷⁰⁶ 566BC

³⁷⁰⁷ Scota.

³⁷⁰⁸ reference to God’s judgement on the remnant that had fled to Egypt to escape Nebuchadnezzar.

³⁷⁰⁹ Mediterranean.

³⁷¹⁰ in Spain.

³⁷¹¹ i.e., subjects.

³⁷¹² II Esdras 13:43

in the Apocrypha. From there, they migrated up the Danube into Central Europe and became known as 'Celts' and 'Gauls.'³⁷¹³

Between 400–100BC, the Celts poured into Britain to form the bed-rock of the British race. One group, in Spain, known as 'Iberes'³⁷¹⁴ moved into Ireland, naming the island 'Hibernia,' a name that still exists. From them came the High Kings of Tara that ruled Ireland for several centuries.

About 500AD, the Scottish King Fergus Mor McErc³⁷¹⁵ of the Gaelic kingdom of Dalriada³⁷¹⁶ left his Irish palace at Dunseverick and invaded the south-western part of the Pictish Kingdom in northern Britain. The Picts³⁷¹⁷ were a confederation of Celtic tribes.³⁷¹⁸ They spoke a slightly different language than Celtic³⁷¹⁹ and had different customs from the Gaels of the west and the Britons of Strathclyde, in the south.

The Scots from Ireland were successful in driving the Picts north, out of Argyllshire. They set up their new capital inside the ramparts of an old Pictish fort on the hill of Dunadd. From there, Fergus ruled both halves of his kingdom, one in Ireland and the other in Scotland. For a time, the Scottish kingdom of Dalriada appears to have been dependent upon Irish Dalriada. But later³⁷²⁰ Aidan³⁷²¹ secured its independence and was crowned king of Scotland upon the Stone Lia Fail.³⁷²² One of Aidan's successors, Kenneth, became king of the Picts,³⁷²³ and gradually the name "Dalriada," both in Ireland and Scotland, fell into disuse.

Many of the Scottish and Irish legends, as well as the Declaration of Arbroath, claim that the remote ancestors of the Scots came from Scythia. This was the ancient name for south Russia. This had led some authorities to believe that they were derived from the Scythian branch of the 'Gamera.'³⁷²⁴ However, this is not the case. What is now Scythia was once inhabited by Cimmerians and there are still traces of the Cimmerians in Scythia: one finds, for instance, remains of a fortification, a Cimmerian strait, the Cimmerian Peninsula, and a tract of land called Cimmeria.

³⁷¹³ Filmer, W. E., *Who were the Scots?*:

'Archaeological evidence in the form of clay cuneiform tablets of the 'Royal Correspondence of the Assyrian Empire,' [the] Cimmerians-Israelites [were] called, during their captivity by the Assyrians, 'Gimera or Gamera.'

³⁷¹⁴ Gaelic name for Hebrews.

³⁷¹⁵ the Great.

³⁷¹⁶ In Ireland.

³⁷¹⁷ Gaelic: Cruithne, meaning 'pictured men,' because they painted or, alternatively, and more accurately, tattooed themselves.

³⁷¹⁸ largely in error; later research suggesting that in significant measure the Picts were of part Canaanite / Phœnician extraction.

³⁷¹⁹ Pictish language seems to have been a form or derivation approximating to proto-Welsh. In this it would have been much closer to the language of the Britons than to that of Dalriadaic Scots.

³⁷²⁰ c.575AD

³⁷²¹ son of King Gabran.

³⁷²² Stone of Destiny.

³⁷²³ c.843AD

³⁷²⁴ Israelites.

Language also indicates the Cimmerians³⁷²⁵ did not originate from the Scythians. The Anglo-Saxon descendants of the Scythians have a totally difference language from the Gaelic and Welsh languages of the Celts. Although both languages can be traced to the Hebrew, their complete separation for centuries and their totally different contacts account for the differences.

To summarise: we find from historical records and archaeological evidence that there were several migrations of Hebrew peoples arriving in Ireland at different times and under different names. They came as the Tuatha de Danaan, Milesians, and Celts, and, apparently, amalgamated.³⁷²⁶ Yet, in fact, they were the same peoples ethnically. The migrations of these early people from Ireland to northern Britain around the sixth century BC established the Celtic kingdom of the Scots where, five centuries later, their descendants founded the nation and kingdom of Scotland.

In tracing the origin of the Scots to be ancient Hebrew people we see the fulfilment of many Bible prophecies. *'As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations....and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee;'*³⁷²⁷ *'Moreover, I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own, and move no more; neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more, as beforetime;'*³⁷²⁸ *'For the Lord shall smite Israel as a reed is shaken in the water, and he shall root up Israel out of this good land which he gave to their fathers, and shall scatter them beyond the river,'*³⁷²⁹ *because they have made their groves,'*³⁷³⁰ *provoking the Lord to anger,'*³⁷³¹ *'For, lo, I will command, and I will sift the house of Israel among all nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth,'*³⁷³² *'For thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.'*^{3733 3734}

Historical clarification

Filmer offers the following in clarification of that part pertaining to Scotland: "The History of Britain," written by Nennius some five centuries before the Declaration of Arbroath, would doubtless have been among the books to which reference was made. There, following an account of various migrations of people from Spain

³⁷²⁵ Celts.

³⁷²⁶ a touch over-optimistic, perhaps.

³⁷²⁷ Gen 17:4,6

³⁷²⁸ II Sam 7:10

³⁷²⁹ Euphrates.

³⁷³⁰ idolatrous symbols; anciently, carved tree-trunks dedicated to the goddess Asheroth.

³⁷³¹ I Kings 14:15

³⁷³² Amos 9:9

³⁷³³ Gen 28:14

³⁷³⁴ *Scottish Declaration of Independence*, pp.44-49

to Ireland, we read: 'According to the most learned among the Scots, if any one desires to learn what I am now going to state, Ireland was a desert and uninhabited when the children of Israel crossed the Red Sea, in which, as we read in the Book of the Law, the Egyptians who followed them were drowned. At that period, there lived among this people, with a numerous family, a Scythian of noble birth who had been banished from his country, and did not go to pursue the people of God. The Egyptians who were left, seeing the destruction of the great men of their nation, and fearing lest he should possess himself of their territory, took counsel together and expelled him.'³⁷³⁵

We are then told that this Scythian and his family, after wandering through many nations, eventually, 'landed in Spain, where they continued many years, having greatly increased and multiplied. Thence, one thousand and two years after the Egyptians were lost in the Red Sea, they passed into Ireland'³⁷³⁶

It should be observed that in this account the migration from Spain to Ireland took place one thousand and two years after the Exodus, whereas the Arbroath document says it was one thousand two hundred. We shall return to this later, but meanwhile we must notice a gross anachronism, in that a Scythian was living in Egypt at the time of the Exodus. The earliest that Scythians are mentioned in any historical document was in 675BC when the Assyrians reported them in northern Iran close to where the Israelites had been placed in captivity half a century earlier. It follows that either this man was not a Scythian or he did not live at the time of the Exodus.

Now, although it is frequently stated in the old Scottish and Irish histories that their ancestors were in Egypt at the time of the Exodus, it is submitted that this is due to a very ancient blunder arising from a forgotten tradition that there was a colony of Jews in Egypt at that time. These Jews were, in fact, not the people that Moses led out of Egypt but the remnant of Judah taken to Egypt by Jeremiah, following the fall of Jerusalem.³⁷³⁷

A study of the old Irish legends reveals that early Irish historians had very great difficulty in filling the gap of over a thousand years between the time of the Exodus and the migration from Spain to Ireland. The ninth-century poet, Maelmura, for example, in an historical poem quoted in the Irish version of Nennius, fills the gap with incredible migrations which ultimately involved sailing between the Black Sea and the Caspian, and thence to the Arctic Ocean.³⁷³⁸ Since this piece of fiction cannot be reconciled with the true story of a migration directly from Egypt to Spain, later historians have woven both into one by having two men marrying Scots in Egypt, one at the time of Exodus, and the other a thousand years later. Thus, regarding the first Scots, Keating writes: 'You must now understand that this woman was not the same Scotsa who was the wife of Galamh, called Miledh of Spain, and who bore him six sons.'³⁷³⁹

³⁷³⁵ Nennius, *The History of Britain*, §15

³⁷³⁶ sublinear emphasis added.

³⁷³⁷ in 586BC

³⁷³⁸ Todd, J. H., and Herbert, A., *Nennius*, pp.233-239

³⁷³⁹ O'Mahoney's Translation (1857AD), *History of Ireland*, p.156

The Scottish historian, John of Fordun, on the other hand, produced an account³⁷⁴⁰ in which the gap has almost entirely vanished. 'In the days of Moses,' he wrote, 'a certain king of one of the countries of Greece, Neolus, or Heolus, by name, had a son beautiful in countenance, but wayward in spirit, called Gaythelos, to whom he allowed no authority in the kingdom. Roused to anger, and backed by a numerous band of youths, Gaythelos disturbed his father's kingdom by many cruel misdeeds, and angered his father and his people by his insolence. He was, therefore, driven out by force from his native land, and sailed to Egypt, where, being distinguished by courage and daring, and being of royal birth, he married Scots, the daughter of Pharaoh. Another Chronicle says that in those days all Egypt was overrun by the Ethiopians who, according to their usual custom, laid waste the country from the mountains to the town of Memphis and the Great Sea; so that Gaythelos, the son of Neolus, one of Pharaoh's allies, was sent to his assistance with a large army; and the king gave him his only daughter in marriage to seal the compact.'³⁷⁴¹

Following quotations from other chronicles and a list of the successive kings of Egypt down to Pharaoh, Scots's father, who was drowned in the Red Sea, we are again told that Gaythelos was expelled from Egypt after the Exodus: 'Gaythelos, therefore, assembled his retainers and, with his wife Scots, quitted Egypt; and as on account of an old feud he feared to retrace his steps to those parts whence he had come to Egypt, he bent his course westwards.'³⁷⁴²

After wandering for forty years through many lands, he eventually left Africa and 'embarked in such ships as he could then get, and went over into Spain,' where he built a town by the name of Brigantia.³⁷⁴³ In Roman times a town of this name existed near Coruna in the province of Galicia in north-west Spain.

Two sons of Gaythelos, after first making a reconnaissance of Ireland and returning to Spain, finally migrated there after Gaythelos had died. In support of this Fordun quotes the 'Legend of Brandan' as saying: 'Now one of the sons of Gaythelos, Hyber by name, a young man but valiant for his years, being incited to war by his spirit, took up arms, and having prepared such a fleet as he could, went to the aforesaid island, and slew part of the inhabitants he found, and part he subdued. He thus appropriated that whole island as a possession for himself and his brethren, calling it Scotia from his mother's name.'³⁷⁴⁴

Now this story, shorn of its connections with the Exodus, would fit very well into the time of Jeremiah. The statement that Gaythelos was the son of Neolus would mean only that he came from the town of Miletus, the principal port of the Greek province of Caria in Asia Minor which Herodotus³⁷⁴⁵ tells us was founded by Neilius, the son of Codrus. In fact, other Irish legends actually state that their eponymous Gaelic ancestor was

³⁷⁴⁰ in 1385AD

³⁷⁴¹ Skene's Translation (1872AD), *History of Scotland*, pp.6,7

³⁷⁴² Skene's Translation (1872AD), *History of Scotland*, p.10

³⁷⁴³ Skene's Translation (1872AD), *History of Scotland*, pp.11,12

³⁷⁴⁴ Skene's Translation (1872AD), *History of Scotland*, p.15

³⁷⁴⁵ Herodotus, IX, 97

surnamed Miledh or Miletus, on account of his exploits at that city, thus accounting for the name of the Milesian dynasty.

It is well known that between 650 and 550BC the Egyptians employed large numbers of Greek mercenaries who came mainly from Ionia and Caria; in fact, Herodotus informs us that Psammitichus I³⁷⁴⁶ was the first to employ them about 655BC to overcome his rivals, and become sole king of Egypt. He then tells us: 'To the Ionians and Carians who helped him gain the throne Psammitichus granted two pieces of land, opposite one another on each side of the Nile, which came to be known as the Camps....The tracts of land where the Ionians and Carians settled lie a little distance seaward from Bubastis on the Pelusian mouth of the Nile.'³⁷⁴⁷ He says that later 'The Egyptians had guardposts in various parts of the country: one at Elephantine against the Ethiopians, another at Daphnae at Pelusium against the Arabians and Assyrians, and a third at Marea to keep watch on Libya.'³⁷⁴⁸

Daphnae is the same as the biblical Tahpanhes to which the residue of the House of Judah fled following the fall of Jerusalem.³⁷⁴⁹ Jeremiah relates that '*Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces, took all then remnant of Judah, that were returned from all nations, whither they had been driven, to dwell in the land of Judah; even men, and women, and children, and the king's daughters, and every person that Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard had left with Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son of Shaphan, and Jeremiah the prophet, and Baruch the son of Neriah. So they came into the land of Egypt: for they obeyed not the voice of the Lord: thus came they even to Tahpanhes.*'³⁷⁵⁰ The site was excavated by Sir Flinders Petrie, who found there the remains of a great fortress. He wrote: 'There were doubtless some state apartments in the fortress for the Egyptian governors who might visit there. Those might be at the disposal of the royal daughters, and Johanan and his men of might would strengthen the camp. Of this an echo comes across the long ages; the fortress mound is known as Qasr Bint el Jehudi, the palace of the Jew's daughter. It is named Qasr, a palace, not Qala, a fortress. It is not named Tell Bint el Jehudi, as it would be if it were called so after it were a ruinous heap. Qasr is a name which shows its descent from the time of habitation, and habitation for nobility and not merely for troops. So through the long ages of Greek and Roman and Arab there has come down the memory of the royal residence of the king's daughters from the wreck of Jerusalem.'³⁷⁵¹

Now, according to the sources quoted by Fordun, Gaythelos, 'backed by a numerous band of youths,' and driven out of his country, sailed to Egypt which at that time 'was overrun by Ethiopians.' This could well refer to the Ethiopian invasion that occurred about 665BC, but on that occasion they were driven out by the

³⁷⁴⁶ 655–610BC

³⁷⁴⁷ Herodotus, II, 154

³⁷⁴⁸ Herodotus, II, 30

³⁷⁴⁹ in 586BC

³⁷⁵⁰ Jer 43:5-7

³⁷⁵¹ Petrie, Sir Flinders, *Egypt and Israel*, 1931 ed., p.90

Assyrians. After that no further wars between Egypt and Ethiopia are reported until the end of the reign of Psammitichus II.³⁷⁵² Herodotus says that: 'During the six short years of his reign, Psammis (Psammitichus) attacked Ethiopia; but soon after the expedition he died.'³⁷⁵³

Whether the Ethiopians actually invaded Egypt again we do not know. But there can be no doubt that the Egyptians attacked Ethiopia again in 589BC with the aid of foreign troops for at Abu Simbel, well within Ethiopian territory, there is a Greek inscription on one of the colossi of Ramesses II which reads: 'When King Psammitichus came to Elephantine, this was written by those who sailed with Psammitichus the son of Theocles, and they came beyond Kerkis as far as the river permits. Those who spoke foreign tongues were led by Potasimto, the Egyptians by Amasis.'³⁷⁵⁴

In the Scottish legends the name of the Egyptian general, Amasis, may have got confused with Moses, and thus contributed to the idea that this took place at the time of the Exodus.

The actual date of the event was thus 589BC, three years before the fall of Jerusalem but, owing to the death of the Egyptian king, there would doubtless have been some delay in the awarding of honours. When, however, the Jewish refugees arrived at Tahpanhes a few years later, the new Pharaoh Hophra may well have adopted the heiress to the throne of Judah, hoping thereby to acquire a title to her lands, and then offered her in marriage to Gaythelos. Whether her name was, in fact, Scots, is doubtful, as it was usual in legends to invent ancestral names that would account both for the origins and names of nations.

How long the Jewish refugees remained in Tahpanhes we do not know, but the foreign mercenaries were removed and the camp abolished by the Egyptians about 565BC. This would be the latest date for Gaythelos to leave Egypt so, allowing forty years for his travels before reaching Spain, he must have arrived in Brigantia at the latest by 525BC. Actually, it was probably earlier, for the forty years given by Fordun's source was apparently based on the Israelites forty years in the wilderness. Since we are told that he died in Spain, and that his sons migrated to Ireland, we arrive at a date in the last quarter of the sixth century for this event.

Let us now return to the statement of Nennius that 'a thousand and two years after the Egyptians were lost in the Red Sea, they³⁷⁵⁵ passed into Ireland.' This figure looks as if it were not a rough guess but a precise figure arrived at by calculation.³⁷⁵⁶ The original migrants from Egypt and Spain would not, of course, have brought with them knowledge of the date of the Exodus, so the calculation must have been made at the time when the Scottish legends were being correlated with biblical and secular history. However, it is not the true date of the Exodus that we need to know, but the date used by somebody for the purpose of this calculation.

³⁷⁵² 595 - 589BC

³⁷⁵³ Herodotus, II, 61

³⁷⁵⁴ Gardiner, A., *Egypt of the Pharaohs*, 1961AD, p.359

³⁷⁵⁵ viz., the Scots.

³⁷⁵⁶ stated as being 1,200 years in the Declaration of Arbroath.

There is reason to believe that Saint Patrick himself went to Rome³⁷⁵⁷ and returned with a copy of the Chronicle of Eusebius, and Nennius, in his introduction, includes Jerome and Eusebius among his sources of information. Now Eusebius gave the date of the Exodus as 1512BC³⁷⁵⁸ and, subtracting 1,002 years from this, we arrive at 510BC as the date of the migration from Spain to Ireland. This is in remarkable agreement with the date we have already obtained independently.

It must not be assumed that there was only one group of people who migrated from the eastern Mediterranean to Ireland, for the Irish legends name several coming by different routes. Skene, for example, quotes one mentioned in the 'Acts of St. Cadroe,' 'According to this legend,' he wrote: 'The Scots were Greeks from the town of Chorischon upon the river Pactolus, which separates Choria³⁷⁵⁹ from Lydia. Having obtained ships, they went to Pathmos, Abidos and the islands of the Hellespont to Upper Thrace and, being joined by the people of Pergamus and the Lacedaemonians, they are driven by the north wind past Ephesus, the island of Melos and the Cyclades to Crete, and thence by the African sea they enter the Illyrian Gulf.³⁷⁶⁰ Then by the Balearic Isles they pass Spain, and through the Columns of Hercules to remote Tyle, and finally land at Cruachan Feli in Ireland.'³⁷⁶¹

This story is remarkable as much for its correspondences as for its differences with the previous one. Although a visit to Egypt is entirely left out, the place of the origin is the same, namely, the Greek province of Caria on the Ægean coast. Coming by this shorter route, this group of people would doubtless have arrived in Spain first, and this would agree with the Milesian tradition which in most of its forms tells that Miledh found a colony of his kinsmen already in Brigantia when he arrived.

Many of the Scottish and Irish legends, however, as indicated by the Declaration of Arbroath, say that the remote Scottish ancestors came from Scythia. This was the ancient name for southern Russia, but archaeological evidence has now proved beyond reasonable doubt that the earliest Scythian remains in that country cannot be dated earlier than 580BC. But we have already seen that some Scottish ancestors had sailed for Egypt before 589BC, so, if they had earlier come from Scythia, then they could not have been real Scythians. It may be that history recorded at a later date that they came from Scythia, but only in the same way as we might say that William the Conqueror came from France, without implying that he was a Frenchman.

Now Herodotus tells us that in his day 'What is now Scythia is said to have been inhabited by Cimmerians' and, to prove his point, stated that 'There are still traces of the Cimmerians in Scythia: one finds, for instance, remains of fortifications, a Cimmerian strait, a Cimmerian Bosphorus, and a tract of land called Cimmeria.'

³⁷⁵⁷ in 442AD

³⁷⁵⁸ 1599BC, in fact; q.v. '7,000-year Chronology,' inf.

³⁷⁵⁹ Caria?

³⁷⁶⁰ viz., Adriatic.

³⁷⁶¹ Skene, W. F., *Celtic Scotland*, 1886, Vol. 1, p.182; Cruachan Feli, the 'mountain of Ireland,' probably for Cruachan Éli, Croagh Patrick, near Westport, County Mayo.

³⁷⁶² He was evidently alluding to the Crimean Peninsula and the Kerch Straits. Consequently, modern archaeologists, finding a burial mound in the Crimea, and other remains on both sides of the Kerch Straits which they date to 650–600BC, have good reason to suppose that these were of Cimmerian origin.

Herodotus must, nevertheless, have been mistaken in assuming that these Cimmerians originated in Russia, for his own account of the history of Asia Minor, and particularly of Lydia, shows that there were Cimmerians operating south of the Black Sea throughout the whole of the seventh century BC. Correlating the Greek with the chronologically-precise Assyrian records, it has been established that the Cimmerians overthrew Midas, king of Phrygia, in the first quarter of the century, and occupied the port of Antandros in the west about 675BC. About ten years later they made their first attack on Lydia, but were repulsed. In 652BC and again in 645BC they overran the whole country, capturing Sardes, the capital, except for the citadel.³⁷⁶³

After that they went on to make raids on the Greek settlements, Ephesus and Magnesia being named as cities that were attacked. Finally, Herodotus informs us that Alyattes, king of Lydia, expelled the Cimmerians from Asia Minor altogether.³⁷⁶⁴

Since it is known that Alyattes reigned from about 607 to 560BC, this statement could well account for the expulsion of Gaythelos, surnamed Miledh, from Miletus, as well as for his reluctance to return to the country he came from. The testimony of Herodotus, confirmed by archaeology, that the Cimmerians had colonies in the Crimea, or 'Scythia,' might explain how some Cimmerians, who had returned thence to raid the Greek cities in Asia Minor, could be said in the Scottish legends to have come from Scythia.

It has been pointed out in the 'Synopsis of the Migrations of Israel'³⁷⁶⁵ that the Cimmerians were derived from those Israelites placed in captivity in the region of Gozan who had escaped by way of the upper Euphrates gorge.³⁷⁶⁶ Most of these crossed the Black Sea to the Carpathian region, called in the Apocrypha Arsareth. Thence they migrated up the Danube into central Europe and became known as Celts. It is well known that these were the ancestors of the ancient British and the Welsh.

We have now seen that the Scots as well as the Welsh came from the same Cimmerian source in Asia Minor in the seventh century BC, but by sea through the Mediterranean. This would account for the relationship between the Gaelic and Welsh languages, while their complete separation after 600BC would explain how these languages came to diverge. The Israelite captives in Media, on the other hand, had totally different contacts, and so their Anglo-Saxon descendants acquired a very different language.³⁷⁶⁷

³⁷⁶² Herodotus, IV, 11,12

³⁷⁶³ Herodotus, I, 15

³⁷⁶⁴ Herodotus, I, 16

³⁷⁶⁵ written by Filmer, W. E.

³⁷⁶⁶ II Esdras 13:43

³⁷⁶⁷ Filmer, W. E., *Who were the Scots?*

Now it should be borne in mind that any claim of the Scots to be the descendants of Israel would have been deeply unpopular at the time of the Declaration of Arbroath, and could not have been brought forward in an attempt at national self-aggrandisement. Rather, it was a statement of fact, albeit a trifle garbled in part.

This same 'Israelite-cum-Scythian-connection' can be seen in the following which has been excerpted and, in part, paraphrased / abridged from a paper by Collins:³⁷⁶⁸ 'Some have asserted that there is a supposed or implied 'conflict' in Kings which states, in relation to the removal of the ten tribes of Israel when Samaria fell,³⁷⁶⁹ *'Therefore the Lord was very angry with Israel, and removed them out of his sight: there was none left but the tribe of Judah only,'*³⁷⁷⁰ while, in Chronicles, it is recorded that Josiah collected donations about a century later to repair the Temple *'from the people of Manasseh, Ephraim, and the entire remnant of Israel.'*³⁷⁷¹ Chronicles adds that Naphtalites and Simeonites were also then present in Palestine.³⁷⁷²

In the late nineteenth-century, many informed persons in Great Britain recognised that the prophecies about Ephraim had come to pass in the manifold blessings showered on the British Empire. This belief, commonly termed 'British-Israelism,' was held, amongst others, by Col. J. C. Gawler, Queen Victoria's Keeper of the Crown Jewels, who wrote two tracts on the subject, 'Our Scythian Ancestors identified with Israel,' and 'Dan, the Pioneer of Israel,' that conclusively made the case that many Israelites did not go into captivity; this also confirmed by a number of Jewish historical sources. Anglo-Israelism was also present in nineteenth-century United States of America. In 1857, a pastor by the name of Pitts³⁷⁷³ gave a two-day presentation advocating Anglo-Israelism to a joint session of the US Congress.

Col. Gawler noted that the medieval geographer, Abraham Ortelius, recorded that when the kingdom of Israel fell, many of the ten tribes migrated to Tartary and 'took the name Gauthi because they were very jealous of the glory of God.' Gawler also cited Armenian historians who noted that a large mass of Israelites migrated through Armenia into Tartary. Tartary was a region near the Black Sea which later became a spring-board for the huge migrations of the Goths into Europe in the third- to sixth-centuries AD. Another medieval Jewish writer is quoted as asserting that these migrating Israelites evaded the calamity,³⁷⁷⁴ going off with their flocks and turning nomads, and that the chief or prince whom they appointed could muster one hundred and twenty thousand horse and one hundred thousand foot.³⁷⁷⁵ With a military escort of almost a quarter of a million men, it is clear the escaping Israelites could easily have numbered well over one million people.

³⁷⁶⁸ Collins, Steven M., *A Rebuttal of the Renegation of the United States / British Commonwealth Doctrine.*

³⁷⁶⁹ c.721BC

³⁷⁷⁰ II Kings 17:18

³⁷⁷¹ II Chron 34:9

³⁷⁷² I Chron 34:6

³⁷⁷³ F. E. Pitts.

³⁷⁷⁴ of Assyrian captivity.

³⁷⁷⁵ Gawler, Col. J. C., *Our Scythian Ancestors identified with Israel.*

In the apocryphal book, II Esdras,³⁷⁷⁶ there is an account that a large group from the ten tribes of Israel escaped the Assyrians and journeyed for one-and-a-half years to a place called Artzareth. This passage records that these Israelites were determined to keep their statutes which they had not kept in their own country, and adds that the Most High held back the waters of the Euphrates River so they could escape the Assyrians.

In Chronicles,³⁷⁷⁷ there is an account of a war between Israel and Judah just decades before the fall of Samaria in which God gave victory to the Israelites who killed one hundred and twenty thousand Jewish soldiers and were leading two hundred thousand Jews into captivity in Israel. Clearly, the house of Israel still had a very sizeable population at that time. Loaded with much spoil, the victorious Israelites were met by the prophet Obed who gave them a warning from God not to carry their Jewish brethren into captivity. The house of Israel had long spurned God's prophets, but [the tract]³⁷⁷⁸ record[s] the elders of Ephraim heeded this prophet. Indeed, they gave back all the spoil to the captive Jews, fed and clothed them, and gently assisted the 'feeble' to make the journey back to Judah. Interestingly, this account indicates the elders of Israel made this decision to 'bend over backwards in obeying God,' without any input from their king.

A few years later when Samaria fell, Kings³⁷⁷⁹ records the Assyrians had to repopulate the land of Israel with foreigners because the land was abandoned. [It]³⁷⁸⁰ implies the land had been depopulated for so long that it had reverted to the wild. The cuneiform texts of the Assyrian kings claim that when Samaria fell, only twenty-seven thousand, two hundred and ninety people were taken captive; a very paltry total considering that only a few years previously the Israelites had slain and taken captive hundreds of thousands of Jews. The Assyrians made no claim of taking the rest of the Israelite nation captive at that time.

As discussed above, historical sources indicate the escaping Israelites migrated north of Armenia into the Black Sea region. Many ancient historians note that the Black Sea region thereafter acquired the names of Iberia and Scythia.³⁷⁸¹

[It was] prophesied that Abraham's seed would be known by the name of Isaac,³⁷⁸² and since ancient Hebrew deleted vowels, Isaac's name is present in the root consonants of 'Sac' or 'Saac.' The Sacæ Scythians kept the name of Isaac in their tribal name, fulfilling the prophecy in Genesis. Iberia preserved the name of the Hebrew's namesake, Eber, and, importantly, Iberian kings bore the name of Phares. Iberia was a Roman province of Eastern Europe, located in the Caucasus Mountains between the Caspian and Black Seas, geographically corresponding to present-day Georgia. The Roman historian Tacitus mentions Iberia and their kings named Pharesmanes, as does the famous British historian George Rawlinson.

³⁷⁷⁶ II Esdras 13:39-46

³⁷⁷⁷ II Chron 28:5-8

³⁷⁷⁸ II Chron 28:13-15

³⁷⁷⁹ II Kings 17:24-31

³⁷⁸⁰ II Kings 17:25 '*the Lord sent lions among them.*'

³⁷⁸¹ the Sacæ.

³⁷⁸² Gen 21:12

King David had been promised by God that his seed *'would never lack a man sitting on the throne of the house of Israel.'*³⁷⁸³ Some Israelites who migrated to the Black Sea had kings named Pharesmanes, and Phares was the lineage from which King David was born.³⁷⁸⁴ This strongly argues that the Israelites who migrated to the Black Sea abandoned their old king to the Assyrians and selected a prince from the house of David to be their new king. Why else would they proclaim the name Phares in their dynastic name? There is much more evidence that Davidic kings ruled over other Asian Israelites as well, but the above will suffice.³⁷⁸⁵

Greek historians indicate that the Black Sea Israelites, now called Sacae Scythians, were obedient to prominent Old Testament laws. Herodotus notes that they avoided swine's flesh and scrupulously avoided foreign idols and religious customs. Herodotus recorded that a Scythian king, with the Israelite name of Saulius, executed a prominent Scythian for participating in a Greek festival honouring the 'mother goddess,' and a Scythian king was even executed for participating in an idolatrous religious celebration. By no means did all Scythians exhibit Israelite customs. The Turanian Scythians, for example, were not related to the Sacae Scythians, and their tribes exhibited some bizarre customs. When discussing Scythians, one must be careful to determine which Scythian tribes are being discussed because not all of them were Israelite.

The Bible supports the thesis that many of the ten tribes resettled in the Caucasus / Black Sea region. In the reign of king Hezekiah of Judah, soon after Samaria fell, Kings states Sennacherib, the king of Assyria, was assassinated by his sons who sought safety by fleeing to *'the land of Ararat.'*³⁷⁸⁶ When fleeing for their lives, these assassins would go to an area which was so anti-Assyrian that they would be certain to receive asylum. They fled to the region of Ararat, the Caucasus / Black Sea region, where refugees of the ten tribes had established a new homeland. The anti-Assyrian Israelites would surely give refuge to assassins of an Assyrian king, and the fact these assassins fled to Ararat is consistent with historical records that Israelites had migrated to that region.

The Bible also confirms that the Israelites who fled to the Black Sea experienced at least a limited revival in serving the God of Israel. God sent a message to the ten tribes of Israel via Jeremiah in about 620BC, one hundred years after Israel had been removed from Palestine. God's message was, *'backsliding Israel hath justified herself more than treacherous Judah. Go and proclaim these words toward the north, and say, return thou backsliding Israel, saith the Lord.'*³⁷⁸⁷ Did God's use of the word *'return'* mean return to God, return to Palestine, or both?³⁷⁸⁸ Whatever the intent, history records the Israelites did *'return'* to Palestine at that time! While the

³⁷⁸³ Jer 33:17, where the K.J.V. has *'never want [for] a man to sit upon the throne,'* which is slightly different.

³⁷⁸⁴ Mat 1:3-6

³⁷⁸⁵ conjecture, appearing to run contrary to the word of Scripture and the record of history.

³⁷⁸⁶ II Kings 19:37

³⁷⁸⁷ Jer 3:11,12

³⁷⁸⁸ one of the clear prophecies in the Bible is the in-gathering of Israel to the Promised Land at the time of the return of the Messiah and the end-time ingathering, as seen from Isa 11:11-16: *'And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord God shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria,*

above quote was not a glowing tribute to the ten tribes' spiritual condition, God nevertheless acknowledged that they were clearly more obedient to God at that time than the tribe of Judah. Also, he directs Jeremiah to address his message to the ten tribes *'to the north.'* If he were addressing Israelites carried captive to Assyria, God would have directed him to the east. By drawing a line straight north of Jerusalem, where Jeremiah was, it will pass exactly through the Black Sea region of the Sacæ Scythians.

Were the ten tribes of Israel 'lost' a century after the fall of Samaria? Obviously not! God himself sent a message at that time via the prophet Jeremiah to the 'free Israelites' near the Black Sea.

So what does this have to do with the supposed conflict alluded to previously? This will now be answered, but it was first necessary to establish the Israelite origin of the Sacæ Scythians before any sense could be made of what follows.

Secular historians record that circa 625–605BC the Scythians poured out of the Black Sea / Caucasus region to invade the regions of the south. Their armies marched in the direction of Assyria and Palestine. The Scythian armies who marched to Assyria devastated Assyria's homeland. The Encyclopædia Britannica states simply: 'Nineveh was captured and destroyed by the Scythian army....and the Assyrian empire was at an end.' However, the Scythian army that marched into Palestine was peaceful, as they continued to Egypt, a country that avoided an invasion by paying tribute to the Scythians. Herodotus notes that while the Scythians also conquered Media and 'took possession of all Asia,' they marched into Palestine 'doing no harm to anyone.'

Harper's Bible Dictionary records that this massive Scythian presence in Palestine occurred in the reign of King Josiah,³⁷⁸⁹ and during the ministry of the prophet Jeremiah, who had sent God's message to the ten tribes which said *'return.'* The Scythian invasions clearly exhibit motives that confirm their Israelite origin. By conquering Media they liberated the Israelites held captive in 'the cities of the Medes,' and by destroying the Assyrian Empire they exacted revenge for the Assyrian destruction of the old kingdom of Israel, for while the Assyrians drove the ten tribes out of Palestine, the ten tribes of Israel ultimately destroyed Assyria and its empire.

If the Scythians had been [but] marauding nomads from the steppes, a common assumption in history books, they would have looted Palestine and Judah as well. However, Herodotus' account of their presence in Palestine indicates a friendly / protective occupation. This makes sense, however, when it is understood that

and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea. And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth. The envy also of Ephraim shall depart, and the adversaries of Judah shall be cut off: Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim. But they shall fly upon the shoulders of the Philistines toward the west; they shall spoil them of the east together: they shall lay their hand upon Edom and Moab; and the children of Ammon shall obey them. And the Lord shall utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian sea; and with his mighty wind shall he shake his hand over the river, and shall smite it in the seven streams, and make men go over dryshod. And there shall be an highway for the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria; like as it was to Israel in the day that he came up out of the land of Egypt.'

³⁷⁸⁹ 639–608BC

the Sacæ Scythians recognised the Jews as a brother tribe. Even the Bible acknowledges the Scythian presence in Palestine during Josiah's reign....in the very passage which some claim to be a Bible contradiction. The Greeks called these Black Sea Israelites Sacæ or Scythian; however, the Bible called them by their Israelite tribal names, and the Jews still recognised the Scythians as Israelite tribes. That is why Chronicles records king Josiah issuing donation and Passover invitations to people of Manasseh, Ephraim, Naphtali, Simeon, and 'Israel'.³⁷⁹⁰ King Josiah was, in fact, interacting with the Sacæ Scythians who had just recently reoccupied their old tribal lands! These passages are powerful biblical proof that the Sacæ Scythians were the ten tribes of Israel! Precisely when Greek history records that the Sacæ Scythians had poured into Palestine, the Bible states many of the ten tribes were again present in the land.

[It also] records that the ten tribes of Israel had reoccupied their old homelands '*with mattocks*'.³⁷⁹¹ While the Scythians attacked Assyria with swords, they occupied Palestine with agricultural tools! The ten tribes apparently intended to reclaim and resettle the old kingdom of Israel. However, history records they decided to return to their new Black Sea homelands within a few decades. Werner Keller states the Scythians returned to the Black Sea region within ten years while Herodotus records they remained in the Mideast for twenty-eight years before returning.

The events of King Josiah's reign take on new meaning when it is realised that the more devout ten tribes of Israel had reoccupied Palestine during his reign! King Josiah's spiritual reform of Judah began in the eighth year of his reign.³⁷⁹² What motivated him to do this? The eighth year of his reign was 623BC, about when the Sacæ Scythians, the ten tribes of Israel, reoccupied Palestine. He began to destroy pagan idols and images even though he did not recover '*the book of the law*' until at least ten years later.³⁷⁹³ So who taught him how to please the God of Israel? The Scythian Israelites! Jeremiah records that the Israelites were closer to God at that time, and Herodotus wrote that the Scythians avoided unclean meat and forbade the use of idolatrous images.

After ten to twenty-eight years, the Israelites mostly returned to the north, after discovering that Palestine was no more '*a land of milk and honey*.' It had been occupied by foreigners, brought by the Assyrians, for a century, and was now undesirable compared to the Israelites' Black Sea region. However, a few Israelites likely stayed on in Palestine, accounting for limited contingents of Israelites being present in future generations. After the Scythian Israelites left Palestine, a city in the old tribal territory of Manasseh, Beth-Shan, was renamed Scythopolis in honour of the Scythians who had liberated Palestine from Assyrian domination. The city was still named Scythopolis when it was one of the cities of the Decapolis in which Jesus walked.³⁷⁹⁴

³⁷⁹⁰ II Chronicles chpts. 34,35

³⁷⁹¹ II Chron 34:6

³⁷⁹² II Chron 34:1-3

³⁷⁹³ II Chron 34:3-15

³⁷⁹⁴ Mark 7:31

The above is an example of how a careful reconciliation of secular history and biblical historical accounts mutually verify the accuracy of the Bible!³⁷⁹⁵

The belief and conviction of Israelite descendancy has been maintained down through the intervening years from the days of the Declaration of Arbroath. But there are other ancient links too. For example, the native Welsh call themselves, in their ancient Welsh language, 'Bryth y Brithan,' meaning the 'covenanters of the land of the covenant,' and have long-claimed that they are descended from one of the tribes of the house of Israel.

Rome's interventions

'The eighteenth-century *Gènèalogie de la Royale et Serenissime Maison de MacCarthy* reported the tradition that when Donnchadh O'Brien was deposed from the throne of Munster, he went on pilgrimage to Rome where he died³⁷⁹⁶ and 'made a present of his crown of massive gold and other regalia to the pope.' It has been suggested that this was interpreted by the popes, in their role as feudal princes, as an act of submission giving them the right to dispose of Ireland. Was Donnchadh's crown the same crown sent by a late pope to Henry II³⁷⁹⁷ to confirm his fiefdom in Ireland?

The fact was that in the nineteenth-century many Irish Catholics found it hard to accept that the church of Rome, as a temporal and feudal institution, was not a friend to the Irish nation. It was forgotten that the church in Ireland, at this time, had been in conflict with Rome for many centuries. It disagreed on several fundamental matters of theology with Rome but, most importantly, it stood in opposition to the social system espoused by Rome. In this fact, more than theology, lay the reason for Rome's enthusiastic advocacy of an invasion and conquest of Ireland.

Mary Hayden and George Moonan explained:³⁷⁹⁸ 'Each clan had its own bishop, and its own priests.... The clan allotted to its clergy, for their support, certain lands....looked after by an officer who was generally a layman. The clergy of a clan mostly lived in communities under their bishop, so that the church was both tribal and monastic.'

In other words, the Irish church, while it was building up its own ecclesiastical laws, called the Penetentials, and generally inspired by Roman custom, still found itself constrained by the Irish native law, popularly called Brehon law, and the social system it generated. Irish law was ancient. It is regarded by scholars as the oldest surviving codified law system in Europe....The Irish had an amazing respect for the law and their ancient

³⁷⁹⁵ Collins, Steven M., *A Rebuttal of the Renegation of the United States / British Commonwealth Doctrine* (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

³⁷⁹⁶ in 1064AD

³⁷⁹⁷ in 1186AD

³⁷⁹⁸ Hayden, Mary, and Moonan, George, *Short History of the Irish People*.

literature contains many references to the high regard that they gave their Brehon³⁷⁹⁹ and ollamhain.³⁸⁰⁰ An ollamh could even speak before a king, and kings and princes had to obey the judgement of the Brehons....

The Irish church's most zealous reformer was Maelmædoc Ó Morgair,³⁸⁰¹....[his] invective....denounced his fellow Irishmen, calling them 'beasts, not men.' 'In all the barbarism which he yet encountered, he had never met such a people so profligate in their morals, so uncouth in their ceremonies, so impious in faith, so barbarous in laws, so rebellious in discipline, so filthy in life....'

It must be remembered that the bishops of Rome of this period regarded themselves as temporal princes, with more feudal power than most emperors, and that they often led their own armies into battle to assert that power and reap tribute from those they subjected.

Many of the Irish clergy followed the leadership of Saint Malachy. The Irish bishops and abbots concluded that the defects and backward state of their church and nation were justification for subjecting their native land to a foreign king as one destined by Heaven and the Vicar of Christ to reform otherwise hopeless abuses. During the winter of 1171–72[AD] a council of Irish bishops convened in Cashel, the Munster capital, passing several decrees which were submitted to Henry II for confirmation. As well as covering purely ecclesiastical affairs, some of the decrees attacked the Irish social system and sought to bring it in line with feudalism, freeing all church property from the jurisdiction of the clan assemblies and placing all clergy, for the first time, above the law, excusing them from paying fines if found guilty of transgressing the law, even if they committed homicide. Cashel decided 'the divine offices shall be celebrated according to the forms of the church of England.'³⁸⁰² 'The bishops went the whole way to oblige Henry and, if we are to believe reputable chroniclers of the next century, each of them gave him a letter with his seal attached, confirming to Henry and his heirs the kingdom of Ireland.'

The Irish church now came in line with Rome and all the Irish were ordered to provide feudal tithes to the parish priests, each clan territory now becoming a parish. Henry II wrote to Alexander III³⁸⁰³ in 1173[AD] acknowledging the pope's feudal superiority; this letter is found recorded in Thomas Rhymer's *Foedera*. The annual payment for Ireland, as a vassel state, was duly paid by Henry II to the pope.

John of Salisbury, in his *Metalogicus*, recorded that the pope, in return, sent Henry a golden ring adorned with an emerald to be worn to symbolise his authority, on Rome's behalf, over Ireland. So it is quite clear that when Ireland became the newest province of the Norman empire, with several of its kings having submitted to Henry II as Dominus Hibernia,³⁸⁰⁴ it had, constitutionally, become a papal fiefdom with the Angevin³⁸⁰⁵ emperors merely as middlemen. The bishops of Rome had conspired in the conquest of Ireland, asserting themselves as

³⁷⁹⁹ judges.

³⁸⁰⁰ professors.

³⁸⁰¹ St. Malachy, born in Armagh in 1095AD.

³⁸⁰² which was still the Roman church at this date.

³⁸⁰³ the pope at the time.

³⁸⁰⁴ i.e., Lord of Ireland.

³⁸⁰⁵ i.e., Norman.

feudal lords of all the lands of Europe and even beyond, taking their feudal authority from God, whom they [claimed to] represent on earth. In this position they were able to give Ireland into the charge of Henry II in return for payment.

Henry II, in a passing fit of generosity, thought to bestow the 'Kingship of Ireland' on his nineteen-year-old son John.³⁸⁰⁶ He had already crowned his eldest son, Henry, as 'King of England' in June, 1170[AD], demonstrating the fact that England was regarded as only one of the provinces of the [Angevin] empire. But 'young Henry' died in Turenne on 11 June 1183[AD]. Enthusiastically, Henry II even sought permission and papal sanction from Urban III for the use of the title 'King' instead of 'Lord.' Urban II, naturally, demanded more money for the proposed change of title and sent three papal legates to Henry II bearing a crown of peacock's feathers set in gold for the inauguration ceremony....³⁸⁰⁷

Henry II's next surviving son, John, became the new Angevin emperor on 2 June, 1199[AD]....[He] was excommunicated by pope Innocent III but then, as now, money talked. On 15 May, 1213[AD], at the House of the Templars at Ewell, near Dover, John assigned the 'kingdom of England' and the 'lordship of Ireland' to the pope [in return for remission of his excommunication]. Innocent III then regranted the kingship of England and lordship of Ireland to John on condition that John acknowledge, for himself and his heirs and successors, Rome's temporal feudal authority. John and his heirs agreed to pay the bishop of Rome an annual tribute of 700 marks for England and 300 marks for Ireland.

In 1533[AD], Henry VIII began his break with the church of Rome and declared himself head of a separate church of England. The most important aspect of this separation was that Henry VIII was breaking with Rome not simply on religious matters but on the feudal level and that meant a loss of revenue to the papal coffers....

The King's Council in Ireland was asked to send some recommendations to John Alen, Master of the Rolls, as to how Ireland might be incorporated as an indistinguishable part of England. The recommendations were simple. It was pointed out that in reality England was in control only within the Pale, a small area around Dublin....that the temporal lords of Ireland had been long opposed to the rule of the kings of England....John Alen considered the matter for some time and wrote a letter³⁸⁰⁸ advising Henry VIII's Commissioners in Ireland that it would be better for Henry to be recognised as 'King of Ireland' and 'then induce the Irish Captains³⁸⁰⁹ 'as well as by their oaths and writings, to recognise the same which things shall be, in continuance, a great motive to bring them to due obedience....'

³⁸⁰⁶ in 1186AD

³⁸⁰⁷ despite what appears to have been the upgrading of the Irish authority to kingship mentioned, this appears to be either an error or a deliberate misrepresentation in Ellis's book.

³⁸⁰⁸ in 1537AD

³⁸⁰⁹ Gaelic kings and nobles.

In 1541[AD], Henry VIII ceased to use the title Dominus Hiberniæ³⁸¹⁰ and thus became the first English king to style himself Rex Hiberniæ.³⁸¹¹ Ireland's constitutional position now changed from being a papal fiefdom in which the kings of England, as lords of Ireland, had accepted the bishops of Rome as paramount lords and had ruled Ireland exercising 'but a governance under the obedience of the same.'

From the Irish viewpoint, it could be argued that Henry VIII, in ceasing to acknowledge the feudal dues of the bishop of Rome, had freed the Irish kings and princes from their feudal dues to Henry, for their ultimate authority was the bishop of Rome [sic!]. They therefore had no further obligation to acknowledge any English king's jurisdiction in Ireland by a claim to European feudal law. The point was certainly recognised at once by the papal administration of pope Paul III³⁸¹² who realised that Henry VIII of England was 'stealing' the papal fiefdoms not only of the 'Kingdom of England' but of the 'Lordship of Ireland.' Pope Paul III wrote to the king of Ulster, Conn Bacach O'Neill, in 1538[AD]....revok[ing] the grant made by Adrian IV's Bull Laudabiliter, confirmed by letters of Alexander III and Innocent III, and formerly releas[ing] all the Irish princes from the feudal duty of obedience to the English king as 'Lord of Ireland'....

The new policy of the bishop of Rome was to re-establish a dynasty in Ireland which would recognise him as feudal prince of the country....Pope Clement VIII³⁸¹³ later endorsed the struggle to maintain the papal fiefdom of Ireland against the authority of Protestant England....On 18 April 1600[AD], [he] issued a Bill of Indulgence to 'archbishops, bishops, prelates, chiefs, earls, barons, and people of Ireland.' Clement acknowledged that the Irish 'have long struggled to recover and preserve your liberty....to throw off the yolk of slavery imposed on you by the English....we grant to all of you....plenary pardon and remission of all sins, as usually granted to those setting out to the war against the Turks for the recovering of the Holy Land.'

However, Pope Paul's intercession with King Conn Bacach O'Neill proved fruitless because the Ulster king became one of the first to offer his submission to Henry VIII in 1542[AD], surrendering his Gaelic title and taking from Henry an English title as Earl of Tyrone. From 1541[AD], Ireland was to constitute a separate realm called the Kingdom of Ireland, but with the English king as head of state. This position remained until 1 January, 1801[AD], when the Kingdom of Ireland became part of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.'³⁸¹⁴

³⁸¹⁰ Lord of Ireland.

³⁸¹¹ King of Ireland by The Crown of Ireland Act, 1542AD; expunged from the Irish statute book by the Oireachtas of The Republic of Ireland through The Statute Law Revision (Pre-Union Irish Statutes) Act 1962AD, Section 1 & Schedule.

³⁸¹² 1534–50AD

³⁸¹³ 1592–1605AD

³⁸¹⁴ Ellis, Peter Berresford, *Erin's Blood Royal: The Gaelic Noble Dynasties of Ireland*, pp.22,23,25,26,30-33 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

Untangling

In order to untangle the various wild and competing claims to the land of Ireland, it is essential to start from the beginning of hereditary kingship in that island. At the beginning of the dynastic reign of the high kings of Ireland there was no Roman Catholic Church; not only in Ireland but, in fact, anywhere. It did not exist. The kingship of Ireland, vesting in the high kings' electoral regnal system³⁸¹⁵ and based on the principles of Brehon law, had legal right and title. Since right and title never passed to Rome, how could the Roman Catholic bishop of Rome, the pope, become vested with feudal rights? His religious system was not that of Ireland. Ireland had its own Celtic Church.³⁸¹⁶ Romanism was its competitor, rival, and, ultimately, its extirpator. The Roman system was feudal, and, as a result, Rome claimed Ireland as a fiefdom. The Brehon system of law and the high kingship of Ireland, however, had existed long before Romanism ever did, and was antipathetic to the feudal Roman system.

Since Rome never had valid title, its feudal claims must have been arrogated. This is unsurprising, since Rome and its ways can be identified in Scripture: *'Come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters; With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication. So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration. And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman. And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth. And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.'*³⁸¹⁷

The *'whore sitting upon many waters,'*³⁸¹⁸ is described as sitting on or arrogating or assuming regality over *'peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.'*³⁸¹⁹ The whore *'reigneth over the kings of the earth.'*³⁸²⁰ This is assumed royalty, arrogated authority, and has to be compared with God's rule, expressed by John in Revelation³⁸²¹ as *'reigneth.'* God's is by divine right; it is not hereditary. The whore's is by presumption and arrogation; a false reign utterly without foundation.

³⁸¹⁵ as opposed to that of primogeniture.

³⁸¹⁶ it is unlikely that the Celtic form had much held even remotely correctly, as it seems, in far too many ways, to have been what was essentially a parallel organization to the Roman variety.

³⁸¹⁷ Rev 17:1b-3,5-7b,9,15,18

³⁸¹⁸ Rev 17:1

³⁸¹⁹ Rev 17:15

³⁸²⁰ Rev 17:18, where the Greek translated *'reigneth,'* *exousa basileian*, means, literally, *'holding royalty.'*

³⁸²¹ Rev 19:6; Greek: *ebasileuse*.

A woman in eschatology signifies a church, a religion, or a religious movement. The pure woman in chapter twelve of Revelation³⁸²² is the true church, the Judæo-Christian church. The '*whore*,' by comparison, is degenerate: a strumpet, an harlot. When Christ returns, He will marry His true bride, the true and pure elect; in other words, His church. He could not marry a drunken whore.

The whore thinks herself safe, '*for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow*,'³⁸²³ but her end follows swiftly: '*Therefore shall he plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her. And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning*.'³⁸²⁴ The whore will be no more.

In fact, even the past and, indeed, the current claims of the whore fall before the word of Scripture. The papacy has arrogated and utterly perverted Christ's authority. He said '*My kingdom is not of this world*,'³⁸²⁵ but Rome, Babylon the Great, the whore, claims the opposite. She says: "My kingdom is this world." And the king of this world, this age, is Satan. The whore's claimed kingdom is Satan's, not God's!

So the papal claim to Ireland is seen for what it is, presumptuously arrogated before God. But who, then, has right and title to the throne of Ireland?

Valid claim

The high-king succession in Ireland, sustained and in accordance with the provisions of Brehon law, maintained in Ireland until the geographically-split kingdom of Dalriada, based in the north of Ireland, but later centred on its northernmost realm, Argyll, in the south-west of what is now called Scotland.

Despite initial setbacks, the Scots, as they were known, took advantage of the attrition of the Picts by the Romans, Anglo-Saxons, Vikings and, to a certain extent, the Scots themselves. Through time, they overran the whole of that part of Scotland roughly north of a line between the rivers Clyde and Forth. Over time, this territory expanded southward to encompass what is now southern Scotland.

The throne of the high king of Ireland, therefore, thus firmly established in the north of Britain, was to make a telling attempt at a comeback to Ireland. An approach was made by the Irish nobility to King Robert the Bruce of Scotland. Since he sat on the Scots throne, which in turn was derived from that of Ireland, Bruce had sole hereditary rights to the high-kingship of Ireland, but there was a problem: he was afflicted by leprosy.³⁸²⁶ Under Brehon law, a leper could not ascend the high throne. Robert was debarred, but his younger brother was

³⁸²² Rev 12:1-17

³⁸²³ Rev 18:7b

³⁸²⁴ Rev 18:8,9

³⁸²⁵ John 18:36a

³⁸²⁶ or some similar bacterial skin affliction.

not similarly afflicted. And so the younger brother of Robert the Bruce, Edward, at the specific request of the Irish nobility, was crowned in Ireland as high king of Ireland,³⁸²⁷ the idea being that the Scots would assist the Irish to rid themselves of the English presence. It came to naught, however, with the conjoined forces of Ireland and Scotland losing in battle against the English in the following year.³⁸²⁸ The high king was killed, together with a substantial proportion of the Irish nobility. While the whole affair ended in disaster, the throne was maintained, of course, in Scotland, with the kingship.

That same throne would eventually overturn once more, with James VI of Scotland becoming James I of England.³⁸²⁹ The throne would end in Westminster.

Present-day morass / religious schizophrenia

Regrettably, and despite the traumatic history of the royal lineage, the current incumbent of the throne of David, and, in particular, family members and close connections, comprising what is known to the world as the house of Windsor, have reduced the dignity and standing of the crown with a base mix of soap opera, low farce, and pantomime, while lacking the discernment, wit, and understanding to fully appreciate the singular significance and importance of the British crown.³⁸³⁰

An apparently overwhelming desire for the approbation of the people and the concurrence of the media, allied to the position of the monarch as head of the glaringly apostate and worldly-liberal church of England—one of the harlots of Revelation—have conspired with many like traits to produce a scandalum magnatum, as it were. Annus horribilis upon annus horribilis, seemingly without end, to borrow a royal phrase.

What has become known as the 'cult' of Princess Diana was highly symptomatic of the right royal malaise which by then had permeated almost every social stratum in the country. During her brief flickering on the world scene, Diana exhibited and epitomised the base aspirations of the end-time, value-free, hedonistic society. She was even described as having been intensely religious.³⁸³¹ This was not the religious form which many today see as merely sterile and irrelevant, but another reflection of our age—worship and belief as one pleases: 'That which you consider to be your ultimate concern, that worship.' The grand plea being: 'Do not be concerned about morality, but be inclusive. In short, be 'New Age.'" This shallow thinking was exemplified by Diana's frequent dalliance with clairvoyants, mystics, and the occult, something all too often associated with the British aristocracy over the centuries.

³⁸²⁷ in 1315AD

³⁸²⁸ in 1316AD

³⁸²⁹ union of the crowns on 24 March, 1603AD; Act of Union, of the two countries, in 1707AD; Ireland was added to the Union in 1801AD.

³⁸³⁰ 'crown' is a reference to the throne, and not to 'The Crown,' viz., The City of London Corporation (Crown Temple).

³⁸³¹ 'Just like Jesus,' to quote the comprehensively deluded Scottish Roman Catholic leader of the time, Cardinal Winning (deceased).

The death of that tragic princess and the attendant responses by people from all over the world in unseemly extravagant grief, highlighted a major change sweeping the planet: the spirit of our age. It ranges from Pope John Paul II's devotion to and advocacy of the Virgin Mary,³⁸³² through to the prevailing belief that each and every one of us, without external interference or influence, can make up his or her own moral framework. This ends with the concept that all forms of faith are equally valid and equally relevant.

The latter is something that has been taken on board in a wholesale manner by H.R.H. Prince Charles who seems to think that 'All paths lead to God.' If this be so, then Jesus Christ was misguided and died in vain, for other ways to salvation were and are available. But it must be obvious that the 'children of this wicked world' cannot be the sons of God. The adherents of pagan religions, worshippers of Satan, cannot be, and deluded 'notables' espousing such beliefs are placing themselves ex adverso God and His children. This is a measure of how far the British Royal Family has veered from the faith once delivered. Ryle puts the core assumption of this profoundly pagan belief thus: 'Everyone who believes anything has faith! Everyone who thinks anything has the Spirit! Everyone is right! No one is wrong!'³⁸³³

The wanting in such foolhardy assumption is all too patent, except, of course, to the simple, the gullible, and the downright foolish: '*The simple believeth every word: but the prudent man looketh well to his going. A wise man feareth, and departeth from evil: but the fool rageth, and is confident.*'³⁸³⁴ The modern view, in short, is that one can believe whatever one wishes, subject to it being held to be 'politically correct', or 'emotionally correct,' in not criticising any other belief, irrespective of however aberrant, weird, vile, or downright dangerous it may be. An unquestioning attitude to profoundly important matters such as religious belief, ethics, behavioural standards, and the like can only lead to a frightening vacuum.

The corrosive effect of 'self-assembly religion' is seen time and time again in high places of power and influence. Many younger members of the British royal family, like the same tragic princess, have long ceased to believe whatever their parents had adhered to and taught them, such as it was, and have proceeded to show a bewildering credulity to almost any idiot proposition that their parents would have scorned to derision. Therein lies the world of the occult, reincarnation, astrology, extra-terrestrials, seers, clairvoyants, mystics, fabulists, witches, wicca, weird superstition, and all manner of mumbo-jumbo, including the latest fad—neo-orthodoxy—where one is urged to 'have faith in one's faith,' despite its patent lack of substance.³⁸³⁵ Major political leaders in

³⁸³² the pope's expectation, stated by the virgin Mary in apparition, of being leader of the world in a new world order, perished with him. It was utterly inevitable that it did so, for malign spirits masquerading as over-egged biblical characters cannot override or subvert the will and purposes of God; Prov 28:10, '*He who leads the upright along an evil path will fall into his own trap, but the blameless will receive a good inheritance.*' Notwithstanding, there were 1,400 dignitaries and 250,000 mourners in St. Peter's Square for his funeral, such is the power inherent in the cult of personality, the force of charisma. Luke 6:26, '*Woe unto you when all men speak well of you, for so did your fathers to the false prophets.*'

³⁸³³ Ryle, J. C.

³⁸³⁴ Prov 14:15,16

³⁸³⁵ Hutton, R. H., *Theological Essays*, p.136 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

the West even have their own personal astrologers on around-the-clock call, and who have been able to influence, on occasion, the timing and course of international events under the guise of a more or less propitious reading of some astrological chart or other. This is pure bunkum! Complex political economies cannot be guided and nurtured by reference to such mind-numbing drivel.

Sadly, such behaviour has proven to be symptomatic of advanced moral decay in societies down through the ages, where leaders and those in prominent social / religious positions have sought recourse to the occult for guidance, only to be brought face-to-face with fear, calamity, and, ultimately, their own destruction and that of their people.

Self-delusion

To North America and the rest in Jacob there is this warning from God: *'Beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God, in not keeping his commandments, and his judgments, and his statutes, which I command thee this day.....And thou say in thine heart, My power and the might of mine hand hath gotten me this wealth.'*³⁸³⁶ The result of wilfully ignoring this is God's warning, *'And if you will not yet for all this hearken unto me, then I will punish you seven times more for your sins. And I will break the pride of your power; and I will make your heaven as iron, and your earth as brass: And your strength shall be spent in vain: for your land shall not yield her increase, neither shall the trees of the land yield their fruits.'*³⁸³⁷ The current leading world power, the United States of America, which takes so much pride in its wealth, power, and influence, will soon see its economic might implode, and its power ebb away: the result of sin. Once the powers of the 'Restrainer' are restricted³⁸³⁸ by God, the nations of Jacob will be exposed to the full vent of the anger and venom of Satan and his workers. With others, America-the-weak will go into slavery.

Sadly, given the depth of this worldwide malaise and delusion, few will realise why these events are happening. Even though in the minds of the deluded perception is taken for reality, such will be the dire and horrendous nature of the then perceived reality that reality will be shut out from their minds: reality denied. To most people, what matters most in 'making sense' of such things is the underlying pattern of reality that they believe exists. Anything failing to fit comfortably in such a world-view or paradigm is either misinterpreted or simply ignored. An existing paradigm or world-view is seldom dispelled by incontrovertible evidence alone. This

³⁸³⁶ 'The faith in which people recast their whole lives....It is one thing to accept a particular explanation, even of a merely unusual occurrence, as the easiest, and quite another thing to believe it in the sense of that unshakable and heartfelt adhesion which we give to the foundation of our whole moral, [ethical, and religious] aims.'

³⁸³⁶ Deut 8:11,17

³⁸³⁷ Lev 26:18-20 (sublinear emphasis added)

³⁸³⁸ q.v. inf.

is often termed 'disconfirmation,' even in the most extreme circumstances. 'Such systems of belief possess a resilience which makes them virtually immune to external argument.'³⁸³⁹

People will not know what to think, or where to turn, or what to do: '*strong delusion*' indeed. That sad state will pertain until the returning, all-conquering Messiah—to His rightful throne, the throne of David—makes His final, dramatic appearance, to the consummate chagrin of the foolish and deluded who are then still alive. Then reality will impact, massively. Paul explains the difference in outcome: '*For they that are of the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are of the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.*'³⁸⁴⁰

³⁸³⁹ Thomas, Keith; it is a wearisome thing, even to God Himself, to hear people insist upon their own justification in their corrupt and wicked practices, and to plead their self-serving 'principles' in vindication of them: cf. Isa 7:13; Mal 2:17.

³⁸⁴⁰ Rom 7:5,6

Chapter 52

7,000-year Chronology

The Bible chronology of the six thousand years³⁸⁴¹ between the first Adam³⁸⁴² and the Second Coming of Jesus Christ, the second Adam,³⁸⁴³ is a recurring theme in biblical hermeneutics. Central to this is the sub-division into three, distinct, two thousand-year periods, followed by the Millennium of rest.

To substantiate this chronology, the Bible record of the generations from Adam must be analysed in detail. At first glance, the prognosis is not encouraging, for many expositors hold that the genealogies are not sequential and unbroken, and almost all hold that the biblical record involving numbers, as in the years of each generation, has been hopelessly corrupted, way beyond redemption, and that any doctrine based thereon must inevitably prove decidedly assailable and frangible. The reason for the widespread distrust of biblical numbers is that, in Hebrew, numbers are represented by letters of the alphabet. As some of them are very akin, it is very easy to mistakenly copy an incorrect letter, and, by so doing, compromise the number. This does not apply to text to the same extent as the sense of the passage aids in avoiding copyists' mistakes. That said, the rigour involved in counting letters used by the Massorites should have kept the text sensibly inviolate, or nearly so.

Given this, the rather complex analysis was embarked upon with an open mind. The four periods were found to correspond to the following events:

³⁸⁴¹ this must be based on the solar year and not the 360-day prophetic year, q.v. sup., since 2,000 years would otherwise be extended by just over 29 years, 6,000 by almost 88 years, and 6,070 by almost 89 years, rendering the 'end-time' events long past, which obviously they are not.

³⁸⁴² from his fall and expulsion with Eve from the garden of Eden, Gen 2:17, for then death passed to mankind.

³⁸⁴³ during which intervening period the earth is the dominion of man under the sway of Satan, suffering accordingly.

- Period #1: 2,000 years from the fall and expulsion from Eden to the covenant with Abram (later Abraham);
- Period #2: 2,000 years from the covenant to the start of Jesus' ministry;
- Period #3: 2,000 years from Jesus' ministry to His Second Coming; and,
- Period #4: 1,000 year millennial reign thereafter, totalling 7,000 years.

This gives seven millennia of measured time in God's eternity. Before this there was timeless infinity, and afterwards there will be timeless infinity. The detail supports the belief that there are distinct and identifiable epochs existing from the time of re-creation of the earth / the creation and fall of man until the end of the Millennium of rest. The biblical correlation with the four divisions of measured time is as follows. It should be noted that the four hundred and fifty years mentioned in Acts is described as *'about the space of four hundred and fifty years, until Samuel the prophet.'*³⁸⁴⁴ Despite this, the account below gives the fall of years exactly in line with the millennia involved:

Period #1	Years
Adam and subsequent generations to birth of Noah ~ Gen 5:1-32: (Adam-Seth 130; Seth-Enos 105; Enos-Cainan 90; Cainan-Mahalaleel 70; Mahalaleel-Jared 65; Jared-Enoch 162; Enoch-Methuselah 65; Methuselah-Lamech 187; Lamech-Noah 182).	1,056
Less the period in garden of Eden prior to expulsion (this time not being under the sway of aberrant and sinful mankind), computed on the basis of Adam to Seth (130 years) less 40 years in sin (giving 90 in Eden)—on a similar basis to the 40 years in the wilderness during which the children of Israel were denied access to the Promised Land. 40 years covers from the expulsion from the garden of Eden, through Cain and Abel—with Abel being murdered and hence not providing lineage to Christ—to the birth of Seth, who did provide the lineal connection between Adam and Christ:	-90
Birth of Noah to the flood ~ Gen 8:13-14:	600
Back to birth of Shem ~ Gen 5:32:	-100
Shem to Abram ~ Gen 11:10-26: (Shem-Arphaxad 100; Arphaxad-Salah 35 ~ Luke 3:36a correctly translated reads, <i>'Which [Salah] was the son of Cainan or Arphaxad,'</i> i.e., Arphaxad was also known as Cainan; Salah-Eber 30; Eber-Peleg 34; Peleg-Reu 30; Reu-Serug 32; Serug-Nahor 30; Nahor-Terah 29; *Terah-Abram 70).	390
*This last must be increased by 60 years (130 less 70) ~ according to Gen 12:4 Abram was 75 years old when he departed from Haran; and according to Gen 11:32 Terah died when he was 205, which means that Abram was born when his father was 130. Thus when Gen 11:26 says that Terah lived 70 years and begat Abram, amongst others, it must mean that Abram was not the firstborn, that one of the others was, and that Abram was born later, with the first being born when Terah was 70. Abram's listing first in Gen 11:26 would therefore reflect his pre-eminence and his place in the messianic line: Abram meaning 'father of elevation,' and his later name, Abraham, meaning 'father	

³⁸⁴⁴ Acts 13:20

of a great number':	60
Life of Abram to time covenant confirmed ~ Gen 17:1-10:	99
Back to covenant before birth of Ishmael ~ Gen 15:9–16:16:	-15
TOTAL Period #1:	2,000

Period #2	Years
Confirmed covenant to date of Exodus / Law ~ Ex 12:40; Gal 3:8,17:	430
Add back to covenant just before birth of Isaac (above) ~ Gen 21:5:	15
Exodus to Promised Land division ~ Num 10:11-13:25 + Josh 14:	46
Division to end of Samuel's judgeship ~ Acts 13:20 ('about') + Josh 14:	450
Reigns of Saul to 3 rd year Jehoiakim ~ I Kings 12:43 to II Kings 25:30; Jer 25:11,12; Dan 1:1: (Saul-40; David-40; ³⁸⁴⁵ Solomon-40; Rehoboam-17; Abijam-3; Asa-41; Jehoshaphat-25; Jehoram-8; Ahaziah-1; Athaliah-6; Jehoash-40; Amaziah-29; Azariah-52; Jotham-16; Ahaz-16; Hezekiah-29; Manasseh-55; Amon-2; Josiah-31; Jehoahaz-1¼; Jehoiakim-3 to captivity).	494
70 years captivity (God not counting a reprise of backlog of sabbaths of the land) ~ Eccl 1:15b, 'that which is wanting cannot be numbered':	0
Cyrus' 1 st year (capture of Babylon & decree freeing Jews to return) to Artaxerxes I's command to Ezra to rebuild in his 7 th regnal year, and not in his 20 th year to Nehemiah ³⁸⁴⁶ (Persian year running spring-to-spring) ~ Neh 2:6-8; Dan 9:25; Ezra 4:6-27 & 6:1-3 (Ezra 4:6-27 belongs, chronologically, after Ezra 7:1-28):	82
Daniel's 69 weeks—483 years—to Messiah ~ Dan 9:25,26:	483
TOTAL Period #2:	2,000

Period #3	Years
Start of Jesus' ministry and announcement of Jubilee ~ Luke 4:16-21:	27AD
Projected year of return of Messiah:	2027
Time lapse between these two events:	2,000
TOTAL Period #3:	2,000

³⁸⁴⁵ the 40 years of the reign of King David is a rounding, and is actually 40½ years. Such rounding is confirmed in the Bible: II Sam 5:4-5, 'David was thirty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty years. In Hebron he ruled over Judah seven years and six months: in Jerusalem he reigned thirty and three years over all Israel and Judah.'

³⁸⁴⁶ q.v. Ptolomy's *Astronomical Canon*

Period #4	Years
Millennial reign of Messiah:	1,000
TOTAL Period #4:	1,000

And following upon this, the reign with God the Father, and God the Son—**FOREVER**.

Addendum

Many expositors have found problematical the reconciliation of, *'Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, who dwelt in Egypt, was four hundred and thirty years,'*³⁸⁴⁷ with, *'And he [God] said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years,'*³⁸⁴⁸ pointing out that a difference of a mere thirty years is incapable of accommodating all events intervening surrounding Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph. This has led to suggestions that the term *'four hundred years'* is merely a rounding, or an approximation, or a biblical discrepancy, or simply a translation of garbled or poorly-copied Hebrew, although it should be noted that many expositors correctly regard the verse in Exodus,³⁸⁴⁹ in the Masoretic text, as missing a final phrase: *'from the confirmation of the covenant with Abraham.'* This would then accord with the words of Paul in Galatians, below.

The answer is a deal more complex, however. *'And God spake on this wise, That his [Abram's] seed should sojourn in a strange land; and that they should bring them into bondage, and entreat them evil four hundred years,'*³⁸⁵⁰ provides confirmation and some more information when taken in tandem with, *'And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect.'*³⁸⁵¹

The '7,000-year Chronology' can be displayed in BC / AD format, and this yields the following, with four hundred years before the Exodus alighting on 1999BC. It was at this time, in Canaan, that the oppression of the seed of Abraham commenced, with further oppression in Egypt for part of their two hundred and fifty-four year sojourn. During all that time they were *'a stranger in a land that is not theirs'*—either in Canaan or in Egypt. The *'seed'* was alive in 1999BC. Isaac had been born forty-four years earlier, and had married Rebecca four years earlier. The children of Israel did not inherit the Promised Land, however, until the division of the land in 1553BC:

³⁸⁴⁷ Ex 12:40

³⁸⁴⁸ Gen 15:13

³⁸⁴⁹ Ex 12:40

³⁸⁵⁰ Acts 7:6 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

³⁸⁵¹ Gal 3:17

Site commencement of Solomon's Temple: (I Kings 6:1 ~ in the 480 th year after the Exodus)	1120BC
Solomon's Temple completed: (I Kings 6:38 ~ 7 years in building)	1113BC
The Exodus, the giving of the codified Law at Sinai, and the name of the Father revealed to Moses, cf. Ex 33:19; 34:6, by way of progressive revelation: (2000 years before Christ's ministry start +70 years 'not counted' by God, -15 years to the covenant, -26 to 27AD, -430 years to Exodus).	1599BC
Jericho's tumbling walls: (40 years after ~ wilderness years + very short period in Promised Land)	1559BC
Confirmation of Abraham's covenant: (15 years after date of covenant).	2029BC
Abraham's covenant: (Exodus / Law 1599BC + 430 years (Gal 3:17) + 15 years from above).	2044BC
Abram born: (Gen 21:5 ~ 100 years before Isaac's birth)	2143BC
Ishmael born: (Gen 17:24-26; 16:16—Ishmael born when Abram was 86: i.e., 86 years after 2143BC).	2057BC
Isaac born: (Gen 17:19-21; 21:3).	2043BC
Isaac weds Rebecca: (Gen 25:20 ~ Isaac forty years old).	2003BC
Jacob and Esau born: (Gen 25:26 ~ Isaac sixty years old).	1983BC
Jacob's age entering Egypt yields the year of his entry & that of Joseph: (Gen 47:9, Jacob 130 y.o.; Joseph, Gen 37:2;41:46;45:6 ((30-17) +7+2)).	1853BC & 1875BC
This gives the entire sojourn of the children of Israel in Egypt at: (1853 until 1599BC).	254 years
Birth of Seth: (Gen 5:1-32).	4004BC
Birth of Enoch: (Gen 5:1-32).	3512BC
Birth of Methuselah: (Gen 5:1-32).	3447BC

Birth of Noah: (Gen 5:1-32; 8:13,14).	3078BC
Birth of Shem: (Gen 5:32; 11:10,11. In Gen 11:10, Shem was 100 years old when he begat Arphaxad, two years after the Flood. Similarly to the report of Abram's birth, Shem is noted as the first of three sons of Noah in Gen 5:32, born when he was 500 years old, but from the overall context these were not triplets, and Shem was not the firstborn. Shem is listed first to reflect his pre-eminence over his brothers Ham and Japheth).	2575BC
Birth of Arphaxad: (Gen 11:10, when Shem aged 100)	2475BC
Birth of Salah: (Gen 11:12, when Arphaxad aged 35)	2440BC
Birth of Eber: (Gen 11:14, when Salah aged 30)	2410BC
Birth of Peleg: (Gen 11:16, when Eber aged 34)	2376BC
Confusion at Tower of Babel: ³⁸⁵² (Gen 10:25, ' <i>for in his days</i> [referring back to Eber] <i>was the earth divided</i> ,' with his son's name Peleg meaning ' <i>divided</i> ,' being named for the event. That naming would have taken place on his son's birth, thus fixing the date of the confusion of tongues at Babel, q.v. Gen 11:1-9)	2376BC
Birth of Reu: (Gen 11:18, when Peleg aged 30)	2346BC
Birth of Serug: (Gen 11:20, when Reu aged 32)	2314BC
Birth of Nahor: (Gen 11:22, when Serug aged 30)	2284BC
Birth of Terah: (Gen 11:24, when Nahor aged 29)	2255BC
The Flood: (Noah aged 600 at start and 601 on completion ~ Gen 7:11; 8:13,14).	2478-7BC
Date of God's re-creation: ³⁸⁵³	4134BC
Date of expulsion from garden of Eden:	4044BC

³⁸⁵² according to Jewish tradition, this happened in 1764BCE.

³⁸⁵³ Ussher, James, *Annals of the World*; archbishop of Armagh, primate of All-Ireland in the Church of Ireland, and vice-chancellor of Trinity College in Dublin, began with the death of Nebuchadnezzar as a reliable date, and worked back through the genealogies of the Old Testament to arrive at the supposed date of creation, 4004BC.

A reconciliation of this chronology with the Jubilees gives the following:

1. Time before the Jubilee 'clock started to tick': (number of years before expulsion from the garden of Eden).	90
2. First cycle of 40 Jubilees:	2,000
3. Second cycle of 40 Jubilees, including Sabbaticals missed (70):	2,070
4. Third cycle of 40 Jubilees (church dispensation):	2,000
5. Millennial cycle of 20 Jubilees:	<u>1,000</u>
TOTAL (in years):	7,160

The Talmud gives off the following Jewish chronology:

year #	event
1	Adam
1057	Noah
1949	Abraham
2049	Isaac
2239	Entrance into Egypt
2449	Exodus
2929	Dedication of 1st Temple
3339	Destruction of same
3409	Return to Holy Land after Babylonian captivity
3829	Destruction of Second Temple

This gives the Second Temple date of destruction as falling in 69AD, the dedication of the First Temple in 832BC, and the Exodus in 1312BC. These dates should be compared with the dates usually given for these events of 70AD, and 961AD, and 1447BC—based on Thiele's calculations of the dates of the kings of Israel and Judah.³⁸⁵⁴ These, in turn, should be compared with the '7,000-year Chronology' which gives 70AD, 1113BC, and 1599BC. The Jewish year annotation system (5760 for 2000AD) is widely held in quasi-Christian circles³⁸⁵⁵ to be in error by just over 200 years.³⁸⁵⁶ By comparing it with the '7,000-year Chronology,' the exact extent of the discrepancy can be identified:

³⁸⁵⁴ the years from Adam to the destruction of the 2nd Temple, according to Josephus, totalled 4,714. This compares to 4,203 years in the '7,000-year Chronology.'

³⁸⁵⁵ and many in Judaism too.

³⁸⁵⁶ i.e., underestimating the actual total by 200+ years.

End of 4,000 years (and start of Christ's ministry):	27AD
Jewish year for 27AD:	3787
Difference in years (4000 – 3787):	213
Add Sabbaths of rest of land (not counted in 7,000):	70
Add years in the garden of Eden (not counted in 7,000):	90
Cumulative error in years:	373

Chapter 53

Sacred Calendar 2014–2028³⁸⁵⁷

³⁸⁵⁷ Notes: Vernal equinox data are expressed in Jerusalem time (i.e., Universal Time, U.T., + 2 hours) without adjustment for daylight saving time (for which there is no need). From 2013, the state of Israel will use the European Union's adjustment date in late October to end their daylight saving time.
Rosh hashanah new moons also shown underlined. Passover is celebrated at dusk on the previous evening, when using the Julian / Gregorian calendar dates, q.v. inf.

Sunset, for the determination of the start of the weekly Sabbath, the new moon, or an annual holy day (with the exception of Passover observance) is the actual point of sunset, just as the sun finally sets. It is not sometime within Early Evening Civil Twilight (E.E.C.T.) leading to Civil Dusk with the centre of the sun 6° below the horizon, nor is it within early Evening Nautical Twilight (E.E.N.T.) leading to Nautical Dusk with the centre of the sun 12° below the horizon, and nor is it within Astronomical Twilight (A.T.) leading to Astronomical Dusk with the centre of the sun 18° below the horizon. Passover, at dusk, is observed at the onset of Early Evening Nautical Twilight (E.E.N.T.), with the centre of the sun below the horizon by 6°, or a trifle more.

In calendar terms, things change slowly, but over time, the vernal and autumn equinoxes occur earlier in the year.

Wikipedia (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'The precession of Earth's axis of rotation with respect to inertial space is....called the precession of the equinoxes. Like a wobbling top, the direction of the Earth's axis is changing; while today, the North Pole points roughly to Polaris, over time it will change. Because of this wobble, the position of the earth in its orbit around the sun at the moment of the equinoxes and solstices will also change. The term precession typically refers only to the largest periodic motion. Other changes of Earth's axis are nutation and polar motion; their magnitude is very much smaller. Currently, this annual motion is about 50.3 seconds of arc per year or 1 degree every 71.6 years. The process is slow, but cumulative. A complete precession cycle covers a period of approximately 25,765 years, the so called Platonic year, during which time the equinox regresses....360° through all twelve constellations of the zodiac [taking 2,147 years to traverse each one].'

Encyclopædia Britannica:

'Also moving with this wobble is the projection onto the sky of Earth's Equator. This projection, a great circle, is called the celestial equator. The celestial equator intersects another useful great circle, the ecliptic. As Earth orbits the Sun, the constantly changing direction from which the Sun is viewed causes it to trace out the ecliptic. The celestial equator is inclined at a 23.44° angle to the ecliptic (the so-called obliquity of the ecliptic). The celestial equator and the ecliptic intersect at two points called the equinoxes (vernal and autumnal). During the course of the year, as Earth orbits the Sun, the latter is seen crossing the Equator twice, in March moving from the Southern Hemisphere into the Northern Hemisphere and in September moving in the opposite direction. The equinoxes drift westward along the ecliptic at the rate of 50.3 arcseconds annually as the celestial equator moves with Earth's precession.'

2014	<u>New Moons:</u> Jan 01, 31; Mar 01, <u>31</u> ; Apr 29; May 29; June 27; July 27; Aug 25; Sept 24; Oct 24; Nov 22; Dec 22 (vernal equinox: Mar 20, 18:57; Rosh hashanah Mar 31).
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Passover:	April 13	Pentecost:	June 08	Atonement:	Oct 03
U/bread:	April 14-20	Trumpets:	Sept 24	Tabernacles:	Oct 08-14
				LGD:	Oct 15

2015	<u>New Moons:</u> Jan 20; Feb 19; Mar 20; <u>Apr 19</u> ; May 18; June 16; July 16; Aug 14; Sept 13; Oct 13; Nov 12; Dec 11 (vernal equinox: Mar 21, 00:45; Rosh hashanah Apr 19).
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Passover:	May 02	Pentecost:	June 21	Atonement:	Oct 22
U/bread:	May 03-09	Trumpets:	Oct 13	Tabernacles:	Oct 27-Nov 02
				LGD:	Nov 03

2016	<u>New Moons:</u> Jan 10; Feb 08; Mar 09; <u>Apr 07</u> ; May 07; June 05; July 04; Aug 03; Sept 01; Oct 01, 31; Nov 29; Dec 29 (vernal equinox: Mar 20, 06:30; Rosh hashanah Apr 07).
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Passover:	April 20	Pentecost:	June 12	Atonement:	Oct 10
U/bread:	April 21-27	Trumpets:	Oct 01	Tabernacles:	Oct 15-21
				LGD:	Oct 22

2017	<u>New Moons:</u> Jan 28; Feb 26; <u>Mar 28</u> ; Apr 26; May 26; June 24; July 23; Aug 22; Sept 20; Oct 20; Nov 18; Dec 18 (vernal equinox: Mar 20, 12:28; Rosh hashanah Mar 28).
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Passover:	April 10	Pentecost:	June 04	Atonement:	Sept 29
U/bread:	April 11-17	Trumpets:	Sept 20	Tabernacles:	Oct 04-10
				LGD:	Oct 11

2018	<u>New Moons:</u> Jan 17; Feb 16; Mar 17; <u>Apr 16</u> ; May 15; June 14; July 13; Aug 11; Sept 10; Oct 09; Nov 08; Dec 07 (vernal equinox: Mar 20, 18:15; Rosh hashanah Apr 16).
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Passover:	April 29	Pentecost:	June 24	Atonement:	Oct 18
U/bread:	April 30-May 06	Trumpets:	Oct 09	Tabernacles:	Oct 23-29
				LGD:	Oct 30

2019	<u>New Moons:</u> Jan 06; Feb 04; Mar 07; <u>Apr 05</u> ; May 05; June 03; July 03; Aug 01, 30; Sept 29; Oct 28; Nov 27; Dec 26 (vernal equinox: Mar 20, 23:58; Rosh hashanah Apr 05).
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Passover:	April 18	Pentecost:	June 09	Atonement:	Oct 08
U/bread:	April 19-25	Trumpets:	Sept 29	Tabernacles:	Oct 13-19
				LGD:	Oct 20

2020	<u>New Moons</u> : Jan 25; Feb 23; <u>Mar 24</u> ; Apr 23; May 23; June 21; July 21; Aug 19; Sept 17; Oct 17; Nov 15; Dec 15 (vernal equinox: Mar 20, 05:49; Rosh hashanah Mar 24).
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Passover:	April 06	Pentecost:	May 31	Atonement:	Sept 26
U/bread:	April 07-13	Trumpets:	Sept 17	Tabernacles:	Oct 01-07
				LGD:	Oct 08

2021	<u>New Moons</u> : Jan 13; Feb 12; Mar 13; <u>Apr 12</u> ; May 12; June 10; July 10; Aug 08; Sept 07; Oct 06; Nov 05; Dec 04 (vernal equinox: Mar 20, 11:37; Rosh hashanah Apr 12).
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Passover:	April 25	Pentecost:	June 20	Atonement:	Oct 15
U/bread:	April 26-May 02	Trumpets:	Oct 06	Tabernacles:	Oct 20-26
				LGD:	Oct 27

2022	<u>New Moons</u> : Jan 03; Feb 01; Mar 03; <u>Apr 01</u> ; May 01, 30; June 29; July 29; Aug 27; Sept 26; Oct 25; Nov 24; Dec 23 (vernal equinox: Mar 20, 17:33; Rosh hashanah Apr 01).
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Passover:	April 14	Pentecost:	June 05	Atonement:	Oct 05
U/bread:	April 15-21	Trumpets:	Sept 26	Tabernacles:	Oct 10-16
				LGD:	Oct 17

2023	<u>New Moons</u> : Jan 22; Feb 20; <u>Mar 22</u> ; Apr 20; May 19; June 18; July 18; Aug 16; Sept 15; Oct 15; Nov 13; Dec 13 (vernal equinox: Mar 20, 23:24; Rosh hashanah Mar 22).
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Passover:	April 04	Pentecost:	May 28	Atonement:	Sept 24
U/bread:	April 05-11	Trumpets:	Sept 15	Tabernacles:	Sept 29-Oct 05
				LGD:	Oct 06

2024	<u>New Moons</u> : Jan 11; Feb 10; Mar 10; <u>Apr 09</u> ; May 08; June 06; July 06; Aug 04; Sept 03; Oct 03; Nov 01; Dec 01, 31 (vernal equinox: Mar 20, 05:06; Rosh hashanah Apr 09).
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Passover:	April 22	Pentecost:	June 16	Atonement:	Oct 12
U/bread:	April 23-29	Trumpets:	Oct 03	Tabernacles:	Oct 17-23
				LGD:	Oct 24

2025	<u>New Moons</u> : Jan 29; Feb 28; <u>Mar 29</u> ; Apr 28; May 27; June 25; July 25; Aug 23; Sept 22; Oct 21; Nov 20; Dec 20 (vernal equinox: Mar 20, 11:01; Rosh hashanah Mar 29).
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Passover:	April 11	Pentecost:	June 01	Atonement:	Oct 01
U/bread:	Apr 12-18	Trumpets:	Sept 22	Tabernacles:	Oct 06-12
				LGD:	Oct 13

2026	<u>New Moons</u> : Jan 19; Feb 17; Mar 19; <u>Apr 17</u> ; May 17; June 15; July 14; Aug 13; Sept 11; Oct 11; Nov 09; Dec 09 (vernal equinox: Mar 20, 16:45; Rosh hashanah Apr 17).
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Passover:	April 30	Pentecost:	June 21	Atonement:	Oct 20
U/bread:	May 01-07	Trumpets:	Oct 11	Tabernacles:	Oct 25-31
				LGD:	Nov 01

2027	<u>New Moons</u> : Jan 07; Feb 07; Mar 08; <u>Apr 07</u> ; May 06; June 05; July 04; Aug 02; Sept 1, 30; Oct 29; Nov 28; Dec 28 (vernal equinox: Mar 20, 22:24; Rosh hashanah Apr 07).
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Passover:	April 20	Pentecost:	June 13	Atonement:	Oct 09
U/bread:	April 21-27	Trumpets:	Sept 30	Tabernacles:	Oct 14-20
				LGD:	Oct 21

2028	<u>New Moons</u> : Jan 27; Feb 25; <u>Mar 26</u> ; Apr 25; May 24; June 23; July 22; Aug 20; Sept 19; Oct 18; Nov 16; Dec 16 (vernal equinox: Mar 20, 04:16; Rosh hashanah Mar 26).
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Passover:	April 08	Pentecost:	May 28	Atonement:	Sept 28
U/bread:	April 09-15	Trumpets:	Sept 19	Tabernacles:	Oct 03-09
				LGD:	Oct 10

SABBATICAL & JUBILEE YEARS: 1998–2028

1998	<u>Sabbatical</u> : March 28, 1998—April 15, 1999 (inclusive)
2005	<u>Sabbatical</u> : April 09, 2005—March 28, 2006 (inclusive)
2012	<u>Sabbatical</u> : March 22, 2012—April 09, 2013 (inclusive)
2019	<u>Sabbatical</u> : April 05, 2019—March 23, 2020 (inclusive)
2026	<u>Sabbatical</u> : April 17, 2026—April 06, 2027 (inclusive)
2027	<u>Jubilee</u> : April 07, 2027—Mar 25, 2028 (inclusive)

NEW MOON KING'S FEAST TIMES³⁸⁵⁸

³⁸⁵⁸ expressed in U.T.C., Co-ordinated Universal Time, not strictly identical with G.M.T., Greenwich Mean Time, which is an average. U.T.C. adjustment for individual local time zone is necessary. There is no D.S.T. 'Daylight Saving Time' in U.T.C., so for those areas affected, a D.S.T. local adjustment should be made in summer time.

1998	U.T.C.	1999	U.T.C.	2000	U.T.C.
28 January	06:01	17 January	15:46	06 January	18:14
26 February	17:26	16 February	06:39	05 February	13:04
28 March	03:14	17 March	18:48	06 March	05:17
26 April	11:41	16 April	04:22	04 April	18:12
25 May	19:32	15 May	12:05	04 May	04:12
24 June	03:50	13 June	19:03	02 June	12:14
23 July	13:44	13 July	02:24	01 July	19:20
22 August	02:03	11 August	11:09	31 July	02:25
20 September	17:02	09 September	22:02	29 August	10:19
20 October	10:10	09 October	11:35	27 September	19:53
19 November	04:27	08 November	03:53	27 October	07:58
18 December	22:43	07 December	22:32	25 November	23:12
				25 December	17:22
2001	U.T.C.	2002	U.T.C.	2003	U.T.C.
24 January	13:07	13 January	13:29	02 January	20:23
23 February	08:22	12 February	07:41	01 February	10:49
25 March	01:22	14 March	02:03	03 March	02:35
23 April	15:26	12 April	19:21	01 April	19:18
23 May	02:47	12 May	10:45	01 May	12:15
21 June	11:58	10 June	23:47	31 May	04:20
20 July	19:45	10 July	10:26	29 June	18:39
19 August	02:55	08 August	19:15	29 July	06:53
17 September	10:28	07 September	03:10	27 August	17:26
16 October	19:24	06 October	11:18	26 September	03:09
15 November	06:40	04 November	20:35	25 October	12:50
14 December	20:48	04 December	07:35	23 November	22:59
				23 December	09:43
2004	U.T.C.	2005	U.T.C.	2006	U.T.C.
21 January	21:05	10 January	12:03	29 January	14:15
20 February	09:18	08 February	22:28	28 February	00:31
20 March	22:41	10 March	09:11	29 March	10:15
19 April	13:21	08 April	20:32	27 April	19:44
19 May	04:52	08 May	08:45	27 May	05:26
17 June	20:27	06 June	21:55	25 June	16:05
17 July	11:24	06 July	12:03	25 July	04:31
16 August	01:24	05 August	03:05	23 August	19:10
14 September	14:29	03 September	18:46	22 September	11:45
14 October	02:48	03 October	10:28	22 October	05:14
12 November	14:27	02 November	01:25	20 November	22:18
12 December	01:29	01 December	15:01	20 December	14:01
		31 December	03:12		

Where New Moon days calculated from Jerusalem differ from the day of the local time of the King's Feast, then the New Moon day is as calculated from Jerusalem, and the King's Feast is kept at the point of the dark lunar conjunction, at the local time, q.v. sup.

2007	U.T.C.	2008	U.T.C.	2009	U.T.C.
19 January	04:01	08 January	11:37	26 January	07:26
17 February	16:14	07 February	03:44	25 February	01:35
19 March	02:43	07 March	17:14	26 March	16:06
17 April	11:36	06 April	03:55	25 April	03:23
16 May	19:27	05 May	12:18	24 May	12:11
15 June	03:13	03 June	19:23	22 June	19:35
14 July	12:04	03 July	02:19	22 July	02:35
12 August	23:02	01 August	10:12	20 August	10:01
11 September	12:44	30 August	19:58	18 September	18:44
11 October	05:01	29 September	08:12	18 October	05:33
09 November	23:03	28 October	23:14	16 November	19:14
09 December	17:40	27 November	16:55	16 December	12:02
		27 December	12:23		
2010	U.T.C.	2011	U.T.C.	2012	U.T.C.
15 January	07:12	04 January	09:03	23 January	07:39
14 February	02:52	03 February	02:31	21 February	22:35
15 March	21:01	04 March	20:46	22 March	14:37
14 April	12:29	03 April	14:32	21 April	07:19
14 May	01:05	03 May	06:51	20 May	23:47
12 June	11:15	01 June	21:03	19 June	15:03
11 July	19:41	01 July	08:54	19 July	04:25
10 August	03:08	30 July	18:40	17 August	15:55
08 September	10:30	29 August	03:04	16 September	02:11
07 October	18:44	27 September	11:09	15 October	12:03
06 November	04:52	26 October	19:56	13 November	22:08
05 December	17:36	25 November	06:10	13 December	08:42
		24 December	18:06		
2013	U.T.C.	2014	U.T.C.	2015	U.T.C.
11 January	19:44	01 January	11:14	20 January	13:14
10 February	07:20	30 January	21:39	18 February	23:47
11 March	19:51	01 March	08:00	20 March	09:36
10 April	09:36	30 March	18:45	18 April	18:57
10 May	00:29	29 April	06:15	18 May	04:13
08 June	15:57	28 May	18:40	16 June	14:05
08 July	07:15	27 June	08:09	16 July	01:25
06 August	21:51	26 July	22:42	14 August	14:54
05 September	11:37	25 August	14:13	13 September	06:42
05 October	00:35	24 September	06:14	13 October	00:06
03 November	12:50	23 October	21:57	11 November	17:48
03 December	00:23	22 November	12:33	11 December	10:03

22 December 01:36

2016	U.T.C.	2017	U.T.C.	2018	U.T.C.
10 January	01:31	28 January	00:07	17 January	02:17
08 February	14:39	26 February	14:59	15 February	21:05
09 March	01:55	28 March	02:58	17 March	13:12
07 April	11:24	26 April	12:16	16 April	01:57
06 May	19:30	25 May	19:45	15 May	11:48
05 June	03:00	24 June	02:31	13 June	19:43
04 July	11:01	23 July	09:46	13 July	02:48
02 August	20:45	21 August	18:30	11 August	09:58
01 September	09:04	20 September	05:30	09 September	18:01
01 October	00:12	19 October	19:12	09 October	03:47
30 October	17:39	18 November	11:42	07 November	16:02
29 November	12:19	18 December	06:30	07 December	07:20
29 December	06:54				

2019	U.T.C.	2020	U.T.C.	2021	U.T.C.
06 January	01:28	24 January	21:42	13 January	05:00
04 February	21:04	23 February	15:32	11 February	19:06
06 March	16:04	24 March	09:28	13 March	10:21
05 April	08:50	23 April	02:26	12 April	02:31
04 May	22:46	22 May	17:39	11 May	19:00
03 June	10:02	21 June	06:42	10 June	10:53
02 July	19:16	20 July	17:33	10 July	01:17
01 August	03:12	19 August	02:41	08 August	13:50
30 August	10:37	17 September	11:00	07 September	00:52
28 September	18:26	16 October	19:31	06 October	11:05
28 October	03:39	15 November	05:07	04 November	21:15
26 November	15:06	14 December	16:17	04 December	07:43
26 December	05:13				

2022	U.T.C.	2023	U.T.C.	2024	U.T.C.
02 January	18:34	21 January	20:53	11 January	11:57
01 February	05:46	20 February	07:06	09 February	22:59
02 March	17:35	21 March	17:23	10 March	09:01
01 April	06:24	20 April	04:13	08 April	18:21
30 April	20:28	19 May	15:53	08 May	03:22
30 May	11:30	18 June	04:37	06 June	12:38
29 June	02:52	17 July	18:32	05 July	22:57
28 July	17:55	16 August	09:38	04 August	11:13
27 August	08:17	15 September	01:40	03 September	01:56
25 September	21:54	14 October	17:55	02 October	18:50
25 October	10:48	13 November	09:27	01 November	12:48
23 November	22:57	12 December	23:32	01 December	06:22

23 December	10:17			30 December	22:27
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2025	U.T.C.	2026	U.T.C.	2027	U.T.C.
29 January	12:36	18 January	19:52	07 January	20:24
28 February	00:45	17 February	12:01	06 February	15:56
29 March	10:58	19 March	01:24	08 March	09:30
27 April	19:32	17 April	11:52	06 April	23:51
27 May	03:02	16 May	20:01	06 May	10:59
25 June	10:32	15 June	02:54	04 June	19:41
24 July	19:11	14 July	09:44	04 July	03:02
23 August	06:06	12 August	17:36	02 August	10:05
21 September	19:54	11 September	03:27	31 August	17:41
21 October	12:26	10 October	15:50	30 September	02:36
20 November	06:48	09 November	07:02	29 October	13:36
20 December	01:44	09 December	00:52	28 November	03:24
				27 December	20:12

2028	U.T.C.
26 January	15:13
25 February	10:38
26 March	04:32
24 April	19:47
24 May	08:17
22 June	18:28
22 July	03:02
20 August	10:44
18 September	18:24
18 October	02:57
16 November	13:18
16 December	02:06

Volume 4

Issues

Chapter 54

Perversions Various

There are many competing views in the major world religions over doctrine, law, practice, the purpose of man on earth, his ultimate fate, and eschatological events in general. The result is a great deal of confusion and conflict, with little consensus, and with little or no biblical foundation. Since this is not of God—He is not the god of confusion—the root of it must be grounded elsewhere. A look at some of these views might prove helpful in discerning the extent of end-time misrepresentation that will be forthcoming from these sources, and the confusion that that will wreak.

God's promises

Human life is no evolutionary accident. It is not a product of random chance or the mutation of species. We were all created for a purpose, to inherit eternal life in the kingdom of God, *'For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord,'*³⁸⁵⁹ *'Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom,'*³⁸⁶⁰ and, *'In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began.'*³⁸⁶¹ This process begins with the Word, Creator-God of all things in the universe and

³⁸⁵⁹ Rom 6:23

³⁸⁶⁰ Luke 12:32

³⁸⁶¹ Titus 1:2

the divine Law-giver,³⁸⁶² and it finishes with Christ, our Redeemer, who took our sins on Himself, suffered the penalty of sin, which is death, rose after three days, ascended to heaven, and Who will soon return to earth in power and glory.

*'Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ. And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise. Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator. Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one. Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. For ye are all the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ. For as many of you as have been baptised into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then ye are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.'*³⁸⁶³

The inheritance promises to Abraham were twofold: the promise of national wealth—a promise of race, fulfilled principally through the twin tribes of Joseph;³⁸⁶⁴ and the promise of the Messiah—a promise of grace, fulfilled through the tribe of Judah. The Law, which was not given in codified form until several centuries after the gracious promise by God, had nothing to do with the promises or Abraham's justification. Neither can it have anything to do with anyone's justification. In terms of the Law alone, all have fallen short, *'For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood.'*³⁸⁶⁵ *"All have sinned—and come short"* (as the necessary consequence) *"of the glory of God."* This, then, is the sinner. He is one who has missed the mark of being; has failed to answer his purpose, alike in work and in destiny; has turned aside from setting forth God's praise, and from walking in the way which leads to glory.³⁸⁶⁶

³⁸⁶² both being essential.

³⁸⁶³ Gal 3:16-29

³⁸⁶⁴ viz., Ephraim and Manasseh; the account given in Numbers chpt. 27 lists twelve tribes, including Ephraim and Manasseh as full tribes while maintaining the total of twelve by taking Levi out as a non-sacrificing tribe, officiating in the sacrifices, q.v. Num 7:12,18,24,30,36,42,48,54,60,66,72,78, and Num 7:5b for the Levites.

³⁸⁶⁵ Rom 3:23-25a

³⁸⁶⁶ Vaughan, C. J., *Christ the Light of the World*, p.8

The book of Kings records, *'for there is no man which sinneth not.'*³⁸⁶⁷ Despite the otherwise inevitable result of this sin, the actual outcome for those under the grace of God and who receive the gift of the Holy Spirit is given: *'For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.'*³⁸⁶⁸

Concerning the relationship of Judæo-Christian love and the Law, there is left no doubt: *'because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given unto us,'*³⁸⁶⁹ and, *'Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.'*³⁸⁷⁰ From this it is evident how the fulfilment operates: the love engendered by the Holy Spirit enables man to love God, and—through this, and faith, and by the grace of God—to be able to stand as righteous before the Eternal.

Man cannot inherit the kingdom of God through his own endeavours and devices, nor through compliance with the Law; for all have failed and are condemned. It is only through the blood of Christ, shed for mans' sins, that propitiation is made and the prospect of the inheritance is made available, not only to the Jew, not only to the Israelite, but to all who accept and follow Christ. This is made available, freely, to the entire of mankind, without exclusion: salvation! In the words of Christ: *'And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.'*³⁸⁷¹

Pharisaic perversion

All this is in contrast with the view of the Pharisees at the time of Christ's ministry, who, in conformity with their tradition, made the Law the centre of all their activity, but in their own particular or peculiar way.

The Pharisees³⁸⁷² were a Jewish sect who had much influence in the time of our Lord and who professed great superiority over all other men.³⁸⁷³ Josephus says: 'Now, for the Pharisees, they live meanly, and despise delicacies in diet, and they follow the conduct of reason; and what that proscribes to them as good for them, they do; and they think that they ought earnestly to strive to observe reason's dictates for practice. They also pay a respect to such as are in years; nor are they so bold as to contradict them in anything which they have introduced; and, when they determine that all things are done by fate, they do not take away the freedom from men of acting as they think fit; since their notion is, that it hath pleased God to make a temperament whereby what He wills is done, but so that the will of man could act virtuously or viciously. They also believe that souls have an immortal vigour in them, and that under the earth there will be rewards or punishments

³⁸⁶⁷ I Kings 8:46

³⁸⁶⁸ Rom 6:23

³⁸⁶⁹ Rom 5:5b

³⁸⁷⁰ Rom 13:10

³⁸⁷¹ Rev 21:6

³⁸⁷² meaning 'Separatists.'

³⁸⁷³ Mat 5:20; Mark 8:15; Luke 11:37

according as they have lived virtuously or viciously in this life; and the latter are to be detained in an everlasting prison, but that the former shall have power to revive and live again.'³⁸⁷⁴

Barclay develops the belief and its consequences: 'It can easily be seen that the identification of true religion with [the accreted minutiae of worthless, devised religious ritual] has certain inevitable consequences. Religion became legalism; it became the meticulous keeping of a mass of rules and regulations. Religion became externalism; so long as a man went through the right ritual he was a good man, no matter what his heart and thoughts were like, and no matter how hard and unsympathetic he might be towards his fellowmen. Religion could very easily become a matter of pride. A man might spend his whole life keeping these rules and regulations, which were obviously impossible for ordinary people, and then might thank God that he was not as other men are'³⁸⁷⁵....To undertake this mass of rules and regulations must have been a tremendous task, yet in that law was their delight; they loved the discipline of it; in it all they saw the service of God....It is clear that under this system religion became the affair of the expert. Only the scribes knew the ramifications of the [non-biblical, man-imposed] oral law; only the Pharisees could keep them. Obviously all this put true religion out of reach of the ordinary working man. He could not engage in the ordinary working activities of the world and keep the [oral] law. Religion in its higher reaches became the preserve of the expert and of the professional.'³⁸⁷⁶

After the Maccabæan struggle, the Pharisees had crystallised into a sort of religious party, and to the party of the Pharisees belonged the Scribes, as was natural enough, for upon them had long-devolved the duty of both copying out the Law and explaining it, and from their explanations of the Written Law grew much of the body of the 'oral law.' The Pharisees had the bulk of the people at that time on their side, and exercised a great influence upon them. Josephus tells us that: 'they delivered to the people a great many observances by succession from their fathers, which are not written in the laws of Moses.'³⁸⁷⁷

Some of the results of this influence and of the development of the Law into oral tradition, here clearly pointed to by Josephus, are dealt with in the New Testament, and to this it is now appropriate to devote some attention.

The main tendency in this Pharisaic development was that the observance of legal precepts came to be looked upon as meritorious. The merit acquired by observing the details of the requirements of the Law justified a man in the sight of God, and thus constituted a claim for reward. It followed, to them logically, that the attainment of salvation was a matter of purely human effort; mankind in their aberrant view being inherently good, or, at the very least, potentially so. Belief in divine grace was, of course, not absent, but the sense of justification felt by a zealous observer of the Law had the effect of obscuring the fact of God's divine grace, and, in practice, the fulfilment of works of the Law came to be looked upon as the means of salvation. Not without due cause did

³⁸⁷⁴ Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, III., bk. viii., sec. 3

³⁸⁷⁵ Luke 18:9-14

³⁸⁷⁶ Barclay, William, *The Mind of Jesus*, pp.161,162 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

³⁸⁷⁷ Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, XIII, X, 6

Christ refer to them as, 'O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?'³⁸⁷⁸ and, 'O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.'³⁸⁷⁹

Much of the teaching of Christ, as well as of Paul, is directed against this false estimate of the Law. The harm done to spiritual religion by observing precepts of the Law for the sake of gaining glory from men forms the subject of Christ's admonition in Matthew: *'Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them; otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven. Therefore, when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, they have their reward. But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth; That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly. And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, they have their reward. But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly. But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be ye not therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask him.'*³⁸⁸⁰ This is bolstered by His admonition to the religious authorities and the religious regimen extant at the time: *'Howbeit in vain do ye worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. For, laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do. And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition. Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye.'*³⁸⁸¹

'Religion has not done its work until we are in very truth the children of God; and we cannot be called religious men, in any but a most superficial and misleading sense, until we are morally like God. In order to accomplish this great end of religion a certain training is needful, and this training is aided by the observance of certain practices, rites, and forms of worship. Prayer, worship, attendance on ordinances, and so forth, are requisite as means of attainment of the knowledge and love of God out of which holiness springs. Unfortunately, the practice of these observances is much more obvious as a distinctive mark of religious people than the result of them in exceptional holiness of life. And in consequence, these observances become identified with religion, while a high and pure morality does not become so identified; and in determining whether a man is or is not religious, attention is turned to a few habits, whose real importance lies solely in what they accomplish and not

³⁸⁷⁸ Mat 3:7

³⁸⁷⁹ Mat 12:34

³⁸⁸⁰ Mat 6:1-8

³⁸⁸¹ Mark 7:7-9,13

at all in themselves. And thus Pharisaism is encouraged; and men who for the world would not go to bed without saying their prayers, or who make a great scruple about it, make no scruple at all about slandering or cheating their neighbour, about being cold and sullen and tyrannical at home, greedy in business, vindictive and violent in their dealings with men.

Evidently no perversion of religion could be more fatal than this substitution of the means for the end. To make religion consist in repeating prayers, observing fasts, attending ordinances, upholding rites, is to reduce it to a pernicious, delusive, deadening, worse than useless burden, which reasonable men must and ought at once to abolish. To encourage men to imagine that they have attained the summit of human excellence when they can fast twice a week is plainly to burlesque religion. To induce men to measure their religious attainment by their diligence in any kind of ritual observances is simply to fatally delude them. Religion, instead of being the very life of the spirit, giving it its true place in the universe and imparting to it eternal principles, is transformed into a mere matter of external performances, which might be as accurately discharged by a soulless automaton.³⁸⁸²

Any suggestion that outward adherence to the Law was valid for the purposes of gaining glory from men was serious enough, but the claim of reward from God because of the fulfilment of works of the Law was clearly a more subtle danger, and the evidence afforded in the New Testament of this ruinous development is overwhelming. No more illuminating illustration of the way in which our Lord viewed it, and made manifest the counteraction, could be given than the parable of the labourers in the vineyard: *'For the kingdom of heaven³⁸⁸³ is like unto a man that is an householder, which went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard. And when he had agreed with the labourers for a penny a day, he sent them into his vineyard. And he went out about the third hour, and saw others standing idle in the marketplace, And said unto them; Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right I will give you. And they went their way. Again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour, and did likewise. And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing idle, and saith unto them, Why stand ye here all the day idle? They say unto him, Because no man hath hired us. He saith unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard; and whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive. So when even was come, the lord of the vineyard saith unto his steward, Call the labourers, and give them their hire, beginning from the last unto the first. And when they came that were hired about the eleventh hour, they received every man a*

³⁸⁸² Dods, Marcus, *The Parables of Our Lord*, pp.216,217

³⁸⁸³ *Bible Study Monthly*, September / October, 2006 issue, p.115 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'There are approximately 124 occurrences of the expression "kingdom of heaven" or "kingdom of God" in the New Testament. A reasonable analysis of these occurrences shows them distributed thus:

26 refer to the spiritual kingdom in men's hearts now;

42 refer to the [spirit-being] destiny of the church....after the Second Coming;

25 refer to the visible kingdom set up on earth during the Millennium [of rest];

31 are indeterminate and could not dogmatically be placed in any one of the above categories; in a good many cases these examples refer to the entire conception of the kingdom embracing all three aspects.'

penny. But when the first came, they supposed that they should have received more; and they likewise received every man a penny. And when they had received it, they murmured against the goodman of the house, Saying, These last have but wrought one hour, and thou hast made them equal unto us, which have borne the burden and the heat of the day. But he answered one of them, and said, Friend, I do thee no wrong: didst thou not agree with me for a penny? Take that thine is, and go thy way: I will give unto this last, even as unto thee. Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil, because I am good? So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen.'³⁸⁸⁴

The explanation of this parable, in the context of justification by works, is this: The master of the vineyard is entirely independent of each and every labourer, and the fact of his seeking them to work in his vineyard is an act of grace on his part. In order to emphasise that it is an act of grace, he goes out at various hours of the day to offer the advantage of employment to other labourers who would otherwise have nothing to do. When the time for payment comes and some labourers claim more because of their longer hours of work, the master of the vineyard shows them that their claim is not justified. The reference is not so much to the amount of wages actually paid, as to the fact of his taking them into his service, for it was that which constituted an act of grace on the part of the master of the vineyard. The claim for more not only implied a right on account of work done but actually sought to resile from the original agreement, whereas the possibility of doing any work at all was the result of an act of grace; and the same applied to all; hence, *'the last shall be first, and the first last.'*

There are, of course, other values and insights to be extracted from the parable, but the question as to benefit deriving from sheer quantity of compliance with the Law is answered. The kingdom is not to be attained by meretricious works. There is no prescription which has to be filled; no net balance of good works over bad. These are apostate, pagan beliefs. It is through grace that we are given entry into the kingdom: *'Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.'*³⁸⁸⁵

The stock response by Peter to the call of Christ is recorded in Matthew: *'Lo, we have left all, and followed thee; what then shall we have?'*³⁸⁸⁶ The mental attitude which prompted this was precisely the same as that of the legalist, who, having acquired merit by carrying out the precepts of the Law, believed himself entitled to claim a reward from God. The Judæo-Christian response to this is thundered out: *'For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.'*³⁸⁸⁷

³⁸⁸⁴ Mat 20:1-16

³⁸⁸⁵ Luke 12:32

³⁸⁸⁶ Mat 19:27

³⁸⁸⁷ James 2:10

Legalism jibe

'Legalism' is often used as a term of opprobrium and derision against those who adhere to the principles and letter of God's Law found in the Pentateuch, but the appellation is woefully inaccurate and ill-directed. Adherence to the Law and 'legalism' are to be distinguished. Barclay gives some clarity: 'If the Jewish approach to the [Law]³⁸⁸⁸ had remained,³⁸⁸⁹ all might have been well, but it did not. Principles became regulations, and regulations became legalism. There was a reason for this. Centuries of subjection to greater nations robbed the Jews of all possibilities of outward expansion, and, as it were, drove the nation in upon itself. Their scholars and experts and theologians began to study their own Laws under the microscope. And worse, they began to be dissatisfied with principles and to insist upon rules and regulations to cover every conceivable event that might happen to a man. There came a passion for definition, and for the fragmentation of principles into rules and regulations.

Nowhere was this so evident as in the Sabbath Law. The Law forbade work. But what was work? There were laid down thirty-nine different classifications called 'fathers of work,' each classification capable of infinite sub-division. One class of work which was forbidden was the carrying of a burden. But what is a burden? So it comes to be argued whether or not a man may lift his child on the Sunday [sic! this should read Sabbath]. Yes, he may, but not if the child has a stone in his hand, for the stone is a burden even if the child is not. Then there comes the inevitable question. What is a stone? And so the matter went on and on.

It was forbidden to tie a knot, to light a fire [this is part of the Law, related to the prohibition of cooking on the Sabbath], to move a lamp, to go on a journey [this, too, is prohibited by the Law, for the Sabbath is a day of ceasing, not travel], to prepare a meal on the Sabbath [also prohibited by the Law; see previous comments]. It was forbidden to heal on the Sabbath. In the case of illness or injury, steps could be taken to keep a man from getting worse, but not to cure him or to make him better. It was the scribes who carefully worked out these rules and regulations and the Pharisees who as carefully kept them. Inevitably the whole character of the Sabbath changed. Instead of being a day designed to protect [and enhance] the [spiritual wellbeing], health, and welfare of the working man, it became a day of prohibitions, with the list of things which might not be done stretching out into an almost endless series of rules and regulations.'³⁸⁹⁰

³⁸⁸⁸ the Law is part prescriptive, but in greater part principle-based. If it were wholly prescriptive—i.e., rules-based—the printed length of the Law would be almost without end.

³⁸⁸⁹ viz., the application of legal principles.

³⁸⁹⁰ Barclay, William, *The Plain Man's Guide to Ethics*, pp.27,28 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

Faith & works

Some, seeking amelioration, may point in error to James, and a text that so perplexed Martin Luther as to cause him to call for the expunging of the book of James from the New Testament canon, on the grounds that it appeared to espouse the Roman Catholic doctrine of justification by works: *'What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?'*³⁸⁹¹ As is frequently the case, this error arises from a heady mix of inability to read and understand the relevant phrase, a translation deficiency, and a lack of Judæo-Christian understanding. The reading goes, *'though a man say he hath faith;'* it does not say *'though a man hath faith.'* There is a difference. Because on the one hand it ranks as a claim without external and visible support, and hence without internal spiritual foundation, and, on the other hand, and if the converse were applicable, it would be self evident: those who have faith, and the gift of the Holy Spirit, patently demonstrate it, even in the land of the unbelievers,³⁸⁹² by their works. These are not those works acceptable according to the predilections, mores, or prejudices of man, but are those congruous with the will of God. Also, in the text in James,³⁸⁹³ the rendition contained in the K.J.V. unfortunately tends to convey to some the wrong impression, for it is not asking about faith in general, but that type of faith which one has when making claims without producing fruit: for example, the Laodicean type. This is affirmed by the presence of the definite article in the original Greek: *'can that faith save him?'*³⁸⁹⁴ would be the proper translation. Thus, which faith? That which the man claims to have. That being the case, James does not contradict Paul: both affirming that true saving faith results in a changed life as evidenced by works conforming to the will of God. This is confirmed by Christ: *'Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth forth not good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits shall ye know them.'*³⁸⁹⁵ *'Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.'*³⁸⁹⁶

While '[m]en are judged by their wishes and cravings,'³⁸⁹⁷ true faith is evident on the outside, but only to those who are able to discern it, but to ordinary man it is mere foolishness. Indeed, real Christian works are an unintelligible abomination before apostate and pagan man. For his part, Luther had simply misread and misinterpreted the book of James.

³⁸⁹¹ James 2:14

³⁸⁹² Latin: in paribus infidelium.

³⁸⁹³ James 2:14

³⁸⁹⁴ James 2:14b (sublinear emphasis added)

³⁸⁹⁵ Mat 7:16-20

³⁸⁹⁶ James 2:17

³⁸⁹⁷ Dods, Marcus, *The Parables of Our Lord, as recorded by St. Luke*, p.45

The same Judæo-Christian teaching underlies the parable of the Pharisee and the Publican: *'And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.'*³⁸⁹⁸ And this view is found in Luke: *'When ye shall have done all the things that are commanded you, say, we are unprofitable servants; we have done that which it was our duty to do.'*³⁸⁹⁹ Similarly, again and again, Paul combated the doctrine of justification by the works of the Law and what it implied: *'By the works of the law shall no flesh be justified in his sight;'*³⁹⁰⁰ *'A man is not justified by the works of the law,'*³⁹⁰¹ and, *'For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.'*³⁹⁰²

It is clear that mankind is warned against editing the word of God and God's Law: *'What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it.'*³⁹⁰³ Despite this, this is the very thing which the 'oral law' has done. The rules as they exist concerning the washings of pots and pans and the like, for example, did not come from God via Moses or anyone else imbued with the Holy Spirit: they were the inventions of man, widely held to have been imported largely from Egypt—in other words, completely profane. Deuteronomy accords with Christ's words in Matthew: *'Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am come not to destroy but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, until all be fulfilled,'*³⁹⁰⁴ and, further, with Revelation: *'For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book. And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.'*³⁹⁰⁵

Doubtless, this development of the doctrine of justification by works, tied to worthless importations, had begun to take place long previously in the Holy Land, but there is not such pointed evidence both of the development and of its effects as is given in the New Testament.

³⁸⁹⁸ Luke 18:9-14

³⁸⁹⁹ Luke 17:10

³⁹⁰⁰ Rom 3:20

³⁹⁰¹ Gal 2:16a

³⁹⁰² Eph 2:8,9

³⁹⁰³ Deut 12:32

³⁹⁰⁴ Deut 12:32; Mat 5:17,18

³⁹⁰⁵ Rev 22:18,19

Roman purview

Any discussion of this doctrinal form must also visit the apostate Roman Catholic version of the doctrine of justification by works, which has, at its very roots, the ancient Babylonian weighings of merits and demerits in the scales: the apostate final judgement of man. And this must also encompass one or other of those various religious systems spawned by Babylon the great, if for no other reason than to demonstrate how deeply ingrained it is.³⁹⁰⁶ The existence of this widespread doctrine is admirably evidenced in the Egyptian invocation of the head embalmer to the sun on behalf of the deceased: 'O thou Sun, our sovereign lord! and all ye Deities who have given life to man, receive me, and grant me an abode with the eternal gods. During the whole course of my life I have scrupulously worshipped the gods my father taught me to adore; I have ever honoured my parents, who begat this body; I have killed no-one; I have not defrauded any; nor have I done any injury to any man.'

Thus the merits, the obedience, or the innocence of man was the grand plea. The doctrine of Rome is identical to that of Egypt. Indeed, the two systems use symbolical presentations in exactly the same way. In the papal legends it is taught that Michael the archangel has committed to him the balance of God's justice, and that in the two opposite scales of that balance the merits and the demerits of the departed are put that they may be fairly weighed, the one over against the other, and that as the scales turn to the favourable or unfavourable side, they may be justified or condemned as the case may be. Now the Chaldean doctrine of justification, as developed in Egypt, and extracted from the monuments in that land, is symbolised in precisely the same way, except that in the land of Ham the scales of justice were committed to the charge of the god Anubis, and that the good deeds and the bad deeds seem to have been weighed separately, and a distinct record made of each, so that when both were summed up and the balance struck, judgement was pronounced accordingly.

The teachings, beliefs, and dogmas of the Roman Catholic Church are many, but a summary view is helpful here, as they are seen to flow naturally and seamlessly from their Babylonian and Egyptian precursors.

In the Roman purview, it is held that there is only one truth of salvation: the Roman Catholic faith, and those who disobey her teachings commit sins of pride and disobedience. Even if these proud people think that their private interpretation of Holy Scripture, while being contrary to the teachings of Rome, is correct, in the Roman view it actually constitutes an error leading to torment and death in hell unless this error is renounced before death.

When it comes to mankind in general, the Roman view is that it can be divided into two categories: the sensual man and the spiritual man. The sensual man is either he who is taken up with sensual pleasures, with carnal and worldly affections; or he who measures divine mysteries by natural reason, sense, and human

³⁹⁰⁶ also found in Judaism.

wisdom only. Now such a man has little or no notion of the things of God. Whereas the spiritual man is he, who, in the mysteries of religion, takes not human sense for his guide, but submits his judgement to the decisions of the Roman Catholic Church, which he is commanded to hear and obey.

Obstinacy is sin, and perpetuating sin is sin against the Holy Ghost, and cannot be forgiven. Those who are obstinate toward the authority, interpretation, and definitions of the Roman Catholic Church, and who persistently separate themselves from the church and the Roman pontiff, are pronounced to have excluded themselves from eternal salvation. Such 'anathemata'³⁹⁰⁷ have usually been thundered ex cathedra, thus having the force of a dogmatic truth, the refusal of which means excommunication and being cut off from the Roman 'Body of Christ,' and, therefore, being cursed. In addition, certain anathemata³⁹⁰⁸ are irrevocable, meaning that no statement by any subsequent pontiff can contradict the thus declared dogma. This was confirmed by Pope Pius IX, in the form of the statement of infallibility of the pope: 'And so We, adhering faithfully to the tradition received from the beginning of the Christian faith, to the glory of God, our Saviour, the elevation of the Catholic religion and the salvation of Christian peoples, with the approbation of the sacred Council, teach and explain that the dogma has been divinely revealed. That the Roman Pontiff, when he speaks ex cathedra, that is, when carrying out the duty of the pastor and teacher of all Christians in accord with his supreme apostolic authority he explains a doctrine of faith or morals to be held by the universal church, through the divine assistance promised him in blessed Peter, operates with that infallibility with which the divine Redeemer wished that His church be instructed in defining doctrine on faith and morals; and so such definitions of the Roman Pontiff from himself, but not from the consensus of the church, are unalterable. But if anyone presumes to contradict this definition of Ours, which may God forbid: let him be anathema.'³⁹⁰⁹

It is a matter of dogmatic belief and confession that outside of the Roman Catholic Church there is no salvation or remission of sins: Pope Eugene IV declared: '[The Roman Church] firmly believes, professes, and proclaims that those not living within the Catholic church, not only pagans, but also Jews and heretics and schismatics, cannot become participants in eternal life, but will depart "into everlasting fire which was prepared for the Devil and his angels,"³⁹¹⁰ unless before the end of life the same have been added to the flock; and that the unity of the ecclesiastical body is so strong that only to those remaining in it are the sacraments of the church of benefit for salvation, and do fastings, almsgiving, and other functions of piety and exercises of Christian service produce eternal reward, and that no-one, whatever almsgiving he has practiced, even if he has shed blood for the name of Christ, can be saved, unless he has remained in the bosom and unity of the Catholic church.'³⁹¹¹

³⁹⁰⁷ Greek: anathema, 'devoted to destruction.'

³⁹⁰⁸ Latin: ex cathedra anathemata.

³⁹⁰⁹ Pius IX chaired Session #4 of the First Vatican Council, 18th July, 1870AD.

³⁹¹⁰ Mat 25:41

³⁹¹¹ Pope Eugene IV, papal Bull *Cantata Domino*, 1442AD (sublinear emphasis added)

Indeed, in relation to this last emphasis, in various apparitions the Virgin Mary has called all her devotees and followers to join her in battle against what are held to be the forces of Satan and the Antichrist. While these appear to mutate from time to time, depending on the particular vision, and the audience, the basic thrust is to identify and isolate those who will not bow to Rome. Others, such as the followers of Islam, are sometimes treated more gently, even to the point of being called 'brothers and sisters,' reportedly as happened recently at Medjugorje.

Pope John Paul II stated: 'She [the Roman Catholic Church] must therefore be called upon, respected, and served; for no-one can have God for his Father if he does not have the church for his Mother. One cannot love Christ without loving the church Christ loves. The Spirit of the church is the Spirit of Christ, and to the extent to which one loves the church of Christ does he possess the Holy Spirit.'³⁹¹² Here, in all its perverseness and apostasy, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit is held to be evidenced by the extent of love which the supplicant or cult-member has for the Roman Catholic Church.

Adoption of Apocrypha

But Rome has gone much further. At the Council of Trent,³⁹¹³ the Roman Catholic Church officially declared that God had inspired twelve of the fifteen writings of the Apocrypha.³⁹¹⁴

These co-opted additions were part of the Roman church's counteraction to the Protestant Reformation. Protestants had rejected the Apocrypha on the basis of its being non-canonical, so Rome then declared dogmatically that most of it was divinely inspired. The Apocrypha also contains teachings that could help Rome defend its doctrine and rites against growing Protestant criticism. For example, Luther had forcibly argued against Rome's practice of selling pardons from purgatory, but Tobit supports the practice, albeit indirectly, in stating: '*almsgiving saves one from death and expiates every sin.*'³⁹¹⁵

The Jews of Palestine never accepted the Apocrypha as part of sacred Scripture. Neither was there a Jewish prophet during the time in which the Apocrypha was written.³⁹¹⁶ Even the Apocrypha itself does not present itself as inspired. The author of II Maccabees states that his book is an abridgement of another man's work,³⁹¹⁷ and concludes II Maccabees by saying: '*If it is well written and to the point, that is what I wanted; if it is*

³⁹¹² Pope John Paul II's speech to the Third General Assembly of Latin American Bishops, 1979AD.

³⁹¹³ in 1546AD

³⁹¹⁴ 7 books: Tobit, Judith, I and II Maccabees, Wisdom of Solomon, Ecclesiasticus (Sirach), and Baruch; and 5 passages: the letter of Jeremiah (which became Baruch chpt. 6); a 107-verse expansion of the book of Esther; the prayer of Azariah (which became Dan 3:24-90); Suzanna (which became Daniel chpt. 13); and Bel and the Dragon (which became Daniel chpt. 14).

³⁹¹⁵ Tobit 12:9

³⁹¹⁶ 300–30BC

³⁹¹⁷ II Macc 2:23

*poorly done and mediocre, that is the best I could do.*³⁹¹⁸ Hardly reassuring! Mediocre is a fitting description of most of the Apocrypha, for it provides questionable ethics,³⁹¹⁹ fanciful legends,³⁹²⁰ and doctrine which contradicts Scripture.³⁹²¹

Jesus and the New Testament writers did not treat the Apocrypha as inspired. Though the New Testament quotes virtually every book of the Old Testament, there is not a single quotation from the Apocrypha. The apostolic and post-apostolic church never accepted the Apocrypha as being divinely inspired. The books of the Bible, the canon, were decided, as far as the New Testament is concerned, by the disciples, acting under the influence of the Holy Spirit, as prophesied: *'Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples.'*³⁹²² And Paul, for example, accepted the law and the prophets: *'so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things that are written in the law and the prophets.'*³⁹²³

Roman eschatology

Roman eschatology, a strange beast in its manifold forms, takes excerpts from the books of Daniel and Revelation, amongst others, and gives them meanings designed to frustrate the urgent seeker of the truth, and to deflect attention away from pagan Romanism by attributing her evils to Christ and His people. In many instances, these meanings, given off through a host of Marian revelations, are the direct opposite of those revealed in biblical prophecy. The following is a somewhat random synopsis, as the two run in very different sequences, and, of course, they have completely different agendas:

<u>Biblical Prophecy</u>	<u>True Meaning</u>	<u>Marian Perversion</u>
1. Two Witnesses of Revelation: ³⁹²⁴	Two end-time witnesses having the true faith and filled with the Holy	Any of the following: Peter and Paul,

³⁹¹⁸ II Macc 15:38

³⁹¹⁹ Judith 9–11

³⁹²⁰ e.g., Tobit.

³⁹²¹ Tobit 4:10,12:19

³⁹²² Isa 8:16; Snow, Eric V., *A Zeal for God Not According to Knowledge*, p.76:

'What Jerome and Augustine Wrote is ultimately consistent with scholar Kurt Aland's conclusion: "It goes without saying that the church, understood as the entire body of believers, created the canon....it was not the reverse; it was not imposed from the top, be it by bishops or synods." F. F. Bruce comments on Augustine's statement cited above: "It is plain from this that, when Augustine wrote, no ecclesiastical council had made a pronouncement on the canon which could be recognized as the voice of the church." The various apocryphal books fell by the wayside, in part because of the actions of ecclesiastical authorities, true, but also because the majority rejected all of the apocrypha, ultimately ensuring the traditional canon's victory over a minority, divided amongst itself, which had clung to one or another apocryphal book here or there.' Cf. Jerome, *Epistle*, 129.3; Augustine, *On Christian Learning*, 2.13, as cited by Bruce, F. F., *Canon of Scripture*, pp.226,227,231; Aland, Kurt, *The Problem of the New Testament Canon*, p.18.

³⁹²³ Acts 24:14b

³⁹²⁴ Revelation chpt. 11

	Spirit, giving the world God's last warning.	Moses and Elijah, The pope and Mother Theresa, or, The pope and somebody else.
2. The Antichrist:	Leader of the seventh and final rise of the Holy Roman Empire; a World Emperor in league with the Roman church and her harlots.	A False world leader set in direct opposition to the Roman church.
3. The False Prophet:	The last pope, in league with the World Emperor, the Antichrist.	A usurping second and 'false' pope, striving against the 'true' pope, seeking to destroy Romanism from within.
4. Destruction of Rome, the Roman church, and its harlot daughters:	Christ's judgement meted out on the seat of the Beast, ³⁹²⁵ with the people turning and attacking the great religious deception. ³⁹²⁶	The result of the works and intrigues of the second, 'false' pope. The 'true' pope is snatched away to a place of safety, but dies an 'horrible' death.
5. The sixth seal of Revelation:	The heavenly signs ³⁹²⁷ as a precursor of the Day of the Lord: no sun or moon, heaven & earth reeling.	The Great Chastisement: lasting for two-and-a-half or three days, with only those devoted to the Virgin Mary surviving.
6. The one hundred and forty-four thousand sealed:	Those having the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, and not taking the mark of the Beast: the 'firstfruits,' comprising twelve thousand from each tribe of Israel, except Dan.	Not number specific, but representing the millions in the Roman Catholic faith who will comprise the 'New Israel,' with all being taken to heaven.
7. The mark of the Beast:	Any or all of the marks recited in the 'Mark of the Beast' chapter.	The Antichrist mark, but those taking Rome's 'Mark of God' are saved.

³⁹²⁵ Revelation chpt. 18

³⁹²⁶ Revelation chpt. 17

³⁹²⁷ Rev 6:12,13

8. Silence in heaven for the space of about half-an-hour: ³⁹²⁸	The short interval between the sixth seal and the Day of the Lord, the latter being when God's wrath is poured out on all apostates remaining alive on earth.	The 'time of peace,' when only those devoted to the Virgin Mary will be left on earth.
9. Fire descending on earth to devour the evil ones: ³⁹²⁹	Deflagration meted out on the armies of Gog and Magog, who come against Jerusalem at the end of the Millennium of rest.	Destruction meted out on all mankind save those devoted to the Virgin Mary, and preceding the 'time of peace.'

The Roman Catholic prophecy of the three days darkness, and its imported meaning, is a perverted, intentional skew of the sixth seal which is mentioned in three prophecies in Scripture: *'And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the Lord come,'*³⁹³⁰ *'Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken,'*³⁹³¹ and, finally, *'And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as the sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of his wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?'*³⁹³²

³⁹²⁸ Revelation chpt. 8

³⁹²⁹ Revelation chpt. 20

³⁹³⁰ Joel 2:30,31

³⁹³¹ Mat 24:29

³⁹³² Rev 6:12-17; v.17, in the Moffatt translation, exhibits the plurality of the Godhead: *'For the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand it? 'Their' refers back to v.16b, in the K.J.V.: 'Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.'* Moffatt has: *'fall upon and hide us from the face of Him who is seated on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb.'*

Roman prophecies

Selected and paraphrased hereunder are merely a few of the vast number of oft-quoted Romanist prophecies by well-respected³⁹³³ visionaries and mystics. Recurring themes are readily discernible, as is the underlying attempt not only to twist the scriptural record but to augment it to exhibit an alternative view of end-time events, often with a view to portraying Jesus Christ as the Antichrist:

Hippolytus³⁹³⁴

Hippolytus is one of the so-called 'early church Fathers' upon which the Roman Church depends for inspiration and dogma. Concerning the blasphemous prophecies made by Hippolytus in the year 170AD, Satan very cleverly inspired this early writer to pen these prophecies: 'Believe not the enemy who is to come and be seen; for he is an adversary and corrupter and son of perdition, and deceives you; and for this reason he will kill you, and smite them with the sword.'³⁹³⁵

'[A]t that time the whole earth will bewail the life of anguish, and the sea and air in like manner will bewail it; and the sun, too, will wail; and the wild beasts, together with the fowls, will wail; mountains and hills, and the trees of the plain, will wail on account of the race of man, because all have turned aside from the Holy God, and obeyed the deceiver, and received the mark of that abominable one, the enemy of God, instead of the quickening cross of the saviour....And in the presence of all he exhibits himself as taken up into heaven with trumpets and sounds and the mighty shouting of those who hail him with indescribable hymns; the heir of darkness himself shining like light, and at one time soaring to the heavens, and at another descending to the earth with great glory, and again charging the demons, like angels, to execute his behests with much fear and trembling. For he will show forth his demons brilliant like angels, and he will bring in hosts of the incorporeal without number.'³⁹³⁶

'Then that abominable one will send his commands throughout every government by the hand at once of demons and of visible men, who shall say, 'A mighty king has arisen upon the earth; come ye all to worship him; come ye all to see the strength of his kingdom: for, behold, he will give you corn; and he will bestow upon you wine, and great riches, and lofty honours. For the whole earth and sea obeys his command.'³⁹³⁷

This has to be compared with Revelation: '*And I saw another [angel] fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation and kindred and tongue and people, Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and*

³⁹³³ in Romish terms, that is.

³⁹³⁴ 2nd-century.

³⁹³⁵ *Ante-Nicene Fathers*; Hippolytus, section XXIX

³⁹³⁶ *Ante-Nicene Fathers*; Hippolytus, section XXXIII

³⁹³⁷ *Ante-Nicene Fathers*; Hippolytus, section XXXVII (sublinear emphasis added)

worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters,³⁹³⁸ and therefore the whole earth and sea obey his command.

When these false Roman 'prophecies' are read from pulpits or broadcast into the ears of the gullible, and they begin to see God's intervention come to pass, they will believe the only meaning they have ever learned about these signs and wonders, and be convinced that the glorious Christ returning in triumph is the Antichrist! This is satanic preparation for the deception of the masses for the time of the return of Christ, starting as early as the second-century AD!

'The public service of God shall be extinguished....at that time silver and gold shall be cast out into the streets, and none shall gather them; but all things shall be an offence.'³⁹³⁹ The 'public service,' that is, the Roman Catholic Mass,³⁹⁴⁰ will not be allowed by Christ. It will be extinguished, forever.

Dionysius³⁹⁴¹

'Antichrist will be an iconoclast.³⁹⁴² Most of the world will adore him. He will teach that the Christian religion is false, confiscation of Christian property is legal, Saturday is to be observed instead of Sunday, and he will change the ten commandments.³⁹⁴³ All his wonders could not be written in a book. They will be more wonderful than the Old and New Testaments!....He will read people's minds, raise the dead, reward his followers and punish the rest!'³⁹⁴⁴

Frederick William Faber³⁹⁴⁵

'He will begin by affecting respect for the law of Moses.'³⁹⁴⁶

Brother John of the Cleft Rock³⁹⁴⁷

'Towards the end of the world, tyrants and hostile mobs will rob the church and the clergy of all their possessions and will afflict and martyr them. Those who heap the most abuse upon them will be held in high esteem....At that time, the Pope with his cardinals will have to flee Rome in tragic circumstances to a place where they will be unknown. The Pope will die a cruel death in his exile. The sufferings of the church will be much greater than at any previous time in her history. But God will raise a holy Pope, and the Angels will

³⁹³⁸ Rev 14:6,7 (sublinear emphasis added)

³⁹³⁹ *Ante-Nicene Fathers*; Hippolytus, section XXXIV

³⁹⁴⁰ Latin etymology: missa, 'dismissal,' deriving from the late 4th-century liturgical Missa Catechumenorum, the mass of the Catechumens, followed, upon their dismissal, by the Missa Fidelium, the mass of the Faithful, who were dismissed too, after that inner or elite ceremony.

³⁹⁴¹ 17th-century AD, Luxembourg.

³⁹⁴² i.e., against idols.

³⁹⁴³ i.e., restore them in their original form, including the declaration against idols.

³⁹⁴⁴ *Prophecy for Today* excerpt.

³⁹⁴⁵ 19th-century AD

³⁹⁴⁶ *Prophecy for Today* excerpt.

³⁹⁴⁷ 14th-century AD

rejoice. Enlightened by God, this man will rebuild almost the whole world through his holiness. He will lead everyone to the true Faith. Everywhere, the fear of God, virtue, and good morals will prevail. He will lead all erring sheep back to the fold, and there shall be one faith, one law, one rule of life, and one baptism on earth. All men will love each other and do good, and all quarrels and wars will cease.³⁹⁴⁸

Abbot 'Merlin' Joachim³⁹⁴⁹

'Towards the end of the world Antichrist will overthrow the Pope and usurp his See.'³⁹⁵⁰

Venerable Bartholomew Holzhauser³⁹⁵¹

'During this period, the freedom of conscience is conceded to them. It is of such men that Jude, the Apostle, spoke when he said: *'These men blaspheme whatever they do not understand; and they corrupt whatever they know naturally as irrational animals do....They feast together without restraint, feeding themselves, grumbling murmurers, walking according to their lusts; their mouth speaketh proud things, they admire people for the sake of gain; they bring about division, sensual men, having not the spirit.'*³⁹⁵² During this unhappy period, there will be laxity in divine and human precepts. Discipline will suffer. The Holy Canons will be completely disregarded, and the Clergy will not respect the laws of the Church. Everyone will be carried away and led to believe and to do what he fancies, according to the manner of the flesh....They will ridicule Christian simplicity; they will call it folly and nonsense, but they will have the highest regard for advanced knowledge, and for the skill by which the axioms of the law, the precepts of morality, the Holy Canons and religious dogmas are clouded by senseless questions and elaborate arguments. As a result, no principle at all, however holy, authentic, ancient, and certain it may be, will remain free of censure, criticism, false interpretations, modification and delimitation by man....These are evil times, a century full of dangers and calamities. Heresy is everywhere, and the followers of heresy are in power almost everywhere. Bishops, prelates, and priests say that they are doing their duty, that they are vigilant, and that they live as befits their state in life. In like manner, therefore, they all seek excuses. But God will permit a great evil against His Church: Heretics and tyrants will come suddenly and unexpectedly; they will break into the church while bishops, prelates, and priests are asleep. They will enter Italy and lay Rome waste; they will burn down the churches and destroy everything.'³⁹⁵³

³⁹⁴⁸ Dupont, Yves, *Catholic Prophecy*

³⁹⁴⁹ 12th-century AD

³⁹⁵⁰ *Prophecy for Today* excerpt

³⁹⁵¹ 17th-century AD, Germany.

³⁹⁵² Jude 10,12,19 excerpts.

³⁹⁵³ Society of Jesus, viz., a Jesuit; Dupont, Yves, *Catholic Prophecy*

Fr. Nectou, S.J.³⁹⁵⁴

'The confusion will be so general that men will not be able to think aright, as if God had withheld His Providence from mankind, and that, during the worst crisis, the best that can be done would be to remain where God has placed us, and persevere in fervent prayers....At that time there will be such a terrible crisis that people will believe that the end of the world has come. Blood will flow in many large cities. The very elements will be convulsed. It will be like a little General Judgement....A great multitude of people will lose their lives in those calamitous times, but the wicked will not prevail. They will indeed attempt to destroy the whole church, but not enough time will be allowed them, because the frightful crisis will be of short duration. When all is considered lost, all will be found safe. This disaster will come to pass shortly after the power of England begins to wane. This will be the sign. As when the fig tree begins to sprout and produce leaves, it is a sure sign that summer is near. England in her turn will experience a more frightful revolution than that of France. It will continue long enough for France to recover her strength; then she will help England to restore peace and order....During this revolution, which will very likely be general and not confined to France, Paris will be destroyed so completely that twenty years afterwards fathers walking over its ruins with their children will be asked by them what kind of place that was; to whom they will answer: 'My child, this was a great city which God has destroyed on account of her crimes.'"³⁹⁵⁵

Blessed Anna-Maria Taigi³⁹⁵⁶

Popes and cardinals have referred to this holy married woman as one of the greatest saints of all time. She was praised by Pope Benedict XV in her beatification³⁹⁵⁷ as being an exemplary wife and mother amid poor and trying circumstances. Frequently in ecstasy, she worked miracles of healing, read hearts, foretold deaths, and saw visions on the coming of future events, foretelling the first two world wars of this century. Eighteen years after her death her body remained fresh and in a state of perfect preservation as if it had been just buried. This is her prophecy on the three days of darkness: 'God will send two punishments: one will be in the form of wars, revolutions and other evils; it shall originate on earth. The other will be sent from Heaven. There shall come over the whole earth an intense darkness lasting three days and three nights. Nothing can be seen, and the air will be laden with pestilence which will claim mainly, but not only, the enemies of religion. It will be impossible to use any man-made lighting during this darkness, except blessed candles. He, who, out of curiosity, opens his window to look out, or leaves his home, will fall dead on the spot. During these three days, people should remain in their homes, pray the Rosary and beg God for mercy....All the enemies of the church, whether known or unknown, will perish over the whole earth during that universal darkness, with the exception

³⁹⁵⁴ 18th-century AD

³⁹⁵⁵ Dupont, Yves, *Catholic Prophecy*

³⁹⁵⁶ 19th-century AD, Italy

³⁹⁵⁷ May 20, 1920AD

of a few whom God will soon convert. The air shall be infected by demons who will appear under all sorts of hideous forms....Religion shall be persecuted, and priests massacred. Churches shall be closed, but only for a short time. The Holy Father shall be obliged to leave Rome.'³⁹⁵⁸

Marie-Julie Jahenny of La Fraudais³⁹⁵⁹

She had five wounds of Our Lord. As a result she was called 'The Breton Stigmatist.' She had the 'marvellous gift' of recognising Eucharistic bread from ordinary bread; objects that were blessed and those that were not relics, and to say where they came from; and finally to understand in several languages hymns and liturgical prayers. During a five-year period³⁹⁶⁰ she survived only on Holy Communion. As Dr. Imbert-Gourbeyre recorded, during this whole period, there were no liquid or solid excretions. She was completely insensitive to pain or intense light during her ecstasies. Some of these ecstasies were accompanied by levitation; at that moment she was ecstatically light.

She had a vision of a dialogue between Our Lord and Lucifer wherein the latter said: 'I will attack the Church. I will overthrow the Cross, I will decimate the people, I will deposit a great weakness of Faith in hearts. There will also be a great denial of religion. For a time I will be master of all things, everything will be under my control, even Your Temple and all Your people.'

'Saint Michael says that Satan will have possession of everything for some time and that he will reign completely over everything; that all goodness, Faith, [and] Religion will be buried in the tomb....Satan and his own will triumph with joy, but after this triumph, the Lord will in His turn gather His own people and will reign and triumph over evil and will raise from the tomb the buried Church, the prostrated Cross.'

Marie-Julie saw that: 'There will not remain any vestige of the Holy Sacrifice, no apparent trace of faith. Confusion will be everywhere....All the works approved by the infallible Church will cease to exist as they are today for a time. In this sorrowful annihilation, brilliant signs will be manifested on earth. If because of the wickedness of men the Holy Church will be in darkness, the Lord will also send darkness that will stop the wicked in their search of wickedness.'

According to Marie-Julie, 'Our Lord and Our Lady announced the conspiracy to invent the 'New Mass':
³⁹⁶¹ 'I give you a warning. The disciples who are not of My Gospel are now working hard to remake according to their ideas and under the influence of the enemy of souls a mass that contains words that are odious in My sight....When the fatal hour arrives when the faith of my priests is put to the test, it will be [these texts] that will be celebrated in this second period....The first period is [that] of my priesthood which exists since Me. The second is [that] of the persecution when the enemies of the Faith and of Holy Religion [will impose their

³⁹⁵⁸ Dupont, Yves, *Catholic Prophecy*

³⁹⁵⁹ 19th-century AD, France

³⁹⁶⁰ from December 28, 1875AD

³⁹⁶¹ 27 November, 1902, and 10 May, 1904AD

formulas] in the book of the second celebration....These infamous spirits are those who crucified me and are awaiting the kingdom of the new Messiah.'

Marie-Julie announced³⁹⁶² the three days of darkness during which the infernal powers will be loosed and will execute all the enemies of God: 'The crisis will explode suddenly; the punishments will be shared by all and will succeed one another without interruption.'

'The three days of darkness will be on a Thursday, Friday and Saturday.³⁹⁶³ Days of the Most Holy Sacrament, of the Cross and Our Lady....three days less one night....The earth will be covered in darkness,' says Our Lady,³⁹⁶⁴ 'and hell will be loosed on earth. Thunder and lightning will cause those who have no faith or trust in My Power, to die of fear....During these three days of terrifying darkness, no windows must be opened, because no one will be able to see the earth and the terrible colour it will have in those days of punishment without dying at once....The sky will be on fire, the earth will split....During these three days of darkness let the blessed candle be lighted everywhere, no other light will shine....No-one outside a shelter will survive. The earth will shake as at the judgement and fear will be great. Yes, We will listen to the prayers of your friends; not one will perish. We will need them to publish the glory of the Cross....'³⁹⁶⁵ 'The candles of blessed wax alone will give light during this horrible darkness. One candle alone will be enough for the duration of this night of hell....In the homes of the wicked and blasphemers these candles will give no light.' And Our Lady states: 'Everything will shake except the piece of furniture on which the blessed candle is burning. This will not shake. You will all gather around with the crucifix and my blessed picture. This is what will keep away this terror....During this darkness the devils and the wicked will take on the most hideous shapes³⁹⁶⁶....red clouds like blood will move across the sky. The crash of the thunder will shake the earth and sinister lightning will streak the heavens out of season. The earth will be shaken to its foundations. The sea will rise, its roaring waves will spread over the continent....The earth will become like a vast cemetery. The bodies of the wicked and the just will cover the groundThree-quarters of the population of the globe will disappear. Half the population of France will be destroyed.'³⁹⁶⁷

St. Pius X³⁹⁶⁸

'I saw one of my successors taking to flight over the bodies of his brethren. He will take refuge in disguise somewhere and after a short retirement he will die a cruel death. The present wickedness of the world is only the beginning of the sorrows which must take place before the end of the world.'³⁹⁶⁹ .

³⁹⁶² 4 January, 1884AD

³⁹⁶³ 'The Seven Seals of Revelation' spreadsheet gives these days as falling on a Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday.

³⁹⁶⁴ 20 September 1882AD

³⁹⁶⁵ 8 December, 1882AD

³⁹⁶⁶ cp. Psalms 78:49

³⁹⁶⁷ Marquis de la Franquerie, Marie-Julie Jahenny (with added comment and clarification in square brackets).

³⁹⁶⁸ 20th-century AD, Italy

Sister Elena Aiello³⁹⁷⁰

She was a Foundress of a religious order, a holy nun, a victim soul, and a Stigmatist. The Virgin Mary appeared and told her:³⁹⁷¹ '[that]...if people...do not return to God with truly Christian living, another terrible war will come from the East to the West. Russia with her secret armies will battle America: it will overrun Europe. The river Rhine will be overflowing with corpses and blood. Italy will also be harassed by a great revolution, and the Pope will suffer terribly.'

The Blessed Virgin showed other visions:³⁹⁷² 'Oh, what a horrible vision I see! A great revolution is going on in Rome! They are entering the Vatican. The Pope is all alone; he is praying. They are holding the Pope. They take him by force. They knock him down to the floor. They are tying him. Oh, God! Oh, God! They're kicking him. What a horrible scene! How dreadful!' 'Our Blessed Mother is drawing near. Like corpses those evil men fall down to the floor. Our Lady helps the Pope to his feet and, taking him by the arm, she covers him with her mantle saying: 'Fear not!' 'Russia will march upon all the nations of Europe, particularly Italy, and will raise her flag over the dome of St. Peter's. Italy will be severely tried by a great revolution, and Rome will be purified in blood for its many sins, especially those of impurity. The flock is about to be dispersed and the Pope will suffer greatly.'³⁹⁷³

Mother Elena Leonardi³⁹⁷⁴

She had been under the special guidance of the famous Stigmatist Padre Pio of Pietrelcina, Italy, since she was nine. She was a victim soul, chosen by God to atone for priests and sinners. The Eternal Father, The Lord, The Virgin Mary, and Padre Pio appeared to her in visions and gave many important messages for the world.³⁹⁷⁵ The following is the message given by the Blessed Virgin Mary: 'An unforeseen fire will descend over the whole earth, and a great part of humanity will be destroyed. This will be a time of despair for the impious: with shouts and satanic blasphemy, they will beg to be covered by the mountains, and they will try to seek refuge in caverns, but to no avail. Those who remain will find God's mercy in my power and protection, while all who refuse to repent of their sins will perish in a sea of fire!....Blessed are those who at this time may be called truly devoted to Mary! My name is locked in your heart, my daughter....Russia will be almost completely burned.'³⁹⁷⁶

³⁹⁶⁹ Dupont, Yves, *Catholic Prophecy*

³⁹⁷⁰ 20th-century AD Italy

³⁹⁷¹ 22 August, 1960AD

³⁹⁷² during 1959–61AD

³⁹⁷³ Herbert, Albert J., *Prophecies! The Chastisement and Purification!*

³⁹⁷⁴ 20th-century AD, Italy

³⁹⁷⁵ from 1973 to 1983AD

³⁹⁷⁶ Herbert, Albert J., *The Three Days' Darkness*

Nostradamus

Nostradamus prophesied that World War III would break out in 1999,³⁹⁷⁷ 'the feast of the eagle,' with Russia and Iran launching nuclear and chemical missiles at NATO³⁹⁷⁸ in Europe, and blocking the Persian Gulf. This World War shall last for thirty years³⁹⁷⁹ and more than one-third of mankind shall perish. Nostradamus also variously 'prophesied' Iran would invade Turkey; political chaos in France; Clinton's downfall; economic collapse at the end of this century; great apostasy and schism in the Catholic Church and the martyrdom of Pope John Paul II; abortion and euthanasia; many floods but only in the northern hemisphere; the USA chastised at first with many floods and hurricanes; a severe drought in Europe during the coming years; and many more significant events in our century.

St. Anthony of the Desert³⁹⁸⁰

'When the church and the world are One, these days will be close at hand. For our divine Master has built a wall between His things and the things of the world.'

Prophecy of Roman Catholic priest³⁹⁸¹

This is claimed to be a prophecy by Lutes Crates,³⁹⁸² possibly from Bayd, Switzerland. In any event, he was a Roman Catholic priest. It is claimed to have been found in the library in Basel,³⁹⁸³ Switzerland in the work 'The Hope of Zion.' This document has appeared in various forms, but the one reproduced here is the longest and most comprehensive to date: 'The old living gospel and the gifts thereof are lost. False doctrines prevail in all churches on the face of the earth. All we can do is exhort the people to be just, fear God, shun evil, and pray. Prayer and purity and faith may cause an angel to visit a deeply distressed soul. But I tell you, God will have spoken within one hundred years. He will restore the old Church again. I see a little band of people led by a prophet and a faithful leader. They are persecuted and burned out and murdered. After the wilderness in a valley by a lake, they will build a great city and make a beautiful land. They shall have a temple of magnificent splendour and also possess the priesthood with apostles, teachers, and deacons etc. From every nation shall the true believers be gathered by speedy messengers. Then shall Almighty God speak to the disobedient nations with thunder, lightning and destruction, such as man has never known before.

³⁹⁷⁷ on 4th July.

³⁹⁷⁸ with the essentially redundant N.A.T.O., post cold-war, transmuting to the U.N.'s security / police / military force, new possibilities open up. If the U.N. then becomes divided into ten world regions, the difficulties inherent in ordering a single security force would tend to the creation of an overarching authority: that of the Antichrist.

³⁹⁷⁹ 1999–2028AD

³⁹⁸⁰ 4th-century AD

³⁹⁸¹ 1739AD

³⁹⁸² some sources list Lutus Gratus or other similar names.

³⁹⁸³ which one is not given.

Prophecies of St. Malachy (concerning popes)

'The best known prophecies about the popes are those attributed to Saint Malachy³⁹⁸⁴ of Ireland. In 1139AD he went to Rome to give an account of the affairs of his diocese to Pope Innocent II, who promised him two palliums for the metropolitan Sees of Armagh and Cashel. While at Rome, he received the strange vision of the future wherein was unfolded before his mind the long list of illustrious pontiffs who were to rule the church until the end of time.³⁹⁸⁵ The same author tells us that Saint Malachy gave his manuscript to Innocent II to console him in the midst of his tribulations, and the document remained unknown in the Roman Archives until its discovery in 1590AD.³⁹⁸⁶ They were first published by Arnold de Wyon, and ever since there has been much discussion as to whether they are genuine predictions of St. Malachy or forgeries. The silence of four hundred years on the part of so many learned authors who had written about the popes, and the silence of Saint Bernard especially, who wrote the 'Life of Saint Malachy,' is strong argument against their authenticity, but it is not conclusive if there is adopted Cucherat's theory that they were hidden in the Archives during those four hundred years.

These short prophetic announcements, in number one hundred and twelve, indicate some noticeable traits of all the future popes from Celestine II³⁹⁸⁷ until the end of the world.³⁹⁸⁸ They are enunciated under the mystical titles. Those who have undertaken to interpret and explain these symbolic prophecies have discovered some trait, allusion, point or similitude in their application to the individual popes, either as to their country, name, their coat of arms or insignia, their birthplace, their talent or learning, the title of their cardinalate, the dignities which they held, etc. For example, it is claimed that the prophecy concerning Urban VIII is 'Lilium et

³⁹⁸⁴ O'Morgair; among the many problems with Malachy's supposed prophecy is that he may have never written it at all. According to numerous sources, including the *New Advent's Catholic Encyclopedia*, there was no mention of Malachy's writings for more than 400 years from the time it was said to have been written and 1590AD when Benedictine monk Arnold de Wyon published the "Prophecy of Popes." The silence about the writings from even Malachy's closest friends has led many scholars to conclude that the writings are forgeries, likely written by Wyon himself, and the Catholic Church has never embraced the writings as official doctrine. The main set of prophecies regarding papal succession is the Prophecy of Popes, 112 short predictions in Latin that supposedly explain the history of popes to come, beginning with Pope Celestine II. Benedictine Arnold de Wyon in 1595AD was the author of the Prophecy of Popes but his writing claims that Saint Malachy, a 12th-century Archbishop of Armagh was the actual composer. The Prophecy is very accurate before 1590AD but far less accurate afterwards, leading some to decide that the Prophecies were composed and released around that time period. Nonetheless, the Prophecy of Popes has continued to occupy the public mind, with Benedict XVI seen as the second-to-last pope, and Francis I presumably as the last (but cf. sup. for more accurate projection). The list finishes with a pope known only as "Peter the Roman." It is stated that his pontificate will usher in the destruction of the city of Rome and the Apocalypse.

³⁹⁸⁵ according to the Abbe Cucherat.

³⁹⁸⁶ Cucherat, *Proph. de la succession des papes*

³⁹⁸⁷ elected in 1130AD

³⁹⁸⁸ rather, the end of the papacy, the whore church, and her harlot daughters.

rosa;³⁹⁸⁹ he was a native of Florence and on the arms of Florence figured a fleur-de-lis; he had three bees emblazoned on his escutcheon, and the bees gather honey from the lilies and roses.³⁹⁹⁰

Again the name accords often with some remarkable or rare circumstances in the pope's career: thus Peregrinus apostolicus,³⁹⁹¹ which designates Pius VI, appears to be verified by his journey when pope into Germany, by his long career as pope, and by his expatriation from Rome at the end of his pontificate. It is also claimed that those who have lived and followed the course of events in an intelligent manner during the pontificates of Pius IX, Leo XIII, and Pius X cannot fail to be impressed with the titles given to each by the prophecies of Saint Malachy and their wonderful appropriateness: Crux de cruce,³⁹⁹² Pius IX; Lumen in Caelo,³⁹⁹³ Leo XIII; and Ignis argens,³⁹⁹⁴ Pius X. There is thought to be something more than coincidence in the designations given to these three popes so many hundreds of years before their time. In some cases, there is need to have recourse either to the family names, armorial bearings or cardinalatial titles to see the fitness of their designations as given in the prophecies. The afflictions and crosses of Pius IX were more than fell to the lot of his predecessors; and the more aggravating of these crosses were brought on by the House of Savoy whose emblem was a cross. Leo XIII was a veritable luminary of the papacy. The present pope³⁹⁹⁵ is truly a burning fire of zeal for the restoration of all things in Christ.

The latter of these prophecies concerns the end of the world, as is, as follows, 'In the final persecution of the Holy Roman church there will reign Peter the Roman, who will feed his flock amid many tribulations, after which the seven-hilled city will be destroyed and the dreadful Judge will judge the people. The End.' It has been noticed concerning Petrus Romanus, who according to St. Malachy's list is to be the last pope,³⁹⁹⁶ that the prophecy does not say that no popes shall intervene between him and his predecessor.³⁹⁹⁷ It merely says he is to be the last, so that we may suppose as many popes as we please before 'Peter the Roman.' Corneius a Lapide refers to this prophecy in his commentary 'On the Gospel of St. John,' and 'On the Apocalypse,' and he endeavours to calculate according to it the remaining years of time.³⁹⁹⁸

Despite the comments, the tenuous nature of some and the distinct probability of forgery, according to Saint Malachy's list John Paul II is the third to last pope, referred to as 'ab labore solis,' 'from the labour'³⁹⁹⁹ of

³⁹⁸⁹ 'the lily and the rose.'

³⁹⁹⁰ tenuous in the extreme!

³⁹⁹¹ Pilgrim pope.

³⁹⁹² Cross from a Cross.

³⁹⁹³ Light in the Sky.

³⁹⁹⁴ Burning Fire.

³⁹⁹⁵ written in 1911AD

³⁹⁹⁶ in Malachy's list, the last-in-line pope is un-numbered.

³⁹⁹⁷ designated Gloria Olivæ.

³⁹⁹⁸ so ends the treatise, excerpted from *The Catholic Encyclopaedia*, published in 1911AD. Newer editions do not go to this detail pertaining to Malachy.

³⁹⁹⁹ or eastern rising, or eclipse.

the sun.' Pope emeritus Benedict XVI is possibly second to last, with the remaining pope Francis I, or popes un-numbered until the end:⁴⁰⁰⁰

110. Ab labore solis;⁴⁰⁰¹

111. Gloria olivæ;⁴⁰⁰² and,

Un-numbered: Petrus romanus.⁴⁰⁰³

⁴⁰⁰⁰ listed in 1998AD.

⁴⁰⁰¹ John Paul II, who, it is claimed, was born during a solar eclipse, and laboured hard in a limestone quarry during World War II.

⁴⁰⁰² 'from the glory of the olive'—according to Malachi O'Morgair, this is the description of the second to last pope, widely but erroneously held to be the 'Anti-pope.' This pope is pope emeritus Benedict XVI who retired, after eight years in the post, on 28 February, 2013AD, the first to have done so in six centuries, the last being Gregory XII in 1415AD. He is succeeded by the first Jesuit pope, Francis I, formerly Argentina's Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio (and a Jesuit Provincial), an Argentinean of Italian stock, elevated on 13 March, 2013AD (13.03.13). This date gives off 3 x 3s, a frequently-used occult sub-set of the infamous '666.'

The Jesuite Fourth Vow or Blood Oath, so vehemently denied by practising Jesuits but confirmed by former Jesuits and by the late Alberto Rivero, also recorded in the U.S. Library of Congress, 62nd. Congress, 3rd. Session, House Calendar 397, Report 1523, 15 February, 1913AD, pp.3215,3216 (before the page was mysteriously ripped out of the record), and also cited by Didier, Charles, in *Subterranean Rome*, includes the following instruction and oath given in the induction ceremony:

'Go ye, then, into all the world and take possession of all lands in the name of the Pope. He who will not accept him as the Vicar of Jesus and his Vice-Regent on earth, let him be accursed and exterminated.'

'I do further promise and declare that I will, when opportunity presents, make and wage relentless war, secretly and openly, against all heretics, Protestants, and Masons, as I am directed to do, to extirpate them from the face of the whole earth; and that I will spare neither age, sex nor condition, and that I will hang, burn, waste, boil, flay, strangle, and bury alive these infamous heretics; rip up the stomachs and wombs of their women, and crush their infants' heads against the walls in order to annihilate their execrable race. That when the same cannot be done openly I will secretly use the poisonous cup, the strangulation cord, the steel of the poniard, or the leaden bullet, regardless of the honour, rank, dignity or authority of the persons, whatever may be their condition in life, either public or private, as I at any time may be directed so to do by any agents of the Pope or Superior of the Brotherhood of the Holy Father of the Society of Jesus. In confirmation of which I hereby dedicate my life, soul, and all corporal powers.'

It is difficult to accept that anyone taking such an oath would act, in the last analysis, other than in its conformity, especially when given the powers bestowed upon Francis I or his successor.

⁴⁰⁰³ Peter the Roman—according to O'Morgair, the last pope—is nothing more than an horrific reprise of the pagan religious position of Peter-Roma, the 'interpreter' of the ancient esoteric Chaldean Mysteries. This pagan priest, of ancient spoor, was he who explained the Mysteries to the initiated, and was sometimes called by the Greek term Hierophant, 'the revealer of that which is hidden.'

Despite O'Morgair's prophecy, it would appear entirely possible that the new pope, Francis I, is but the penultimate and transitional pope, not the last-in-line. If this proves to be so, then it is likely that the last pope will be a Jesuit too.

There is a tenuous link between John Paul I, who is widely-held to have been assassinated, and Francis I. C.C.G. p288: '....we have it recorded by a number of authorities that John-Paul I went white on his election, and uttered these words: "May God forgive you for what you have done in my regard (or on my account)."'

Francis I is reported as saying on his election: "May God forgive you for what you have done."

Francis I apparently models himself on Francis of Assisi (1181–1226AD). A prophecy of Francis of Assisi, given shortly before his death, contains this interesting prediction: 'At the time of the tribulation a man, not canonically-elected, will be raised to the pontificate, who, by his cunning, will endeavour to draw many into error and death.' An alternative Francis on whom to model himself, Francis Xavier, introduced the Inquisition to Portugese Goa, in India, with predictable results.

Assuming Francis to be the penultimate, there is the possibility of the final pope being Sixtus or Xystus VI, i.e., '66.'

Indeed, Sixtus V redesigned Rome in a mere five years, in the AD1580s, so it would be consonant for the VI to complete

Pope Pius XII actually took for himself the title of 'Pastor Angelicus,' one of Malachy's descriptions, which supposedly referred to him. This was after Pius had previously styled himself the 'Pope of Fatima' until he discovered what was in 'Fatima 3' by sending an envoy to interview 'Sister Lucy.'⁴⁰⁰⁴ Once some details of the contents became known to him, he became quite reticent on the matter. The actual written prophecy was kept 'secure and unopened' in the Vatican for many years, when it was opened by Pope John XXIII.⁴⁰⁰⁵ Since then, it is claimed that it has been read by all popes.

Editing

Irrespective of the content of all of the above 'prophecies,' in all their apostate and discursive rambling, it should be borne in mind that there is an underlying yet discernible attempt to 'edit' the New Testament canon, and introduce apocryphal material more conformed to these views and Marian and other 'revelations.' Some elements in Roman Catholicism and 'New Age' philosophy have been mindful, in the past, to expunge the book of Revelation entirely from the New Testament canon⁴⁰⁰⁶ and replace it with one or other of their own versions, such as the wholly apostate book of the Shepherd of Hermas. This deceptive device has been referred to as the 'Antichrist's Bible,' described by Riplinger: 'Is the Antichrist's final bible already here, waiting in the wings in the new version manuscripts Vaticanus (B) and Sinaiticus (Aleph)? New Age leader Vera Alder⁴⁰⁰⁷ betrays the method by which the 'Antichrist' will create the Bible for his one world religion.

[T]he World Government and its Spiritual Cabinet of twelve, headed by 'the Christ,' will study all archaeological archives....From it, the Research Panel would develop the 'New' Bible of a World Religion which would be the basis of future education.'⁴⁰⁰⁸

the exercise in the AD2020s....or, possibly Pius XIII, this claimed by many to be the more obvious choice of a new Roman prelate.

⁴⁰⁰⁴ in 1955AD

⁴⁰⁰⁵ in 1960AD

⁴⁰⁰⁶ such is their level of co-habitation.

⁴⁰⁰⁷ Alder, Vera, *When Humanity Comes of Age*

⁴⁰⁰⁸ Riplinger, Gail A., *New Age Bible Versions*, pp.555-558 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets), who goes on to say:

'The Antichrist's ploy has its precedence in the prefaces of series in this century.' The R.V. of 1881AD used Aleph and B. The R.S.V. added 16 papyrus, the N.A.B.S. added 13 more, the N.I.V. added another 10 and the N.R.S.V. another 18. (It should be noted that these 'additional' sources in most cases caused the subtraction of words, phrases, or sentences.) As Comfort's and my collation have shown, these sources were used very haphazardly. *US News and World Report* (11.08.93) reveals plans by Canon Seminar scholars for a "radical revision of the New Testament" that will replace the book of Revelation with "other writings.... [previously] dismissed by church leaders as inauthentic or heretical." "We are saying to the church, 'If you think you have everything you need in your Bible....we don't think that's true.'" They "hope their new canon eventually will work its way into the churches' major Christian denominations." When the Antichrist's Bible comes, it too will boast a resurrection from the 'archaeological archives'—or is it already here? A word-for-word translation of Vaticanus (B) or Sinaiticus (Aleph) with its Apocrypha will serve Satan's purposes perfectly. I can just see the ads—"More accuratecloser to the originals."

Texe Marrs, New Age researcher, observes how the words 'research' and 'archaeology' are woven into this web of deception: 'For centuries Satan has inspired scientists and pseudo-scientists to label Christians as unsophisticated and behind-the-times. Many of these....secular humanist arguments will become part of the New Age Bible. The Bible that is developed by the Antichrist will be applauded as fully in keeping with a high-tech age. Furthermore, New Age citizens will be told that the New Age scriptures can be changed whenever new scientific discoveries suggest revisions are needed.'⁴⁰⁰⁹

'The book of Revelation gives God's version of 'the end of the story.' Both Aleph and B give a different ending to the story, ignoring God's warning.⁴⁰¹⁰ *'If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of this book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.'*⁴⁰¹¹

Neither Aleph nor B ends with the book of Revelation. Vaticanus (B) completely eliminates Revelation, thereby disobeying God's command not to "*take away from the words of this book.*" Sinaiticus (Aleph) adds two books after Revelation, both written in the same handwriting as the remainder. Hence this manuscript is guilty of adding "*unto these things.*" The addition of these two books presents an ending to the story that lines up, word-for-word, with the scenario Satan would like to see. (Since the exegesis⁴⁰¹² of most apostate Christian teachers regarding the book of Revelation puts it in the setting of the fall of the Roman Empire, the two added books could easily be adopted to form a manual for the New Age). These two books, 'The Shepherd of Hermas,' and 'The Epistle of Barnabus,' spell out in detail the entire New Age scenario, including commands to do the things God specifically forbids, such as:

1. Take 'the name of the beast';
2. Give 'up to the beast';
3. Form a one world government;
4. Kill those not receiving his 'name';
5. Worship female virgins;
6. Receive 'another spirit';
7. Seek power;

⁴⁰⁰⁹ Marrs, Texe, *Power of Prophecy*

⁴⁰¹⁰ sublinear emphasis added.

⁴⁰¹¹ Rev 22:18,19

⁴⁰¹² rather, it constitutes eisegesis (forcing the Bible meaning to accord with an existing belief) masquerading as exegesis (obtaining a belief from the Bible itself).

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8. Believe that God is imminent in His creation, as a pantheistic, monistic Hindu god;
 9. Avoid marriage;
 10. Permit fornication;
 11. Abstain from fasting;
 12. Subscribe to the New Age Root Race Theory; and,
 13. Be saved by being baptised and keeping the 'twelve' mandates of the Antichrist.

Like the TV advertisements selling 'faux' diamonds, 'New' versions are now being advertised as containing the 'Apocrypha'.⁴⁰¹³ The N.R.S.V., R.S.V., T.E.V., N.I.V., and Revised English Bible have abandoned their previous Protestant moorings and added these 'false Rocks.' This might be expected since the two foremost New Testament scholars value the Apocrypha very highly. Bruce⁴⁰¹⁴ cites the Muratorian Canon which "implies that its⁴⁰¹⁵ right to a place in the canon could be maintained on the strength of its prophetic quality." Bruce Metzger, American mastermind behind the *U.B.S. Greek New Testament*, believes the Apocrypha is a part of the Bible.

They are not alone, but are not in good company. The Ghostly Guild duo, Westcott and Lightfoot, and their spectres from the past, Clement, Origen, and Eusebius, called these added books "divinely inspired and very useful," "remarkable" and "theologically....of the highest value." Our Bible revisers, Bruce, Metzger, and Westcott, are here in common cause with Mme. Blavatsky, who sees these added books as vehicles for her Luciferian doctrines. She snickers in her book, *Isis Unveiled*, of Westcott's ardour for this material, recognising it as the domain of the occult world. She recognises [the contents of The Shepherd of Hermas] as direct excerpts from Pagan literature, "concocted from those Pagan predecessors....such as the Kabala, the Sohar, [and] Hindu and Gnostic writings."

'[T]he best men, the most erudite scholars even among Protestant divines, but too often fall into [our]traps. We cannot believe that such a learned commentator as Canon Westcott could have left himself in ignorance as to Talmudistic and purely kabalistic writings. How then is it that we find him quoting from the work of The Pastor of Hermas, which are complete sentences from the kabalistic literature?....[N]early everything expressed by the pseudo-Hermas....is a plain quotation, with repeated variations, from the Sohar and other kabalistic books. [T]hey....are not only purely kabalistic without even so much as a change in expression, but Brahmanical and Pagan.'⁴⁰¹⁶

⁴⁰¹³ Greek for 'false.'

⁴⁰¹⁴ F. F. Bruce.

⁴⁰¹⁵ Shepherd of Hermas.

⁴⁰¹⁶ Riplinger, Gail A., *New Age Bible Versions*, pp.555-558

Mme. Blavatsky gives several pages of quotes showing the parallels between Aleph's apocryphal Shepherd of Hermas and occult writings. She not only shows these added books to be occult, but throws in Lightfoot himself, whom she quotes to support her views on magic: 'Lightfoot assures us that this voice [which]responded from the mercy-seat within the veil....was indeed performed by magic art.'⁴⁰¹⁷

Now, of course, a distinctive part of Roman Catholic belief lies in a variety of forms of worship known as hagiolatry: the worship of, and communion with, dead 'saints.' These beliefs are also deeply rooted in paganism, and the occult. It should also be remembered that there are other variant world religions, described as apostate, and which fall well within the definition of '*antichrist*' given in the epistles of John:

1. Buddhism—the mark on the forehead is called 'The lotus of the true Way,' and the religion itself is called 'The Way';
2. Shintoism—the popular religion of Japan comes from the word Shinto which means 'The Way of the gods';
3. Taoism—the religion of China, which is Chinese for 'The Way';
4. Islam—Moslem mystics call their Sufi branch, 'a search for the Way, a Way that is....seeking divine ecstasy';
5. Hinduism—defined as 'a Way'; and,
6. Gnosticism—ancient Gnosticism's 'Path of Initiation' was called 'The Way.'⁴⁰¹⁸

All of these deny the Bible in its entirety. But there are others, ranging from the Jews who deny the New Testament, to the likes of Joseph Smith who claimed to have found strange tablets under a tree and which he claimed to be 'new revealed scripture.' These can be taken together as comprising a fundamental questioning of the validity of the New Testament, but there are others, of course. Superficially and heretically, if it has been questioned by many whether the New Testament is valid, then why should it stop there? According to this view, the whole thing could be open-ended, with ever more 'up-to-date scripture' being added as 'necessity' dictates.

The Judæo-Christian, biblically-founded response to this is very simple. In the first instance, there is a proscription on adding to or detracting from the Law. However, in the Old Testament, there is no such proscription on Scripture itself, which contains the Law, the prophets and the writings. Thus, while adding to or detracting from the Law is proscribed in the Old Testament, the other two are not restricted in terms of addition, thus permitting the New Testament.

⁴⁰¹⁷ Blavatsky, Helena Petrovna, *Collected Writings*, Vol. ii., p.128

⁴⁰¹⁸ Riplinger, Gail A., *New Age Bible Versions*, pp.276,277

In a similar way to the Old Testament, the New Testament contains the Law, and prophecies and writings. As the New Testament is a restatement and confirmation of the Old Covenant Law—with, as sometimes termed, the '*royal law*'⁴⁰¹⁹—that aspect can be left aside for the purposes of the current discussion. That leaves the position of the New Testament, and, in particular, its writings and prophecies.

The New Testament writings are a record of the life and times of Jesus Christ, whose position has already been reviewed, and those of his immediate followers. As Christ was '*Emmanuel with us*,' and the '*hope of all Israel*,' then the writings of His life and times, His preaching, His healing, His words, His admonitions, His warnings, His prophecies, and other matters, are certainly valid for the purposes of Scripture. They constitute Scripture: the New Testament Scripture.

From even a cursory reading of prophetic Scripture, it should be evident that a number of lengthy sections of the Old Testament⁴⁰²⁰ are rendered more easily understood, and fleshed out, when read in conjunction with the New Testament. In the area of prophecy, the New Testament does contain significant or wholesale additions to that which appears in the Old Testament. These additions are frequently in the form of more detail, but neither do they negate nor seek to countermand those in the Old Testament. Rather, they illuminate and enrich them.

The New Testament has a singular difference with the Old Testament in one key context: it contains a prohibition and a curse on anyone adding to it or detracting from it.⁴⁰²¹ It is not only the Law, but everything written that is covered by this proscription. In other words, Scripture closed with the completion of the New Testament in the form of the book of Revelation. This is why the Mormon 'scriptures' are wholly apostate. It is not even necessary to read them to know: the very date indicates it clearly. That said, if they are read, very quickly this initial view becomes wholly confirmed. The same goes for the Koran, and all other 'quasi-scriptures' written post-Revelation.

However, there is one more point, and it is referred to above. The question is whether the church was left by our Lord Jesus Christ with a full and final revelation of necessary beliefs, which it had to preserve, and study, and grow to appreciate, comparing its prophecies with the unfolding of events, or with an imperfect and insufficient revelation, waiting to be enlarged from time to time by special revelations given to favoured teachers. It is clear that while Scripture is complete, prophecy is not, despite the claims of some 'Christians' that it is. There are many references to prophecies that are to be given off at or very near the time of the end. For example, the two witnesses in chapter eleven of Revelation are to prophesy. In the New Testament, there is: '*And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream*

⁴⁰¹⁹ q.v. sup.

⁴⁰²⁰ e.g., Daniel.

⁴⁰²¹ Rev 22:18,19

*dreams: And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy.*⁴⁰²² And in the Old Testament: *'And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophecy; your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my Spirit.'*

4023

In both instances, these verses are followed by a description of what is actually the sixth seal of the book of Revelation, which precedes the seventh seal, the great and terrible Day of the Lord. This, in turn, brings on the triumphal return of Christ first *'in the air'* and then to the mount of Olives, in all power and glory, at the Last Trump, the seventh trumpet of the seventh seal. Clearly these refer to end-time events. There is in this a caveat, however: as Scripture is complete, there will be no further writings of Scripture. All valid prophecies given at or near the time of the end will be by way of detail within the overall scriptural revelation.

Certainly, God's ways and His plan for mankind are different from apostate man's imaginings, despite man's best attempts at hiding and subverting God's word, and it is abundantly clear that man has not been left in ignorance concerning these matters, although many false beliefs can frequently obscure the purview. In addition to various verses in the Bible which offer specific reference, there is the overall scheme in the flow of God's annual holy days. These holy days are mentioned many times in both the Old and New Testaments and are listed in order in Leviticus.⁴⁰²⁴ These holy days picture God's plan to save mankind, a plan from Passover through to the Feast of Tabernacles / Last Great Day which covers Judæo-Christians converted down through the ages prior to the return of Christ, as well as the vast numbers who will become converted subsequently, during Christ's millennial reign.

There are many, however, who do not fit in with this. The plan is one of Judæo-Christian redemption, so there is the question of what happens to all those who died or will have died without even hearing the name of Jesus Christ, the only name by which salvation is possible.⁴⁰²⁵ Is it fair or equitable that those who could never have heard of Him—either through having lived before the time of Christ or having lived in locations remote or completely cut off from the mainstream of events—can have no hope? And what of those who are genuinely confused by the fractious state of what passes for mainstream Christianity today? Are they all lost? John furnishes the response: *'For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.'*⁴⁰²⁶ God is, above all, fair and just, and all will be given one chance, and but one chance, to attain their place in the kingdom.

⁴⁰²² Acts 2:17,18

⁴⁰²³ Joel 2:28,29

⁴⁰²⁴ Leviticus chpt. 23; also cf. New Moons.

⁴⁰²⁵ Acts 4:12

⁴⁰²⁶ John 3:16,17

Jewish eschatology

In the time of Christ, the Jews held that the Messiah would come to condemn the Gentiles, based on a seriously deficient understanding of, inter alia, a tract in Amos: *'Woe unto you that desire the day of the Lord! to what end is it for you? the day of the Lord is darkness, and not light. As if a man did flee from a lion, and a bear met him; or went into the house, and leaned his hand on the wall, and a serpent bit him. Shall not the day of the Lord be darkness, and not light? even very dark, and no brightness in it?'*⁴⁰²⁷

Jewish eschatology and apocalyptic of the time, as it is often called, is summarised by Oesterley and Robinson: 'Jewish Eschatology as it came down from earlier times comprised, amongst others, the following themes: The belief that in the 'Day of Yahweh' God would intervene in favour of His chosen people, and would overthrow the enemies of Israel. There was next the hope of the establishment of a new kingdom ruled over by a messianic king belonging to the House of David. Further, there was to be the in-gathering of the scattered members of the race in their own land, and the conversion of the Gentiles to the belief in Yahweh. These beliefs and hopes had existed in one form or another since the Exile and before; and they were intensified and came to fuller expression whenever the times became dark and perplexing.'⁴⁰²⁸

The work also has a second paragraph,⁴⁰²⁹ which forms part of a tract which sources a great many Jewish beliefs surrounding the Messiah and eschatology to roots in Zoroastrianism, the pagan, fire-worshipping dualistic religion of Persia, with its constant battle between the all-good Ahura-Mazda and the great spirit of evil, Angra-Mainyu. This religious system was reputedly founded by Zorathushtra sometime between 1500–600BC. While some of this attribution may be disregarded, especially any and all of that which claims biblical correlation and adoption, the accusation of serious Jewish import from paganism is certainly germane, with a good part of it coming from Persia, as will be seen below, particularly in the context of the Kabbala. The Israelites, for example, patently did not keep the commandment of God when entering the Promised Land: *'When the Lord thy God shall cut off the nations from before thee, whither thou goest to possess them, and thou succeedest them, and dwellest in their land; Take heed to thyself that thou be not snared by following them, after that they be destroyed from before thee; and that thou enquire not after their gods, saying, How did these nations serve their gods? Even so will I do likewise. Thou shalt not do so unto the Lord thy God: for every abomination to the Lord, which he hateth, have they done unto their gods; for even their sons and their daughters they have burnt in the fire to their gods. What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it.'*

⁴⁰³⁰ Despite this stark commandment, frequent piecemeal and sometimes wholesale adoption of pagan rites

⁴⁰²⁷ Amos 5:18-20, selected for the purpose of illustration.

⁴⁰²⁸ Oesterley, W. O. E., and Robinson, Theodore H., *Hebrew Religion—its Origin and Development*, p.343, para. 1

⁴⁰²⁹ Oesterley, W. O. E., and Robinson, Theodore H., *Hebrew Religion—its Origin and Development*, p.343, para. 2

⁴⁰³⁰ Deut 12:29-32

and customs by the children of Israel did occur, augmented by the vain imaginings of their wayward minds. This is what led Christ to say, '*But in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.*'⁴⁰³¹

Irrespective of its shortcomings, most of the content of the second paragraph is in point, as, again, it gives a quite reasonable summary of Jewish belief in the matter: 'Now if the eschatological beliefs of Judaism had had to do with these alone one should not necessarily have grounds for thinking that extraneous influences had been at work. But alongside of these beliefs we find there are thoughts and expectations of a rather different kind. Thus, it is not for Israel exclusively that the bright future is anticipated. Although in the foreground it is the chosen people who appear, the purview is widened, and the whole world is embraced within this hope. Then, too, there is the expectation of the annihilation of the world in order that the new world of the future may take its place. Again, as regards the present world-order, it is seen to be divided up into different periods, the precise length of each of which is accurately calculated, and at the right time God will intervene in the world's history and bring about this annihilation and the creation of the new world. Further, the judgement upon Israel's enemies becomes the final judgement of the whole world. And finally, in connexion with the end of this world and the new one to come, there appears the belief in the resurrection of the dead, and a worldwide kingdom of God.' But this can be expanded upon. 'Virtually all of rabbinic eschatology sprang from the ideas in the inter-testamental literature, not from the Bible.'⁴⁰³²

Adding to all is an adumbrated view of Jewish expectation of the Messiah at the time of Christ: 'Other New Testament messianic ideas might have precursors in the scrolls. In one important text⁴⁰³³ written in Aramaic, a figure called 'the Son of God, Son of the Most High' appears. Although the first column of the text is broken, making an identification uncertain, it has been plausibly suggested that this figure is none other than the Messiah. This apocalyptic fragment may thus provide an important precursor to the New Testament's designation of Jesus as the 'Son of God.' Prior to its publication, the idea of the Messiah as God's son had not been attested in pre-Christian Jewish texts. It was often suggested that the idea derived not from Judaism, but from the Greco-Roman royal ideology, where kings were believed to have been adopted by the gods. (We may observe the appearance of similar themes also in ancient Near East texts). This scroll may thus provide a Jewish antecedent to an idea once thought to be a Hellenistic-Christian innovation [sic]. In addition, we now have a text⁴⁰³⁴ that speaks in its first line of a Messiah who commands 'heaven and earth'—a far more exalted position of a Messiah than is usually found in Jewish texts of this period.'⁴⁰³⁵

⁴⁰³¹ Mat 15:9

⁴⁰³² Golb, Norman, *Who Wrote the Dead Sea Scrolls?* p.335; in other words, from the vain imaginings of man, not from the word of God.

⁴⁰³³ 4Q246

⁴⁰³⁴ 4Q521

⁴⁰³⁵ Golb, Norman, *Who Wrote the Dead Sea Scrolls?* p.379

Oesterley and Robinson identify the spoor of the then Jewish view of the resurrection and judgement: 'In both Iranian and Jewish Apocalyptic the Resurrection is closely connected with the World-conflagration and the Judgement, and the conjunction of these themes is to be found in Iranian and Jewish Eschatology alone. And further, as Bousset has pointed out,⁴⁰³⁶ in Jewish Eschatology we have two incongruous ideas side by side; there is, in addition to the Judgement and the general Resurrection of the dead at the last day, retribution on the individual immediately after death, and therefore before the Resurrection. The idea of a twofold retribution [on the individual] in the Hereafter occurs nowhere else but in Iranian Eschatology. The two facts mentioned should be sufficient to prove the indebtedness of Jewish Apocalyptists to Persia.'⁴⁰³⁷

As a brief statement of the span of Jewish belief, this patently lacks the spectrum necessary to cover all the various competing ideas, thoughts, and interpretations then in currency, but it does give a flavour of the complexity of the mix, being partly scripturally-based, partly pagan. It is sufficient, however, for the immediate purposes of this inquiry, although a little more will be given later, where deemed necessary.

Herford identifies and ably describes the general state of disorder: 'When looked at from a distance, as is usually the case with non-Jewish students, Judaism appears to be a well-defined and fairly simple system, with a few strongly marked lines of thought and practice capable of easy description, and supposed to be not less easily understood. But, when studied from near at hand, still more when studied from within, Judaism is seen to be by no means simple. There were many more types than usually appear, many more shades of belief and practice than those which are commonly described. In this sense it is true to say, in the words of Montifiore, 'that there were many Judaisms'....If it were possible to analyze the Judaism of the New Testament Period in all its component elements, the result of the process would be to show how complex a variety is summed up under that name, and how far from the truth it is to speak of 'the Jews' collectively as if they were all alike, in respect of their Judaism.'⁴⁰³⁸

That the Jews are yet expecting Elijah is not surprising, given their lacking the New Testament canon. Much less so is their continuing failure to discern two messianic appearances of a single Messiah from the Old Testament. Sadly, this does not increase the likelihood of their arriving at anything even approaching the complete plan of God. Their denial of Christ utterly locks them out of the very thing they seek: there can be no proper knowledge of eschatology and the apocalypse without the gift of the Holy Spirit,⁴⁰³⁹ available only through the

⁴⁰³⁶ Bousset, Wilhelm, *Die Religion des Judentums*, pp.511f.

⁴⁰³⁷ Oesterley, W. O. E., and Robinson, Theodore H., *Hebrew Religion—its Origin and Development*, pp.350,351 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁴⁰³⁸ Herford, V., *Judaism in the New Testament Period*, pp.14,41,42

⁴⁰³⁹ Barclay, William, *A New Testament Workbook*, p.25 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets): 'To a Jew the Holy Spirit of God had two great functions:

1. It was through His Holy Spirit that God spoke to man. The prophet spoke because the Spirit of the Lord was upon him. It was God's Holy Spirit [that] revealed to Simeon that he would see God's Anointed One before he died (Luke 2:25).
2. But also, it was God's Holy Spirit in his heart which enabled a man to recognise God's truth when he heard it.

suffering and sacrifice of Jesus Christ, and subsequent repentance and baptism. In addition, the detail afforded by Christ in the book of Revelation not only goes way beyond that available in the Old Testament, it illuminates it thoroughly too. Thus, their restriction to a single messianic appearance,⁴⁰⁴⁰ allied to a very limited understanding of Old Testament prophecy, produces, for the Jews, but a merely inchoate, un-crystallised reflection of what is, in reality, a fully-coloured, detailed and enthralling conclusion to this age, and its glorious continuation throughout all eternity beyond: to whit, the plan of God⁴⁰⁴¹ and the very purpose of man.

However, touched on above, there is the question of the extent of seepage of pagan belief into mainstream Judaism, whether or not from the root of Zoroastrianism. By way of illustration of the malaise, in the Kabbalah, along with its various magical practices, tokens and amulets, and fearful images of dybbuks, ghosts, demons, and succubi, are the 'secrets of sacrifices,'⁴⁰⁴² interpreted in terms of transformations of spiritual and vital energies,⁴⁰⁴³ to get closer to God. According to the teachings of Hassidism, all men have an animal soul and a divine soul.⁴⁰⁴⁴ These divine souls are interconnected in hidden ways, and the assembly of all constitutes a unified and sacred divine entity that is developing through the spiritual development of each and every one of its individual components.

In this view, the Torah and its commandments⁴⁰⁴⁵ were formed to guide the spiritual transformation from the dominance of the animal soul to the pre-eminence of the divine soul. It is held that this divine soul is common to all humankind, as well as to spiritual worlds. Accordingly, as the majority of Torah commandments are held to deal with Temple worship and the sacrifices, certain processes of spiritual transformation are not available as long as the Temple is not in existence.

Today some contend that worship in the future Temple will not include 'substitute animal sacrifices,' but, rather, the sacrifice / dedication of the animal soul of each person. In this way, it is suggested that there would be a return to the primal intensity of sacrifice: human sacrifice. This time it is to be self-sacrifice, rather than the sacrifice of a substitute offering. By dint of this, it is held that sacrifice will return to its primordial meaning, namely, man will be able to realise his whole being, illuminated by his divine spark, through 'dying to his animal soul,' to make space for the inner divine.

The Jews believed that the Holy Spirit of God operated from without to bring men truth; and from within to enable them to recognise truth. The Holy Spirit was at once, to them, the revealer and the touchstone of truth.'

⁴⁰⁴⁰ cf. inf. for a review of the Jewish doctrine of the 'Double-Messiah.'

⁴⁰⁴¹ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol.2, p.80:

'There are no failures and there are no loose ends in the ultimate plan of God.'

⁴⁰⁴² Hebrew: Sod haKorbanot.

⁴⁰⁴³ Hebrew: Hayut.

⁴⁰⁴⁴ an occult belief that man inherently possesses a divine nature that only has to be realised through mystical methods to attain salvation, perfection, and divinity.

⁴⁰⁴⁵ containing a claimed deeply-hidden and mystical, infinitely-demanding additional Torah which God is supposed to have encoded in the words of Scripture and which can only be discovered and understood by the Hasidic Jew.

In light of this, especially when taken in the context of the pervading element of Kabbalism in Judaism, it is not beyond the bounds of possibility that sacrifices in the Third Temple, after the setting up of the image of the Beast when ritual sacrifice and oblations will cease, will be human sacrifices potentially performed by Jewish priests, descendants of Aaron. That there will be human sacrifices is certain, and this has been well-known for a long time, but the possibility of Jewish priests undertaking such acts is horrifying beyond description. It is hoped and prayed that this concern proves ill-founded. Unfortunately, it is impossible to dismiss it.

Kabbalah

Encyclopedia Americana provides a definition of mystical Kabbalah: 'Cabala (literally, tradition)⁴⁰⁴⁶ is the name given to the current of mystic teachings in Judaism beginning at about the end of the twelfth-century. The name originated in Spain at the time mentioned, and signifies that these doctrines, though not referred to in the Bible and the Talmud, possess authority and authenticity, having been transmitted from man to man during the ages, down to the first cabalists. The origins of cabala are variously ascribed to Isaac the Blind,⁴⁰⁴⁷ son of Abraham of Posquières;⁴⁰⁴⁸ David, father of Abraham; Isaac the Nazarite; and other scholars and mystics.

Despite its claim to be a new and sudden revelation, cabala is actually an intensified development of the principal teachings of an earlier mystical trend, and, like its precursor, centres about two problems: first, how to reconcile the relation of God, the most exalted and spiritual Being, to the gross, materialistic world; and second, how could such a Being create a material world and whence did matter come? The solution to these problems can be comprised in one word: mediation—meaning that there are mediators between God and the world by means of which the relation is carried out. This answer is not new; it was taught in ancient times by Philo. The content, however, differs. The mediators were identified differently through the ages as angels, as powers of God embodied in the letters of the alphabet, or as hypostatized powers called sephiroth. It is the sephiroth on which the cabala centres.

The essence of God, according to the cabala, is unknown. We only know that he is unlimited and infinite. He is accordingly denominated the En Sof.⁴⁰⁴⁹ He must, however, reveal Himself to the world and the mind of man. The doctrine, therefore, posits between God and the world and man, ten manifestations of power and media of His will, called sephiroth. These are: Kether,⁴⁰⁵⁰ Hokmah,⁴⁰⁵¹ and Binah,⁴⁰⁵² forming the first triad,

⁴⁰⁴⁶ or traditional lore, incorporating a mystical Jewish system of interpretation of the Scriptures based on the belief that every word, letter, number, and even accent contains mysteries; a summary of the Kabbalah and its modern variants is given in the Glossary.

⁴⁰⁴⁷ c.1190–1200AD

⁴⁰⁴⁸ 1125–1198AD

⁴⁰⁴⁹ Endless.

⁴⁰⁵⁰ Crown.

⁴⁰⁵¹ Wisdom.

⁴⁰⁵² Understanding.

which relates to pure being; Hesed,⁴⁰⁵³ Geburah,⁴⁰⁵⁴ and Tiferet,⁴⁰⁵⁵ which denote the moral qualities; Nezah,⁴⁰⁵⁶ Hod,⁴⁰⁵⁷ and Yesod,⁴⁰⁵⁸ which represent the world of nature; and Malkut,⁴⁰⁵⁹ which harmonizes the other nine and acts as the medium between the sephiroth and other links in the chain of existence. The sephiroth are the instruments by means of which God created the world. Around this central theory there developed a vast literature dealing with the functions of the sephiroth, their relation to the various names of God, and their combinations. A trend of practical cabala was developed which held that, by the use of such divine names and their combinations, miracles could be performed and requests in prayers granted.

The principal book of the cabala is the Zohar.⁴⁰⁶⁰ It was brought forth by Moses ben Shem Tob de Leon at the end of the thirteenth-century and ascribed by him to Simon ben Yohai, a tanna of the second-century, although it is now assumed to have been compiled by de Leon from various sources. Of the many currents of cabala, the one initiated by Isaac Luria Ashkenazi,⁴⁰⁶¹ who lived in Palestine, is the leading one, having exerted great influence on the Jewish masses for centuries.⁴⁰⁶²

'[The Zohar] was offered as the work of Simon ben Jochai, a sage of the second-century, of whom many legends are told. He is said to have spent many years in solitude, a hermit receiving special revelations. It was claimed that for over a thousand years the Zohar had been concealed in a cave in Galilee and had been at last brought to light. The literary forger who "discovered" the Zohar was Moses of Leon,⁴⁰⁶³ who employed an Aramaic idiom to give the book an air of antiquity, and with such skill that Jew and Christian [sic!] alike were deceived and some even to-day attribute to it hoary age. Yet his widow declared it a forgery.

The character of the Zohar can hardly be dismissed as unique in literature, with its fantastic, imaginative and emotional elements.⁴⁰⁶⁴ It is a medley of spirituality and coarseness, a strange combination of intellectuality and grossness, whose influence has been far-reaching and whose adherents have numbered hundreds of thousands. It is a work without method, a kind of impressionist commentary on the Pentateuch, half homily, half meditation, dwelling largely on the "higher" sense of Scripture and allowing every opportunity for vague and mystic interpretation, hence the moral perversions that abound, the blasphemy and the absurdity. The pre-existence of the soul is assumed—paradise and hell are alike depicted, the varieties of sin described with

⁴⁰⁵³ Kindness.

⁴⁰⁵⁴ Power.

⁴⁰⁵⁵ Glory.

⁴⁰⁵⁶ Might or Victory.

⁴⁰⁵⁷ Splendour.

⁴⁰⁵⁸ Foundation.

⁴⁰⁵⁹ Kingship.

⁴⁰⁶⁰ Splendour.

⁴⁰⁶¹ 1534–1572AD

⁴⁰⁶² Waxman, Meyer, under heading 'Cabala.'

⁴⁰⁶³ b. Leon, c.1250AD

⁴⁰⁶⁴ being astral mysticism, in which the adept, by use of meditation and magic formulae, journeys ecstatically through and beyond the seven astral planes.

painful minuteness, Messianic speculations indulged in, and views favourable to the dogma of the Trinity uttered, while communion with departed spirits, celestial hosts and angels completes the farrago of nonsensical speculation....Its soil has nourished gross superstitions and strengthened the belief in ghosts and evil spirits; its mode of interpretation has degraded the study of the Bible and spread the wildest fancies. At one time it was high in favour with the papacy when the Talmud was condemned to the flames, but it was later included in the Index Expurgatorius.⁴⁰⁶⁵

Golb provides further insight into the origins and impact of such superstitious thinking: 'Foremost among them, the Manual of Discipline rejects money as spiritually defiling, favours commune-style purity groups, makes creative metaphorical use of biblical anthropomorphisms and sacrificial terminology, and, for the first time that we know, calls for organised, systematic group study of the Torah's 'hidden' meanings.⁴⁰⁶⁶....'Some of the writings—the ones most often cited when attributing the scrolls as a whole to Essenic sectarians—reflect the ideas of writers evidently sharing awareness of a common background of opposition to ruling powers in Jerusalem in the second-century BC. As seen, the Manual of Discipline reflects one distinct radicalizing trend within this group of texts, emphasizing an apocalyptic mode of brotherhood initiation, strict spiritual dichotomies, heightened metaphorical interpretation of Torah-mysteries [sic], and overriding purity-discipline.⁴⁰⁶⁷

By no means is this a complete overview of the Kabbalah, and some would contend that in certain areas it is rather abbreviated, mixed, and ambiguous, being a generalisation at best, and that the 'truth' of Kabbalism is much more complicated, and specifically that in relation to sacrifices there are many kinds, with many avenues of coming closer to God through them, emphasising that the Temple is an environment in which spiritual aspirations can be realised. Thus it is claimed that the sacrifice is a form of aspiration that comes true. But irrespective of the view or flavour, the difference between Kabbalistic thought and perception, which is mainly a pastiche of Neoplatonic mysticism⁴⁰⁶⁸ and Hellenistic astrology / demonology ultimately derived from Perso-Babylonian paganism / Gnosticism, on the one hand, and Judæo-Christianity, on the other hand, is vast, and the illustration holds for the purposes of this investigation.

Rabbi Akiba, the famous rabbinic sage and perhaps the most pervasive influence in the development of rabbinical Judaism, was a pupil of the revered mystic and Kabbalist teacher, Nehuniah ben ha-Kanah. Re'iyut Yehezkiel⁴⁰⁶⁹ records Akiba's reports of his heavenly ascents to obtain mystical secrets or prophetic knowledge. Sadly, it is pure occult. Taking a view of the Kabbalistic material discussed, a tract in Malachi comes to mind: *'And now, O ye priests, this commandment is for you. For the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they*

⁴⁰⁶⁵ *Encyclopedia Americana*, article 'Zohar.'

⁴⁰⁶⁶ sometimes carelessly referred to as 'obscurantism.'

⁴⁰⁶⁷ Golb, Norman, *Who Wrote the Dead Sea Scrolls?* pp.339,364 (sublinear emphasis added)

⁴⁰⁶⁸ mysticism is derived from the Greek: myein, 'to keep one's mouth closed,' and refers to the esoteric, secretive nature of the occult (hidden). The prime root is the verb muo, 'to shut the mouth.' An initiate into the Mysteries or mystery religion was termed mueo, and the secret teachings of the mysteries, musterion.

⁴⁰⁶⁹ *Visions of Ezekiel*, from the 4th - or 5th-century AD

*should seek the law at his mouth: for he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts. But ye are departed out of the way; ye have caused many to stumble at the law; ye have corrupted the covenant of Levi, saith the Lord of hosts. Therefore have I also made you contemptible and base before all the people, according as ye have not kept my ways, but have been partial in the law.'*⁴⁰⁷⁰

Subsequent developments and mutations in Kabbalistic thought and musing have led to it forming the secret ideology⁴⁰⁷¹ of mystical societies and brotherhoods such as the Free and Accepted Masons and the Rosicrucians. In its deep preoccupation with pagan symbols, dark speculations, otherworldly communication, séances, reincarnation, and the like, Kabbalism has maintained a trove of occult lore that fed into the Theosophy movement⁴⁰⁷² of the nineteenth-century, and, eventually, into the New Age movement of today. The Kabbalistic renaissance in the U.S.A. in the late nineties, involving high-profile media-celebrities, forms yet another eruption, as do the myriad Internet sites dedicated to the promotion of Kabbalistic thought and study through the dissemination of literature, and the hundreds of centres around the world which have been opened to offer courses and instruction in this deeply occult belief.

More pagan borrowings

The corruption of Jewish belief in intertestamental times continued as a steady and ultimately wholesale usurpation of authority, as can be seen from Lauterbach's essay in relation to the early 'work' of the Sanhedrin pursuant to the time of religious anarchy and wholesale importation of pagan beliefs and culture under the Hellenistic influence of the Egyptian and Seleucid monarchs: 'Many new customs and practices for which there were no precedents in the traditions of the fathers, and not the slightest indication in the book of the Law [Torah], were observed by the people and considered by them as part of their religious laws and practices.'⁴⁰⁷³

Concerning the question of assimilation of worthless doctrine: 'The Jews borrowed the doctrine from the heathen': It is allowed on all hands that the Jews in our Saviour's time believed the doctrine of endless punishment; that it was part of their common faith. Of course, as the doctrine is found nowhere in their Scriptures, the question arises, where did they find it? At the close of the Old Testament Scriptures they did not believe it; at the beginning of the New they did.

⁴⁰⁷⁰ Mal 2:1,7-9

⁴⁰⁷¹ seen in many walks of life; Brooker, Christopher, and North, Richard, *The Great Deception: Can the European Union Survive?* p.590:

'They were believers in a way reminiscent of those who accept any corrective religious ideology, taking for granted that it possessed an inherent moral superiority which brooked no questioning.'

⁴⁰⁷² Theosophy: A system of thought and practice especially derived from Buddhism and Brahminical religious mysticism. It claims to be a synthesis of those elements in all religions which result from divine revelation, and to enable its followers to establish personal communion with the theosophical god.

⁴⁰⁷³ Lauterbach, Dr. Jacob Z., *Rabbinic Essays*, p.195 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

Between these two points of time was an interval of some four hundred years, during which there was no prophet in Israel. Malachi was the last of the Hebrew prophets, and from him to Christ there stretches this waste period of four centuries, when the Jews were without any divine teacher or revelation from heaven. And all this while they were in constant and close intercourse with the heathen, especially the Egyptians, the Greeks and the Romans, who held the doctrine in review as part of the national faith. From these, therefore, they must have borrowed it, for it is certain that they could not have obtained it from any inspired source, since none was open to them during this period.

Besides, they were, all the time, as one might infer from their previous history, departing further and further from the Law, and growing more and more corrupt; till at last they had, as the Saviour charges upon them, utterly made void the Law of God by their traditions⁴⁰⁷⁴ Speaking on this point, Guizot made the observation that, 'The Jews had acquired at Babylon a great number of Oriental notions, and their theological opinions had undergone great changes by this intercourse.'⁴⁰⁷⁵

Albert Pike, hailed 'the pontiff of international freemasonry,'⁴⁰⁷⁶ acknowledged the deep occult traditions of Jewish sects: 'The Magi of Babylon were expounders of figurative writings, interpreters of nature, and of dreams; astronomers and divines; and from their influence arose among the Jews, after their rescue from captivity, a number of sects, and a new exposition, the mystical interpretation, with all its wild fancies and infinite caprices. The Aions of the Gnostics, the Ideas of Plato, the Angels of the Jews, and the Demons of the Greeks, all correspond to the Ferouers of Zoroaster...From the system of Zend-Zvesta they borrowed, and subsequently gave large development to everything that could be reconciled with their own faith.'⁴⁰⁷⁷

Thus it is seen that the cords which bound the Jews to the authority of Moses, and to the written Law and revelations of God, had been slowly relaxing for a long time. Of course, when the last prophet departed, and God had withdrawn all special guidance, the growth of corruption among them, and conformity to pagan opinions, rapidly increased.

The process is easily understood. About three hundred and thirty years before Christ, Alexander the Great had subjected to his rule the whole of Western Asia, including Judæa, and also the kingdom of Egypt. Soon after he founded Alexandria, which speedily became a great commercial metropolis and drew into itself a large multitude of Jews who were always eager to improve the opportunities of traffic and trade. A few years later, Ptolemy Soter took Jerusalem, and carried off one hundred thousand of them into Egypt. Here, of course, they were in daily contact with Egyptians and Greeks, and gradually began to adopt their philosophical and religious opinions, or to modify their own in harmony with them.

⁴⁰⁷⁴ Mark 8:9,13; Thayer, Thomas B., *The Origin and History of the Doctrine of Endless Punishment*, published in 1855AD, chapter #4.

⁴⁰⁷⁵ Guizot, Francis, *Guizot*

⁴⁰⁷⁶ Pike wrote his seminal work, *Morals and Dogma*, under channelled direction.

⁴⁰⁷⁷ Pike, Alfred, *Morals and Dogma*, p.256

'To what side soever they turned,' says a careful writer, 'the Jews came in contact with Greeks and with Greek philosophy, under one modification or another.' It was around them and among them, for small bodies of that people were scattered through their own territories, as well as through the surrounding provinces. It insinuated itself very slowly at first; but stealing upon them from every quarter, and operating from age to age, it mingled at length in all their views, and, by about one hundred and fifty years before Christ, had wrought a visible change in their notions and habits of thought.

At Alexandria, too, was established the celebrated school of philosophy and theology which exerted such a corrupting influence on both Jewish and mainstream Christian doctrine and teaching. 'This school,' says Enfield, 'by pretending to teach a sublimer doctrine concerning God and divine things, enticed men of different countries and religions, and among the rest the Jews, to study its mysteries, and incorporate them with their own....Hence, under the cloak of symbols, Pagan philosophy gradually crept into the Jewish schools; and the Platonic doctrines, mixed first with Pythagoric, and afterwards with the Egyptian and Oriental, were blended with the ancient faith in their explanations of the Law and their traditions....This corruption, which began in the time of Ptolemy Philadelphus,⁴⁰⁷⁸ soon spread into Palestine, and everywhere disseminated among the Jews a taste for metaphysical subtleties and mysteries." Again, he says, "Under the Ptolemies the Jews began to learn the Egyptian and Oriental theology, and to incorporate those foreign dogmas with their ancient creed." And once more he says: "Some among them were so unfaithful to their country and their God, as to court the favour of the conqueror, Antiochus Epiphanes, by mixing Pagan tenets and superstitions with their own sacred doctrines and ceremonies.'

The Jews incorporated into their ancient faith the dogmas of both philosophy and theology of Egypt, the very fountainhead from which spouted the doctrine of future endless torments. But not only did they borrow from the Egyptian, they also borrowed from Oriental and Pythagorean philosophy, in both of which, as well as in the Egyptian, one of the distinguishing features was the doctrine of metempsychosis, or the transmigration of souls, as a method of retribution after death. Indeed, Pythagoras made so much of this dogma that it was often called specially by his name; and it was almost universally believed by the Oriental nations, and is to this day, especially by the Hindus, the Brahmans, the followers of the Grand Lama, and by the Buddhists generally. The Hindus have brought the doctrine to such a degree of perfection that they profess to be able to tell precisely the sin which the person committed in another body, by the afflictions which he endures in this.

⁴⁰⁷⁸ 283BC

Transmigration of souls

Josephus, one hundred and fifty years later, said of the Pharisees: "They believe that souls have an immortal vigour in them, and that under the earth (in Sheol or Hades) there will be rewards and punishments, according as they have lived virtuously or viciously in this life. The latter are to be detained in an everlasting prison; but the former shall have power to revive and live again." Again, he says, "The souls of the pure and obedient obtain a most holy place in heaven, from whence, in the revolution of ages, they are again sent into pure bodies;" while the souls of those committing suicide "are received into the darkest place in Hades." Once more, "All souls are incorruptible, but the souls of good men only are removed into other bodies; but the souls of bad men are subject to eternal punishment."

These testimonies are sufficient to show how thoroughly the doctrine of transmigration⁴⁰⁷⁹ had fixed itself in the Jewish creed by the time of Christ.⁴⁰⁸⁰ It will be seen that the excerpts indicate that transmigration, or permission to enter other bodies on earth, was regarded by the Pharisees and Jews as the reward of virtue and goodness; while the privilege was denied to the wicked, who were kept in the underworld, or Hades, subject to punishment. This doctrine has prevailed extensively among the Jews to this day. 'The benefit of the rain is common to the just and to the unjust, but the resurrection of the dead is the peculiar privilege of those who have lived righteously.'⁴⁰⁸¹ 'No one can be partaker of an interest in the world to come, but the souls only of just men, which, separated from their body, shall enter into it.'⁴⁰⁸² 'From the mind and opinion of all the ancients, we conclude that there will not be a general resurrection of the dead, one common to all men.'⁴⁰⁸³

Pococke has brought a large mass of evidence from rabbinical writers to prove this point. Still this was not the universal opinion, for evidently transmigration in the time of Christ was regarded by some as a method of retributive punishment. Hence, in the account of the blind man restored to sight by Jesus, there comes forth the question: '*Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?*'⁴⁰⁸⁴ This shows plainly that the people, actually, his disciples, thought the man might have been sent into a blind body as a punishment for some sin in a pre-existent state, a belief which is an exact copy of the Egyptian and Oriental doctrine.

In Luke there is another trace of the same doctrine among the people. In answer to the question of Jesus, '*Whom do men say that I, the son of man, am?*' the disciples reply, '*Some say that thou art John the Baptist; some say Elias; and others Jeremias, or one of the prophets.*'⁴⁰⁸⁵ They seemed to think the soul of some one of these ancient men of God had returned again to the earth in the body of Jesus, which to them was

⁴⁰⁷⁹ doctrine of transmigration of souls (metempsychosis) was borrowed from pre-Islamic Arabs by the Karaites.

⁴⁰⁸⁰ also cp. the thief's questioning of Christ on the cross, q.v. sup.

⁴⁰⁸¹ Kimchi, David.

⁴⁰⁸² Gerundensis, Moses.

⁴⁰⁸³ Ben Israel, Manasseh.

⁴⁰⁸⁴ John 9:2

⁴⁰⁸⁵ Luke 14:14

a satisfactory explanation of the miracles He wrought. Many of the Jewish doctors had believed that the souls of Adam, Abraham, and others have at different times animated the bodies of the great men of their nation.

It is not easy to see how those alluded to by the disciples could believe the soul of John the Baptist, who had so recently been put to death,⁴⁰⁸⁶ could have entered into the body of Jesus who was thirty years old. But then the ideas of the common people on this subject, as well as of the learned,⁴⁰⁸⁷ were very much mixed and confused. Moreover, there was every variety of opinion respecting the moral theory of the system.

The Egyptians believed in transmigration as a punishment of vice; the Pharisees believed in it as a reward of virtue; and the Pythagoreans believed in it both as a reward and a punishment. The Egyptians excluded the extremely wicked; and the Pharisees excluded the wicked generally, who were punished in the underworld; while Pythagoras excluded the extremely good, or pure and philosophical souls, who were sent directly to heaven, or the society of the gods, so great was the diversity of opinion in regard even to the leading features of the system.

Philo, an Egyptian Jew contemporary with the Saviour, believed the air to be full of spirits, who from time to time descended 'to unite themselves with mortal bodies, being desirous to live in them again.' And Josephus reports the Essenes, one of the three chief sects among the Jews, as holding the same views in regard to the pre-existence of spirits, equivalent to transmigration.

A sufficient number of witnesses have been adduced to prove that the Jews borrowed from the pagans the doctrine of transmigration, with all its accompaniments of future retribution and endless punishment.⁴⁰⁸⁸ Abundantly, they justify the statement of Enfield, that: '[T]he purity of the divine doctrine was corrupted among the Jews in Egypt, who, under the disguise of allegory, admitted doctrines never dreamed of by their lawgiver and prophets; and adopted a mystical interpretation of the Law, which converted its plain meaning into a thousand idle fancies.'

'From the time of the captivity, more especially from the time of the subjection of the Jews, first to the Macedonian empire, and afterwards to the Romans, as they had a closer intercourse with Pagans, they insensibly imbibed many of their sentiments, particularly on those points where their Law was silent, and wherein by consequence they considered themselves as at greater freedom. On the subject of a future state, we find a considerable difference in the popular opinions of the Jews in our Saviour's time, from those which prevailed in

⁴⁰⁸⁶ at the request of Salome, daughter of Herod Antipas, on the urging of her mother, Herodias.

⁴⁰⁸⁷ e.g., Herod's beliefs were somewhat similar: Mat 14:1,2, '*At that time Herod the tetrarch heard of the fame of Jesus. And said unto his servants, This is John the Baptist; he is risen from the dead; and therefore mighty works do shew forth themselves in him.*'

⁴⁰⁸⁸ Jews even gave the doctrine their own name: *gilgul*; Silberman, Neil Asher, *Heavenly Powers, Unraveling the Secret History of the Kabbalah*, p.188:

'In the *Zohar*, the principle of reincarnation was narrowed and given the technical name *gilgul*, or revolution, requiring new incarnations for persons who failed to procreate (and thereby obey the basic biblical injunction to "*be fruitful and multiply*") in earlier lives. Gradually the idea of reincarnation began to be seen as a generalized means of moral and spiritual improvement.'

the days of the ancient prophets. As both Greeks and Romans had adopted the notion that the ghosts of the departed were susceptible both of enjoyment and of suffering, they were led to suppose a sort of retribution in that state, for their merit or demerit in the present. The Jews did not adopt the Pagan fables on this subject, nor did they express themselves, entirely, in the same manner, but the general train in both came pretty much to coincide.^{'4089}

Perhaps they did not adopt the pagan fables in every particular, but they appropriated the basis and framework of them, and invented others of their own equally gross and absurd. They '[B]orrowed so great a number of fables, that their history, after the time of the last of the sacred historians, was scarcely more reasonable than the most fabulous histories of Paganism....As they were better instructed than the Pagans, they were, therefore, more blameable for having invented so many falsehoods.'⁴⁰⁹⁰

'Oral law'

The Jews invented and borrowed, till, about the time of Christ: '[T]hey had so vitiated the Law by the intermixture of heathen doctrines, and ceremonies borrowed from the Pagans....Judaism itself had become so corrupted and disguised, as to be a source of national discord and division among its votaries.'⁴⁰⁹¹ Herford notes in relation to this cataclysmic and wholesale Jewish slide into apostasy: 'The difficulty was to find a sanction in the Torah for the new customs and practices which had established themselves in the community.'⁴⁰⁹²

The commandment of God in the matter was pointed: '*Thus saith the Lord, learn not the ways of the heathen*,'⁴⁰⁹³ and, '*Take heed to thyself that thou be not snared by following them...and that thou enquire not after their gods, saying, How did these nations serve their gods? Even so will I do likewise. Thou shalt not do so.*'⁴⁰⁹⁴ In attempted reconciliation of that diametrically opposed, the Jewish teachers rationalized it into oblivion: 'It is hardly possible that foreign customs and non-Jewish laws should have met with such universal acceptance. The total absence of objection on the part of the people to such customs vouched for their Jewish origin, in the opinion of the teachers.'⁴⁰⁹⁵

Their delusion ran further, however, for in pursuance of 'superficial coherence' they even claimed that these customs must have been taught by the prophets, and even by Moses himself. In this way these were then pronounced to be 'the customs of the fathers.' The fundamental wanting of no scriptural support for any of this

⁴⁰⁸⁹ Dr. Campbell.

⁴⁰⁹⁰ Le Clerc.

⁴⁰⁹¹ Tyler.

⁴⁰⁹² Herford, *Talmud and Apocrypha*, p.66; ⁴⁰⁹² in the Jews' tradition, the 'Oral law' is claimed to have been given by God to the seventy elders at the base of Sinai while Moses was on the mountain, and considered more detailed than the Law of Moses.

⁴⁰⁹³ Jer 10:2

⁴⁰⁹⁴ Deut 12:30,31

⁴⁰⁹⁵ Lauterbach, Dr. Jacob Z., *Rabbinic Essays*, p.211

maintained, however, and needed to be addressed by the religious leaders. They invented this answer: 'These customs were handed down orally from Moses. They were passed by word of mouth from Moses through every generation. Accordingly, the teachers themselves came to believe that such generally recognised laws and practices must have been old traditional laws and practices accepted by the fathers and transmitted to following generations in addition to the Written Law. Such a belief would naturally free the teachers from the necessity of finding scriptural proof for all the new practices.'⁴⁰⁹⁶

There is absolutely no scriptural authority for the contention of the teachers. '*And it came to pass, when Moses had made an end of writing the words of this law in a book, until they were finished.*'⁴⁰⁹⁷ Moses wrote the whole Law in a book. '*Moses commanded the Levites, which bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord, saying, Take this book of the law, and put it in the side of the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, that it may be there for a witness against thee.*'⁴⁰⁹⁸ The Torah is a witness against those who would add to it the ramblings of human 'reason.' 'These traditional [oral] laws naturally had no indication in the Written Law and no basis in the teaching of the Sopherim,⁴⁰⁹⁹ because they developed after the period of the Sopherim.'⁴¹⁰⁰ There was and is no such thing as an 'oral law' of Moses.

The 'tradition of the fathers' sprung from the self-same period of religious anarchy when the whole of Palestine was under the control of the Egyptians and subject to Hellenistic influence. By the time of the Sanhedrin, which contained lay teachers as well as priests, the former had managed to formulate explanations of how the oral law was transmitted down through the ages from antiquity. 'The Sanhedrin devised methods for connecting with the Law all those new decisions and customs which were now universally observed by the people, thus making them appear as part of the laws of the fathers.'⁴¹⁰¹

To bolster this preposterous system, the Jewish protagonists devised a ready range of equally absurd stock answers to certain taxing questions and contentions. As an illustration of the rough handling meted out on many straightforward and basic questions, consider the following:

<u>Question / Contention</u>	<u>Stock response</u>
<i>'Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the Lord your God</i>	The Oral Law is not an addition to the Law of Moses. The Oral Law originated with Moses and together with the Torah represents the complete Law given by God.

⁴⁰⁹⁶ Lauterbach, Dr. Jacob Z., *Rabbinic Essays*, p.211 (sublinear emphasis added)

⁴⁰⁹⁷ Deut 31:24

⁴⁰⁹⁸ Deut 31:24-26

⁴⁰⁹⁹ i.e., the Great Synagogue.

⁴¹⁰⁰ Lauterbach, Dr. Jacob Z., *Rabbinic Essays*, p.206 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁴¹⁰¹ Lauterbach, Dr. Jacob Z., *Rabbinic Essays*, p.210

which I command you.'⁴¹⁰²

These new oral laws are of recent invention.

The Oral Laws of Moses merely had been forgotten and had just been recalled and re-instituted.

The new oral laws are nothing other than adopted pagan practices.

The heathen were simply following Jewish practices, and not vice-versa.

'Certain religious practices, considered by the later teachers as part of the traditional law, or as handed down by Moses, originated in reality from other, perhaps non-Jewish sources, and had no authority other than the authority of the people who adopted them.'⁴¹⁰³

Through the introduction and widespread acceptance of these new customs and practices, including the Greek passion for worldly-knowledge, debate, erudition, purity, and 'logic,' it is possible to date the beginning of Judaism as a religion.⁴¹⁰⁴ The development of such a wayward and Hellenised system vested much authority in the religious leaders of the time, and particularly the lay leaders. In fact, it took on much of the trappings of the typical mystery religion: 'No one except the recognised teachers could say what the tradition contained.'⁴¹⁰⁵

Despite this, many of the priests in the earlier days of the Sanhedrin objected to this assumption of power by the lay teachers, especially their raising to Divine Law the new customs derived or adopted from Hellenism. This difference of opinion between the lay leaders and the priests, allied to a struggle for overall control, eventually caused a permanent breach between them, and this engendered the beginnings of the two prominent sects mentioned in the New Testament: the Pharisees and the Sadducees.

Through time, the lay teachers, the Pharisees, came to regard and recognise themselves as the real religious leaders: 'It is certain that they regarded themselves as the successors of the prophets, and that not merely in fact but by right.'⁴¹⁰⁶

In the Talmud,⁴¹⁰⁷ there are several statements of the early Pharisees in regard to this belief: 'Prophecy was taken from the prophets and was given to the wise [Pharisees]. And it has not been taken from these.'⁴¹⁰⁸

⁴¹⁰² Deut 4:2

⁴¹⁰³ Lieberman, Dr. Saul, *Hellenism and Jewish Palestine*, p.241

⁴¹⁰⁴ to in or around 160–150BC.

⁴¹⁰⁵ Hereford, *Talmud and Apocrypha*, p.68

⁴¹⁰⁶ Hereford, *Talmud and Apocrypha*, p.71

⁴¹⁰⁷ Talmud, and not the Old Testament, is the governing religious book of Judaism. Evidence of this is found in the Talmud itself. *Erubin* 21b (Soncino edition): 'My son, be more careful in the observance of the words of the Scribes (the Talmud) than in the words of the Torah (Old Testament).' The Talmud nullifies the Bible by permitting and encouraging virtually everything the Bible defines as Sin! While on earth, Jesus made a direct reference to the Talmud when he denounced the Pharisees, the leaders of the synagogue, for voiding the Scripture by teaching the traditions of

By appropriating the role of prophets, the Pharisees took unto themselves the right of prophetic utterance. They claimed the right to speak the 'current will of God' without recourse to the Scriptures. '[They] believed in the continuous progressive revelation of God, and that His authority was made known in the reason and conscience of those who sought to know His will, and not only in the written text of the Torah.'⁴¹⁰⁹

All this started quite slowly, however, as damnable heresies are wont to do, but it later gained a momentum all of its own. Herford notes the origins and early development of this doctrine: 'The lead which Joseph ben Joezer⁴¹¹⁰ had given was followed, but only gradually; and though the theory of the unwritten Torah⁴¹¹¹ was finally accepted and worked out to its furthest consequences, as seen in the Talmud, yet those who most firmly maintained it were quite aware of the weaknesses of its foundation. They knew that it cut the connection between the Halachah⁴¹¹² and the written Torah, and they knew that in appearance, at all events, it gave the teachers free scope to teach what they thought fit.'⁴¹¹³ Hereford records the prevalent view of the Pharisees on the matter of the standing and immutability of the Torah: 'The written Torah was good for the age in which it was given, or in which it was first read, but the written Torah alone could not suffice for later ages.'⁴¹¹⁴

It is patent that the ideas and beliefs of the Pharisees originated in their own befuddled imaginings and were contrary to the Law of God. An oft-quoted saying by Jewish religious leaders, even to this day, runs: 'every good idea comes from God.' This was twisted grievously to permit the introduction of all manner of apostasy and perversion under the guise of personal and unique inspiration and revelation from God. But it had to be Pharisaic revelation: '[The Pharisees] upheld the authority of tradition...and taught that no Scripture should be of unauthorised [non-Pharasaic] or private interpretation.'⁴¹¹⁵

Peter delivers the telling riposte: '*Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake, as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.*'⁴¹¹⁶ The preceptor is the Holy Spirit, not the Pharisaic or any other apostate tendency.

Inevitably, a veritable flood of commandments came forth from this apostasy, called Halachah⁴¹¹⁷ by the Pharisees. Christ excoriated this very thing: '*Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the*

men (Mark 7:1-13), the Talmud being a compilation of Jewish writings from the days of Alexander the Great until about 400AD.

⁴¹⁰⁸ Baba Bathra 12a (added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁴¹⁰⁹ Hereford, *Talmud and Apocrypha*, p.71

⁴¹¹⁰ called 'Joseph the Permitter' on account of his introducing three new laws contrary to those in the Torah.

⁴¹¹¹ viz., the oral law, so-called.

⁴¹¹² viz., the rules of the Pharisees.

⁴¹¹³ Hereford, *Talmud and Apocrypha*, p.68

⁴¹¹⁴ Hereford, *Talmud and Apocrypha*, p.113

⁴¹¹⁵ Conder, *Judas Maccabæus*, p.203 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁴¹¹⁶ I Peter 1:20,21

⁴¹¹⁷ meaning 'way,' 'path,' or 'guide,' from the Hebrew root meaning 'to go' or 'walk,' but some claim it to be from the root word meaning 'rule' or 'decision.'

*commandments of man. For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men....And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandments of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.*⁴¹¹⁸

The Pharisees were not so blind as to be unable to recognise what they doing, and the seriousness of it: 'The Pharisees were well aware that some of their interpretations were rather forced, and that their opponents arguments against these interpretations were sound.'⁴¹¹⁹

'The teachers who introduced the conception of the Unwritten Torah....were quite aware of the extreme gravity of the step they were taking. They intended to modify the written commandment in various ways, and in the course of time actually did so in numberless cases. Yet they had before them the plain injunction:⁴¹²⁰ 'Ye shall not add to the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish from it; that ye may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you.'...This conclusion that the Torah or written word might be set aside—or even annulled, as was sometimes done—was deliberately drawn and consistently acted upon by the teachers who developed the 'Halachah.'⁴¹²¹

In an attempt to deflect attention away from this new and unwarranted device, which became known as the 'Mishnah-form',⁴¹²² the Talmud retains a reticent silence on its origins. These are not unknown, however, for they have their roots firmly in Hellenistic thought and practice. The true scriptural form, to the Jews, was termed the 'first-form,' the one used by Moses and the prophets. When the 'second-form' was used or appealed to, it was held that there was no need of scriptural authority or corroboration: the assumed and baseless authority of the teacher introducing the new law or commandment was deemed to be sufficient to consider them the very Word of God.

Edersheim gives a brief description of the nature and content of the Talmud: 'If we imagine something combining law reports, a Rabbinical 'Hansard,' and notes of a theological debating club—all thoroughly Oriental, full of digressions, anecdotes, quaint sayings, fancies, legends, and too often of what, from its profanity, superstition, and even obscenity, could scarcely be quoted, we may form some general idea of what the Talmud is. The older of [the] two Talmuds dates from about the close of the fourth century of our era. It is the product of the Palestinian Academies, and hence called the Jerusalem Talmud. The second is about a century younger, and the outcome of the Babylonian schools, hence called the Babylonian Talmud. We do not possess either of these works complete.'⁴¹²³

⁴¹¹⁸ Mark 7:7-9 (sublinear emphasis added)

⁴¹¹⁹ Lauterbach, Dr. Jacob Z., *Rabbinic Essays*, p.232

⁴¹²⁰ Deut 4:2

⁴¹²¹ Hereford, *Talmud and Apocrypha*, pp.112,113

⁴¹²² meaning 'second,' or 'second-form.'

⁴¹²³ Edersheim, Alfred, *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, p.72

'The first use of the 'Mishnah-form' was in the acceptance of the 'traditional laws and customs' inherited from Hellenism. The Pharisaic leaders were forced to recognise these new customs as proper religious practices, for they knew that the people would not give them up.

The Pharisees did not first invent the Mishnah-form and then use it to teach the traditional laws. Just the opposite occurred. The acceptance of the new customs from Hellenism, without any scriptural proof, brought the Pharisees to realise that they were teaching in a new form not previously used....[and] they had begun to use a new method of teaching by accepting the traditional [oral] laws without scriptural proof.'⁴¹²⁴ 'Finding no convincing proofs for such laws in the Bible, they taught them independently of scriptural proof, that is, in the Mishnah-form....They insisted that their decisions must be accepted as authoritative.'⁴¹²⁵

By the time of Christ, the Pharisees had developed the Mishnah-form so extensively that they were teaching for doctrines hundreds of commandments of men without the slightest hint of any scriptural foundation. In such circumstances, the older 'first-form,' as used by Ezra, Nehemiah, and the Sopherim, the 'Midrash-form,' had almost to be practically abandoned. 'The exclusive use of the Midrash-form threatened to endanger the authority and teaching of the Pharisees. These apprehensions caused the Pharisaic teachers to make more extensive use of the Mishnah-form, and in some cases even to prefer the same to the Midrash-form. For to give all the halachic teachings of the Pharisees in the Midrash-form as based on Scripture would have exposed the teachings to....attack.'⁴¹²⁶

The Pharisees would, and, of course, did make reference to any Scripture which they considered helpful to their contentions. In doing so, they became notorious for their methods of forcing or twisting Scripture to conform to their own views. This device, however, brought them under attack from those who perceived the fundamental wanting in all of it, and, through time, less and less support, however convoluted and ethereal, was adduced from the Scriptures. In the Talmud, it states, 'All the teachers who arose in Israel from the days of Moses until the death of Joseph ben Joezer studied the Torah as Moses did, but afterwards they did not study the Torah as Moses did.'⁴¹²⁷

Largely propelled by the massacres of Jews by Greeks⁴¹²⁸ who took advantage by attacking on the Sabbath when the Jews were unable to take up arms to defend themselves, and an obvious and subsequent need to explain defeat when complying with the Law, the religious authorities ceased teaching the Word of God in the way Moses had. By heavily embellishing the extant and inchoate Jewish belief in some form of afterlife, extraction from the stigma of military defeat was achieved by teaching that the immortal souls of those who died

⁴¹²⁴ Martin, Ernest L., *Is Judaism the Religion of Moses?* p.146

⁴¹²⁵ Lauterbach, Dr. Jacob Z., *Rabbinic Essays*, pp.229,235

⁴¹²⁶ Lauterbach, Dr. Jacob Z., *Rabbinic Essays*, p.231

⁴¹²⁷ Temurah 15b

⁴¹²⁸ 165BC

had gone to a greater reward in heaven. In myriad ways they began to invent and teach their own doctrine, signalling the start of Judaism.

A direct consequence of so many uninspired and headstrong men taking the lead in religion, in the midst of a profoundly Hellenistic and anarchic environment, and bound only by the tenets of a highly didactic religion, resulted in vast differences of opinion on almost everything. From this confused root sprang the various sects and colours of Judaism evident at the time of Christ.

Rabbinical Judaism

This highly fractious development continued largely unabated until crystallising in the relatively more rigidly-prescribed and apostate theology of rabbinic Judaism. Gruber describes the modus and cadence:

'In a similar way, the Rabbis approached the teachings of the Scriptures. They wrote themselves in wherever they could: "Our Rabbis taught: Justice, justice shalt thou follow: this means: Follow the scholars to their academies."⁴¹²⁹ "Rab Judah said in Rab's name: What is meant by '*Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm*'?⁴¹³⁰ '*Touch not mine anointed*' refers to school children; '*and do my prophets no harm*,' to disciples of the sages."⁴¹³¹

They found hidden references to the whole range of their teachings: 'Resh Lakish said, What is meant by the verse, '*and there shall be faith in thy times, strength, salvation, wisdom, and knowledge*'?⁴¹³² "*Faith*' refers to the Order of seeds; '*thy times*,' the Order of Festivals; '*strength*,' the Order of women; '*salvation*,' the Order of Nezikin; '*wisdom*,' the Order of Sacrifices; and '*knowledge*,' to the Order of Purity."⁴¹³³ "*He hath made me to dwell in dark places like those that have been long dead*."⁴¹³⁴ This, said R. Jeremiah, refers to the Babylonian Talmud."⁴¹³⁵ "And R. Judah?—[Scripture states:] '*According to the Torah which they shall teach thee*,' intimating that both the Torah and their [Scribes] teaching must be involved."⁴¹³⁶

This revisionism developed to such a point that the Midrash Rabbah claimed scriptural proof that all that the Rabbis had decreed, and all that they and their disciples might one day decree, was all sanctioned in the Scriptures. To make the claim, Akiba's method of attaching immense importance to a single Hebrew letter was used.

⁴¹²⁹ Sanh. 32b

⁴¹³⁰ I Chron 16:22

⁴¹³¹ Shab. 119b

⁴¹³² Isa 33:6

⁴¹³³ Shab. 31b

⁴¹³⁴ Lam 3:6

⁴¹³⁵ Sanh. 24a

⁴¹³⁶ Sanh. 87a

"R. Nehemiah expounded: *'And the superfluities of the earth are included,'*⁴¹³⁷ means that even things which appear to you additions to the actual revelation—for example, the law of fringes, of phylacteries and of mezuzah—are also included in the revelation, as may be inferred from the fact that it says, *'And the Lord delivered unto me two tables of stone written with the finger of God; and on them was written according to all the words,'*⁴¹³⁸ R. Joshua b. Levi explained: It says *'On them....according to all [kekol] the words [haddebarim],'* and it is also written, *'All [ko] the commandments [hammizwah] which I command thee.'*⁴¹³⁹ Instead of the expression 'ko' the expression 'keko' is used, instead of 'debarim,' 'hadebbarim' is used, implying that Scripture, Mishnah, Halachoth, Talmud, Tosefot, Haggadoth, and even what a faithful disciple would in the future say in the presence of his master, were all communicated to Moses on Sinai; for it says, *'Is there a thing whereof it is said: See, this is new.'*⁴¹⁴⁰ And the other part of the verse provides the reply to this: *'It hath been already.'*"⁴¹⁴¹

Even God Himself is transformed by the Rabbis and placed under their authority. He is depicted in the image and likeness of the Rabbis: "God keeps the commandments of the Torah, written and oral." [The Babylonian Talmud] depicts God in His Tallith prayer-shawl teaching Moses the order of the prayers.⁴¹⁴²

"[It also] tells how God, after burying Moses, became defiled and purified Himself, not with water, but with fire."⁴¹⁴³ God kept the first Sabbath.⁴¹⁴⁴ God wears phylacteries.⁴¹⁴⁵ [The Talmud] shows how God occupies Himself every day.⁴¹⁴⁶ He studies Torah; He judges the world; He feeds all living things from the smallest to the biggest; He plays with leviathan.⁴¹⁴⁷ The opinion was expressed by R. Hiyya bar Abba that since the destruction of the Temple there is only 4 cubits⁴¹⁴⁸ of the Halakah left to God.⁴¹⁴⁹ R. Berekiah gave the teaching of R. Judah b. Ezekiel that there is no day without a new teaching (on the Law) produced by God in His Beth ha-Midrash⁴¹⁵⁰ in Heaven.⁴¹⁵¹ R. Abiathar and R. Jonathan gave different interpretations of (the concubine of Gibeah).⁴¹⁵² R. Abiathar met Elijah and enquired of him what God was doing then. Elijah told him that God was studying the subject of the concubine of Gibeah. On being asked what God said about it, Elijah reported: 'He [God] says:

⁴¹³⁷ Eccl 5:8

⁴¹³⁸ Deut 9:10

⁴¹³⁹ Deut 8:1

⁴¹⁴⁰ Eccl 1:10a

⁴¹⁴¹ Midrash Rabbah, Leviticus, xxii.i; Eccl 1:10b

⁴¹⁴² T.B. Rosh ha-Shanah 17b

⁴¹⁴³ T.B. Sanh. 39a

⁴¹⁴⁴ Pirke de R. Eliezer, ch. xix

⁴¹⁴⁵ T.B. Ber. 7a

⁴¹⁴⁶ T.B. Abodah Zarah 3b Rab

⁴¹⁴⁷ cp. Isa 27:1, where leviathan is described as 'the crooked (or coiled) serpent,' i.e., Satan.

⁴¹⁴⁸ 72 inches, or about 2 metres.

⁴¹⁴⁹ T.B. Ber. 8a

⁴¹⁵⁰ Hebrew: House of Study / Commentary.

⁴¹⁵¹ Gen. R. lxiv 4

⁴¹⁵² Judg 19:2; T.B. Gitten 6b

"My son Abiathar says so, and my son Jonathan says so." "What?" exclaimed the other, "Is there any doubt with Heaven [God]!" "No," said Elijah, "but both utter the words of the living God."

As Talmudically revised, God Himself studies the teachings of the Rabbis, for sometimes they are wiser than He. He is "Ribbono shel Olam," the Master or rabbi of the world. But as "Ribbono shel Olam," God is only one rabbi among many. In matters of Halakha, He must follow the majority. He submits to them, and learns from them. Each day He learns something new about the Law He has given.⁴¹⁵³ Apparently He is not omniscient.

The teaching that God was defiled is a monumental departure from '*Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts*.'⁴¹⁵⁴ In this revision, God Himself is no longer the standard of holiness. There is an external standard to which He must submit.

None of these claims for rabbinic authority can be seen in the text of the Tanakh without the revisionist lens. Wherever that is not sufficient, the rabbinic teaching becomes a tradition which is granted equal authority with Torah. Even more, whereas Torah is limited to what the Rabbis say it says, their teaching has no limits. Talmudic revisionism is the means by which the Rabbis attain the legitimacy and authority that Scripture denies them, but that only Scripture can bestow.

Another important aspect of Talmudic Revisionism is the consistent pattern of replacement and substitution. Rabbinic practices and decrees were substituted for biblical ones. Usually these were related to the void created by the destruction of the Temple and the cessation of the sacrifices. Where would Israel find atonement?

The Rabbis presented numerous alternative means of atonement. Among them were circumcision, exile, death, burial, and giving to the Rabbis. Even hospitality was said to bring atonement. Looking to the description of the future Temple presented in Ezekiel, R. Johanan and Resh Lakish noted the proximity of the altar and the table. From this they concluded: "At the time when the Temple stood, the altar used to make atonement for a person; a person's table makes atonement for him."⁴¹⁵⁵

The most prominent substitutes were study and prayer. R. Huna said: "If you study the laws about sacrifice, that is to me as if you had offered them."⁴¹⁵⁶ Whoever occupies himself with the study of Torah needs no burnt offering nor sin offering, no meal offering nor guilt offering."⁴¹⁵⁷ Reading the Scriptures on sacrifice was equivalent to offering the sacrifices....

⁴¹⁵³ Baba Metzia 59b (Talmud), where it is claimed a rabbi debates with God and defeats Him, and God admits the rabbi won the debate.

⁴¹⁵⁴ Isa 6:3

⁴¹⁵⁵ Hag 27a

⁴¹⁵⁶ Pesikta 60b

⁴¹⁵⁷ Rava in Men. 110a

The atoning nature of rabbinically-ordained prayer was said both to have originated in the earliest beginnings of the Jewish people and also to have begun almost two thousand years later. R. Jose, son of R. Hanina, says: "The Tefillahs⁴¹⁵⁸ were instituted by the Patriarchs."

R. Joshua b. Levi says: "The Tefillahs were instituted to replace the daily sacrifices. It has been taught in accordance with R. Jose b. Hanina, and it has been taught in accordance with R. Joshua b. Levi. It has been taught in accordance with R. Jose b. Hanina: Abraham instituted the morning Tefillah....Isaac instituted the afternoon Tefillah....Jacob instituted the evening prayer...."⁴¹⁵⁹

The daily sacrifices began to be offered when the covenant at Sinai was given. That was several centuries after the Patriarchs. The daily sacrifices ceased after the destruction of the First Temple and then again after the destruction of the Second. If the Patriarchs instituted the times of prayer, they could not have instituted them to replace the daily sacrifices. The daily sacrifices had not yet been offered for the first time.

Daniel did pray three times a day,⁴¹⁶⁰ and it is certainly possible that others did as well. So the practice may have been quite old.⁴¹⁶¹ Whatever the case of their origin may be, there is no implication that Daniel's prayers, or those of anyone else, replaced the sacrifices.

Other times of rabbinically-prescribed prayer were also substituted for the Temple sacrifices. R. Hisda said in Mar 'Ukba's name": "He who prays on the eve of the Sabbath and recites 'and [the heaven and earth] were finished,' the two ministering angels who accompany man place their hands on his head and say to him, 'and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged.'"⁴¹⁶²

The rabbinic house of study became a substitute for the Temple.⁴¹⁶³ For this form of atonement, the Rabbis replaced the priests.

The pursuit of scholarship, in fact, possesses the power to induce supernatural redemption—particularly when allied with other forms of communal service. Hence: 'If a man occupies himself with the study of the Torah, works of charity, and prays with the community,' says God, 'I account it to him as if he had redeemed Me and My children from among the nations of the world.'⁴¹⁶⁴ In an extended sense, popular study could even be described as a form of atonement.⁴¹⁶⁵

⁴¹⁵⁸ three daily times of prayer.

⁴¹⁵⁹ Ber. 26b

⁴¹⁶⁰ Dan 6:11

⁴¹⁶¹ Idelsohn, Abraham, *Jewish Liturgy and its Development*, p.19:

'These three services were made obligatory in the Academy at Jamnia, c.100CE.'

⁴¹⁶² Shab. 119b (with added comment and clarification)

⁴¹⁶³ Meg. 29a

⁴¹⁶⁴ T.B. Berakhot 8a

⁴¹⁶⁵ Cohen, S. A., (unknown), pp.169,170

More than that, simply attributing a rabbinic teaching to its proper author could do what all the sacrifices of the Temple had no power to do. "He who quotes a statement by name brings redemption to the world."

4166 4167

All this is nothing less than a grotesque and completely futile substitution for redemption and salvation through Jesus Christ. It brings to mind the excoriating statement in Malachy, *'But ye are departed out of the way; ye have caused many to stumble at the law; ye have corrupted the covenant of Levi, saith the Lord of hosts,'*⁴¹⁶⁸ and also that found in Isaiah, *'the priest and the prophet have erred through strong drink, they are swallowed up of wine, they are out of the way through strong drink; they err in vision, they stumble in judgment. For all tables are full of vomit and filthiness, so that there is no place clean.'*⁴¹⁶⁹

The Pharisees and their practices, the foundation upon which rabbinic Judaism is built, were frequently excoriated by Christ: *'Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but within are full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also appear outwardly righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.'*⁴¹⁷⁰ Indeed, the whole is summed in John, where the root of all of it is identified: *'Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.'*⁴¹⁷¹ And there is this concerning the Jews' unbelief and persecution: *'And ye have not his word abiding in you; for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not. Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.'*⁴¹⁷²

They had the Scriptures of the Old Testament; might they not by them be disposed to receive Christ? Yea, if they had their due influence on them. But first, the word of God was not in them; it was among them, in their country, in their hands, but not in them. What did it avail them that they had the oracles of God committed to them, when they did not have these oracles commanding within them? If they had, they would have readily embraced Christ.⁴¹⁷³ Secondly, it did not abide in them. Many have the Word of God coming into them, and lingering for a while, but it does not abide with them. The proof of this is in the Jews rejecting Christ. There is so much said in the Old Testament concerning Christ, as has been seen already, to direct people when and where

⁴¹⁶⁶ Avot 6:6; Meg. 15a, cited by Elman, Yaakov, *Authority and Tradition: Tosephtan Baraitot in Talmudic Babylonia*, p.21

⁴¹⁶⁷ Gruber, Daniel, *Rabbi Akiba's Messiah: The Origins of Rabbinic Authority*, pp.75,79 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁴¹⁶⁸ Mal 2:8

⁴¹⁶⁹ Isa 28:7b,8

⁴¹⁷⁰ Mat 23:27,28

⁴¹⁷¹ John 8:44

⁴¹⁷² John in John 5:38-40:

⁴¹⁷³ Rom 3:1,2, the 'oracles' had been fully relinquished by the time the Temple fell in 70AD, and have been preserved and broadcast by the Christian church since Pentecost 30AD.

to look for Him, and so to facilitate the discovery of Him, that, if they had duly considered those things, they could not have avoided the conviction of Christ's being sent by God. The indwelling of the Word, and Spirit, and grace of God is best tried by the effects of it; particularly by the receiving of what He sends, His commandments, and His Messiah.⁴¹⁷⁴

The Jews searched the Scriptures, indeed, but to no avail. They read them daily in the synagogues. They had Rabbis and doctors and scribes that made it their business to study them, and criticise upon them, yet it benefited them nothing, for the very thing that should have been completely apparent, they did not see. The Jews boasted of a flourishing Scripture-learning in the days of Hillel, who died about twelve years after Christ's birth. They gloried in the beauties of their wisdom, and the intricacies of their legal contentions, but it was all a search of their own glory, and profited naught: the very Messiah was among them, and they knew it not.

The rabbinical claim that the oral law takes precedence over God's Law,⁴¹⁷⁵ resulting in the changing of the Torah, with assumed powers, is discussed by Gruber: 'The Jewish Encyclopedia⁴¹⁷⁶ defines "Rabbinical Authority" as: "The power or right of deciding the Law, in dubious cases, or of interpreting, modifying, or amplifying, and occasionally of abrogating it, as vested in the Rabbis as its teachers and expounders." This power or right belongs to the Rabbis alone. As for anyone else, even a prophet, who dared to uproot the written Law: "Our Rabbis taught: If one prophesies so as to eradicate a law of the Torah, he is liable [to death]."⁴¹⁷⁷

What then is the source of rabbinical authority to annul the Torah? "Rab maintains that....the Sages have imparted to their enactments the same force as that of the Pentateuchal laws."⁴¹⁷⁸

The Rabbis are the source of their own authority to annul the Torah. They gave this power to themselves. They gave to their own laws the same binding power as the laws of the Torah. Actually, they ascribed greater authority to their own laws than to the laws of Torah, for they claimed that their laws took precedence over what is written in Torah.

⁴¹⁷⁴ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of John*, Vol.2, pp.192,193 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets): 'The word that John uses of the work of the Spirit is the [Greek] word elegchein, translated 'convince' by the Revised Standard Version. The trouble is that no one word can translate it adequately. It is used for the cross-examination of a witness, or a man on trial, or an opponent in an argument. It has always this idea of cross-examining a man until he sees and admits his errors, or acknowledges the force of some argument which he has not yet seen. It is, for instance, sometimes used by the Greeks for the action of conscience on a man's mind and heart. Clearly such cross-examination can do two things—it can convict a man of the crime he has committed or the wrong that he has done; or it can convince a man of the weakness of his own case and the strength of the case which he has opposed. In the passage in question [John 16:5-11] we need both meanings, both convict and convince.

(i) The Holy Spirit will convict men of sin;
(ii) The Holy Spirit will convince men of righteousness;
(iii) The Holy Spirit convinces men of judgement; and,
(iv) The Holy Spirit gives assurance and confidence in forgiveness and salvation.

⁴¹⁷⁵ Jer. Chad. p.76d

⁴¹⁷⁶ Jewish Encyclopedia, p.337

⁴¹⁷⁷ Sanh. 90a

⁴¹⁷⁸ Ket. 84a

Baumgarten⁴¹⁷⁹ summed up the Talmudic position: "Whenever a man makes a condition which is contrary to what is written in the Torah, his condition is null and void,⁴¹⁸⁰ but not wherever a rabbinic scholar makes such a condition."⁴¹⁸¹

The Rabbis could establish conditions and practices that contradicted and even nullified the Torah. According to the Rabbis, God Himself would obey whatever they decided.⁴¹⁸² Related to the issue of the new moon....is the claim that: "Heaven itself yields to the authority of the earthly court of justice as to the fixing of the calendar and the festival days."⁴¹⁸³

Setting the dates of the calendar, which regulated personal and national life, was of major importance.⁴¹⁸⁴ In every area of life, one had to be more careful to obey rabbinic law than to obey Torah. As the Talmud says: "The sages have applied to their enactments higher restrictions than those of the Torah."⁴¹⁸⁵ "In truth, it is rabbinic, but the sages made their law even stricter than Scripture."⁴¹⁸⁶

To obscure the fact that they had no biblical authority, the Rabbis built a fence around the Torah. The fence both obscures Torah and keeps the people from Torah. "Our Rabbis taught: They who occupy themselves with the Bible are but of indifferent merit; with Mishnah, are indeed meritorious, and are rewarded for it; with Gemara—there can be nothing more meritorious; yet run always to the Mishnah more than to the Gemara."⁴¹⁸⁷ Studying the Bible was said to be of no great importance. Studying the rabbinic writings brought great reward. Israel was told to trust in the Rabbis.

R. Akiba sought to fence the people off from the Torah and from all other influences that would have challenged rabbinic interpretation and authority.⁴¹⁸⁸ In the system he erected, no-one else had the right to interpret Torah. Not the am ha'aretz, nor the priests, nor the prophets, nor the Sadducees, the Qumran Covenanters, the Talmidei Yeshua, nor anyone else. Not even God.

Ultimately, the Rabbis taught that Torah itself recognised the indispensable superiority of Halakha.⁴¹⁸⁹ They taught that God would have destroyed Israel for rejecting the Oral Law.

This was the continuing theme of the rabbinic writings. "The apologetic function of the Midrash is not only to denigrate the translation of Scripture, but to establish the exclusive authority of the Pharisaic tradition as the legitimate recipient and interpretation of divine revelation."⁴¹⁹⁰

⁴¹⁷⁹ Baumgarten, Albert I., *The Flourishing of Jewish Sects in the Maccabean Era*, p.22, n5

⁴¹⁸⁰ Kid. 19b

⁴¹⁸¹ Tchernowits, Chaim, *ha-Talmud*, pp.118-123, on the matter of 'the authority of the sages to nullify biblical laws.'

⁴¹⁸² cp. erroneous doctrine of 'binding and loosing,' q.v.

⁴¹⁸³ *Jewish Encyclopedia*, p.337; Yer. R.H. i. 57b

⁴¹⁸⁴ new moons set the annual holy days, and the new moon festivals, not the Rabbis.

⁴¹⁸⁵ Eruv 77a; Ket. 56a

⁴¹⁸⁶ Zeb. 100b-101a

⁴¹⁸⁷ Baba Metzia 33a

⁴¹⁸⁸ Hebrew: sejag latorah.

⁴¹⁸⁹ q.v. Baba Metzia 33a

⁴¹⁹⁰ Levine, Etan, *The Aramaic Version of the Bible*, p.143

Only the Rabbis could give the authorised interpretation. Who said so? They themselves. As a fence, the Oral Law is a means to assert and entrench rabbinic hegemony. Without it, nothing needs rabbinic approval. With it, everything does.⁴¹⁹¹

The extent to which the 'new order' of quasi-theology based on tradition and the tortuous wisdom of the Rabbis extirpated the last remnants of true belief and doctrine from Judaism is described by Edersheim: 'The Sopherim had ceased to be an authority, and their place had been taken by the Zequenim, the 'elders'....'The sayings of the elders have more weight than those of the prophets,'⁴¹⁹² 'an offence against the sayings of the Scribes is worse than one against those of Scripture'⁴¹⁹³....And this not illogically, for tradition [in Judaism] was equally of Divine origin with Holy Scripture, and authoritatively explained its meaning; supplemented it; gave it application to cases not expressly provided for, perhaps not even foreseen in biblical times; and generally guarded its sanctity by extending and adding to its provisions, drawing a 'hedge' around its 'garden enclosed.' Thus, in new and dangerous circumstances, would the full meaning of God's Law, to its every tittle and iota, be elicited and obeyed. Thus also would their feet be arrested, who might stray from within, or break in from without. Accordingly, so important was tradition, that the greatest merit a Rabbi could claim was the strictest adherence to the traditions which he had received from his teacher. Nor might one Sanhedrin annul, or set aside, the decrees of its predecessors. To such length did they go in this worship of the letter, that the great Hillel was actually wont to mispronounce a word, because his teacher before him had done so.⁴¹⁹⁴

These traditional ordinances....bear the general name Halakhah, as indicating alike the way in which the fathers had walked, and that which their children were bound to follow.⁴¹⁹⁵ These Halakhoth were either simply the laws laid down in Scripture; or else derived from, or traced to it by some ingenious and artificial method of exegesis;⁴¹⁹⁶ or added to it, by way of amplification and for safety's sake; or, finally, legalised customs. They provided for every possible and impossible case, entered into every detail of private, family, and public life; and with iron logic, unbending rigour, and most minute analysis pursued and dominated man, turn whither he might, laying on him a yolk which was truly unbearable. The return which it offered was the pleasure and distinction of knowledge, the acquisition of righteousness, and the final attainment of rewards....

[T]he whole traditionalism, according to Maimonides, consisted of five, but more critically of three classes. The first of these comprises both such ordinances as are found in the Bible itself, and the so-called Halakhot

⁴¹⁹¹ Gruber, Daniel, *Rabbi Akiba's Messiah: The Origins of Rabbinic Authority*, pp.82,83,86,87 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁴¹⁹² Jer. Ber. 1.7

⁴¹⁹³ Sanh. 11.3

⁴¹⁹⁴ q.v. Eduy. 1.3, cf. the comment of Maimonides.

⁴¹⁹⁵ it is so explained in the Aruch—ed. Landau, vol. 2, p529, col. b

⁴¹⁹⁶ the ancient or anciently-traditional Jewish conception of biblical prophecy is not the same as the modern or western one. The western idea is of a prophecy and then, later, a fulfilment. The former one is of a series of recurring or apotelesmatic fulfilments, culminating in one great and climactic fulfilment. There is scope for this, of course, if handled with very great care.

of Moses from Sinai—that is, such laws and usage as prevailed from time immemorial, and which, according to the Jewish view, had been orally delivered to, but not written down by Moses. For these, therefore, no proof was to be sought—at most, support, or confirmatory allusion.⁴¹⁹⁷ Nor were these open to discussion. The second class formed the ‘oral law,’ or the ‘traditional teaching’ in the stricter sense. To this class belonged all that was supposed to be implied in, or that could be deduced from the Law of Moses. The latter contained, indeed, in substance or germ, everything; but it had not been brought out till circumstances successfully evolved what from the first had been provided in principle. For this class of ordinances, reference to, and proof from Scripture was required. Not so for the third class of ordinances, which were the ‘hedge’ drawn by the Rabbis around the Law, to prevent any breach of the Law or customs, to ensure their exact observance, or to meet peculiar circumstances and dangers. These ordinances constituted the ‘sayings of the Scribes’ or ‘of the Rabbis’—and were either positive in their character,⁴¹⁹⁸ or else negative.⁴¹⁹⁹ Perhaps the distinction of these two cannot always be strictly carried out. But it was probably to this third class especially, confessedly unsupported by Scripture, that these words of Christ referred: *‘All therefore whatsoever they tell you, that do and observe; but do not ye after their words: for they say and do not. For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men’s shoulders; but with their finger they will not move them away.’*^{4200 4201}

This view has twofold confirmation, for this third class of Halakhic ordinances was the only one open to the discussion of the learned, the ultimate decision being according to the majority. Yet it possessed practically, though not theoretically, the same authority as the other two classes. In further confirmation of our view the following may be quoted: ‘A Gezerah⁴²⁰² is not to be laid on the congregation, unless the majority of the congregation is able to bear it’⁴²⁰³—words which read like a commentary on those of Jesus, and show that these burdens could be laid on, or removed away, according to the varying judgement or severity of a Rabbinic college.

But when the Halakhah, however varied in its application, was sometimes fixed and stable, the utmost latitude was claimed and given to the Haggadah.⁴²⁰⁴ It is sadly characteristic that, practically, the main body of Jewish dogmatic and moral theology is really only Haggadah, and hence of no absolute authority. The Halakhah indicated with the most minute and painful punctiliousness every legal ordinance as to outward observances, and it explained every bearing on the Law of Moses. But beyond this it left the inner man, the spring of actions, untouched. What he was to believe, and what he was to feel, was chiefly [a] matter of the Haggadah.

⁴¹⁹⁷ Hebrew: Asmakhtu.

⁴¹⁹⁸ Hebrew: Tegganoth.

⁴¹⁹⁹ Hebrew: Gezeroth, from gazar, ‘to cut off.’

⁴²⁰⁰ Mat 23:3,4

⁴²⁰¹ Edersheim, Alfred, *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, pp.66-74, and footnotes

⁴²⁰² the third class of ordinances.

⁴²⁰³ B. Kam. 79b

⁴²⁰⁴ that which was said upon the authority of individuals, not as a legal ordinance.

Of course the laws of morality, and religion, as laid down in the Pentateuch, were fixed principles, but there was the greatest divergence and latitude in the explanation and application of many of them. A man might hold or propound almost any views, so long as he contravened not the Law of Moses, as it was understood, and adhered in teaching and practice to the traditional ordinances. In principle it was the same liberty which the Romish church accords to its professing members—only with much wider application, since the debatable ground embraced so many matters of faith, and the liberty given was not only that of private opinion but of public utterance. We emphasise this, because the absence of authoritative direction and the latitude in matters of faith and inner feeling stand side by side, and in such sharp contrast, with the most minute punctiliousness in all matters of outward observance.

In truth, Rabbinism,⁴²⁰⁵ as such, had no system of theology; only what ideas, conjectures, or fancies the Haggadah yielded concerning God, angels, demons, man, his future destiny and present position, and Israel, with its past history and coming glory. Accordingly, by the side of what is noble and pure, what a terrible mass of utter incongruities, of conflicting statements and too often debasing superstitions, the outcome of ignorance and narrow nationalism; of legendary colouring of biblical narratives and scenes, profane, coarse, and degrading to them; the Almighty Himself and His angels taking part in the conversations of Rabbis, and the discussions of Academies; nay, forming a kind of heavenly Sanhedrin, which occasionally requires the aid of an earthly Rabbi.⁴²⁰⁶ The miraculous merges into the ridiculous, and even the revolting. Miraculous cures, miraculous supplies, miraculous help, all for the glory of great Rabbis⁴²⁰⁷ who, by a look or a word, can kill, and restore to life. At their bidding, the eyes of a rival fall out, and are again inserted.'

Heavy burden

*'Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: ye shall find rest unto your[selves]. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.'*⁴²⁰⁸ Jesus says, *'Come unto me all you who are weighted down beneath your burdens.'* For the religious orthodox Jew religion was a thing of burdens. Jesus said of the Scribes and Pharisees: *'They bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders.'*⁴²⁰⁹ To the Jew, religion was a thing of endless rules and regulations, all of which had to be observed. A man lived his life in a forest of rules

⁴²⁰⁵ Edersheim, Alfred, *Jesus the Messiah*, p.1056 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):
'Such are the leading provisions by which Rabbinism enlarged the simple Sabbath law as expressed in the Bible [Ex 20:8-11,23:12,31:12-17,34:21,35:1-3; Deut 5:12-15], and, in its anxiety to ensure its most exact observance, changed the spiritual import into a complicated code of external, [trivial], and burdensome ordinances.'

⁴²⁰⁶ q.v. B. Mez. 86a

⁴²⁰⁷ q.v. B. Mets. 85b,86a

⁴²⁰⁸ Mat 11:28-30 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁴²⁰⁹ Mat 23:4

and regulations which dictated every action of his life. He must listen for ever to the voice which continually said, *"Thou shalt not."*

Even the Rabbis saw this. There is a kind of rueful parable put into the mouth of Korah, which [purports to show] just how binding and constricting and burdensome and impossible the demands of the Law could be.

"There was a poor widow in my neighbourhood who had two daughters and a field. When she began to plough, Moses said, 'You must not plough with an ox and an ass together.' When she began to sow, he said, '*You must not sow your field with mingled seed.*' When she began to reap and to make stacks of corn, he said, 'Take not the gleanings, or what you forget,⁴²¹⁰ or the corners.⁴²¹¹ She began to thresh, and he said, 'Give me the heave-offering, and the first and second tithe.' She accepted the ordinance and gave them all to him.⁴²¹² What did the poor women then do? She sold her field, and bought two sheep,⁴²¹³ to clothe herself from their fleece, and to have profit from their young. When they bore their young, Aaron came and said, 'Give me the first-born.' So she accepted the decision, and gave them to him. When the shearing time came, and she sheared them, Aaron came and said, 'Give me the first-fruit of the fleece.'⁴²¹⁴ Then she thought: 'I cannot stand up against this man. I will slaughter the sheep and eat them.' Then Aaron came and said, 'Give me the shoulder and the two cheeks and the maw.⁴²¹⁵ Then she said, 'Even when I have killed them I am not safe from you. Behold, they shall be devoted.' Then Aaron said, 'In that case they belong entirely to me.'⁴²¹⁶ He took them and went away and left her weeping with her two daughters.'^{4217 4218}

[Although ill directed and seriously error-infected, the tract does give a flavour of the ready potential for an unending barrage of petty rules and regulations which the Rabbis chose to impose].

'Since the laws of Judaism consist in the imaginings of men, and since man's imagination is a bottomless pit of endless self-invention, the multiplication of laws, rules, regulations, codes, compilations, traditions and fantasies is a growth industry in the rabbinic universe. Just when one imagines that there could not possibly be another alliterative compendium in the wake of those by the Rif,⁴²¹⁹ the Rosh,⁴²²⁰ and the Rambam,⁴²²¹ we meet:

⁴²¹⁰ Deut 24:19

⁴²¹¹ Lev 19:9

⁴²¹² under the Law, the second tithe did not go to Moses or the priesthood; it was to be eaten by the owner, in this case, the widow and her family.

⁴²¹³ all her land for but two sheep?

⁴²¹⁴ Deut 18:4

⁴²¹⁵ Deut 18:3; this provision applies only to sacrifices at the Temple, not to food slaughtered for the purpose of nourishment.

⁴²¹⁶ Num 18:14; why she would willingly and voluntarily give away the entire, and then weep over it is not explained.

⁴²¹⁷ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol.2, pp.17-19 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁴²¹⁸ this is a construction which would not apply in reality under the provisions of the Law, and is clearly intended to denigrate the provisions of the Law. The bracketed comments refer. Others could be added.

⁴²¹⁹ Rabbi Isaac Alfasi.

⁴²²⁰ Rabbi Asher ben Yechiel.

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1. The Bach codification;
 2. The Taz elucidation;
 3. Aruch HaShulchan commentary;
 4. The Kitzur Shulchan Aruch;
 5. The Mishneh Berurah;
 6. Responsa;
 7. Various factional derivations; and,
 8. The Torah.

[On the last, it states] this word is wielded like a weapon. It is Judaism's badge of authority. The rabbis boast that they have the Torah, they have mastered the Torah, they base their laws on the Torah and that they are Torah-true. Actually, these claims of theirs are a play on words, for the "Torah" they study, base their laws upon and truly uphold is the formerly Oral Traditions and Laws of the Pharisees which is known among them as the Torah SheBeal Peh. Consequently, when the rabbis are telling the Gentiles all about their relationship with the "Torah," the Gentiles imagine that the rabbis are referring to the Hebrew Covenant or Old Testament, known as the Torah SheBichtav.

Judaism is not true to the Torah SheBichtav, but rather to the Torah SheBeal Peh. If Christians and Gentiles could keep this concealed⁴²²² distinction uppermost in their minds when dealing with rabbinic claims, demands and boasts of authority and knowledge, it would go a long way towards dissolving the spiritual and epistemological smog that is at the very heart of Judaism—its posturing as a Biblical, that is, "Torah" faith. When faced with this claim on the Torah, one should always ask the claimant, which "Torah" is it to which you are loyal? According to Jesus Christ, one cannot be loyal to both.^{'4223 4224}

The three levels of study in Judaism: The Bible is the lowest form; the next best is the Mishnah; and the highest is the Talmud (the Gemara).

As noted above, while Judaism plays elaborate lip-service to the Bible (Tanakh), the Bible is not a factor in the rise, formation, progress and emendation of rabbinic law, except as a prestigious cover and front

⁴²²¹ Rabbi Moses Maimonides.

⁴²²² Hebrew: hester.

⁴²²³ Mark 7:9

⁴²²⁴ Hoffman, Michael, *Judaism Discovered*, pp.128-130 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

for what are, in fact, entirely man-made enactments, figments of the rabbinic imagination and extensive revivals of pagan anachronism.⁴²²⁵ While this is hotly denied among the rabbis and the legions of Gentile apologist for Judaism in the universities and the modern churches, it is a truism inside Judaism, as reflected in the following rabbinic passage, which lays out the superior status of the rabbinic oral law over the written law of the Bible, and goes even further, acknowledging what is to be expected from a religion of self-worship, that the rabbis are superior to God! With regard to the Halacha of the Talmud, we discover that “the Almighty Himself is bound by them.” The rabbis of course portray God as conceding His inferior status: ‘The realization of the difference between written and oral regulations finds expression in the appraisal that ‘The Sages safeguarded their own enactments more than those of the Torah,’ and in the hyperbolic statements concerning the supreme authority of the expositions and decisions of the Rabbis. The Almighty Himself is bound by them. God sits and occupies Himself with the section of the Red Heifer, and He cites a Halakha in the name of R. Eilezer, despite the astonishment of Moses, who cries: ‘Sovereign of the universe, Thou dost hold in Thy power the creatures of heaven and earth, yet thou dost sit and cite a Halakha in the name of a human being!’⁴²²⁶

'Double-messiah'

Even this baleful purview does not dispense with all Jewish rabbinic confusion by any means, for these are but highlights, and there is still the matter of the Jewish 'Double-messiah,' mentioned previously.

Golb⁴²²⁷ states that the scrolls indicate a belief in a single Messiah from the stem of David, rather than two separate Messiahs as is now the fashion among many of the Jews. That said, there appears to be a reference in at least one Qumranian document to the strange dual concept of the Messiahs of Aaron and Israel.⁴²²⁸

According to the views of some rabbis—this particular version being very prevalent in the twelfth- to fifteenth-centuries—two Messiahs are to make their appearance: Messiah ben Joseph who is to be slain in battle, followed by Messiah ben David who is to reign as the victorious king. Numerous Jewish sources therefore refer Zechariah, *'And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and supplications; and they shall look upon me⁴²²⁹ whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born,'⁴²³⁰* to the slaying of this Messiah ben Joseph. At least one commentator has stated a belief that Messiah ben Joseph is to die as an atonement for Israel's sins.

⁴²²⁵ Deut 4:2,13:1; Mat 15:2,3; Col 2:8

⁴²²⁶ Pesiqta de-R. Kahana, Para, ed. Mandelbaum, p.73; Hoffman, Michael, *Judaism Discovered*, pp.132,133

⁴²²⁷ Golb, Norman, *Who Wrote the Dead Sea Scrolls?*

⁴²²⁸ 4Q246 actually has the Messiah being God and the Son of God!

⁴²²⁹ cp. John 19:37b, *'look on him.'*

⁴²³⁰ Zech 12:10

Turning to view the Targum of the Minor Prophets, and the appropriate part of the marginal readings to the Codex Reuchlinianus,⁴²³¹ there is found the following: 'And I shall cause to rest upon the house of David and upon the house of Jerusalem the spirit of prophecy and true prayer. And afterwards the Messiah son of Ephraim will go out to do battle with Gog, and Gog will slay him in front of the gate of Jerusalem. And they shall look to me and shall inquire of me why the nations pierced the Messiah son of Ephraim.'

This Codex '[has] numerous notes and variants....which inhabit its margins. Many of these marginalia consist of a single-word variant, sometimes of philological and lexical interest, while a significant minority are longer and often midrashic in content.'⁴²³²

The Babylonian Talmud introduces a division of opinion: '*And the land shall mourn, every family apart; the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart.*'⁴²³³ And what is the cause of this mourning? Herein lies the difference: some hold that the cause is the slaying of Messiah son of Joseph, and others that it is the slaying of what is termed the 'evil inclination.'⁴²³⁴ The former hold that the explanation well agrees with the scriptural verse, '*...and they shall look upon me*⁴²³⁵ *whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son,*' but to those who hold the latter view of being due to the 'evil Inclination,' the question has been asked by the former, 'Then why the weeping?'⁴²³⁶

Rashi, in his eleventh-century AD commentary on this,⁴²³⁷ concluded that as the words '*the land shall mourn*' are found in the prophecy of Zechariah, and he prophesies of the future, that they shall mourn on account of Messiah, the son of Joseph, who shall be slain in the war of Gog and Magog. It has been noted by some that this interpretation contrasts with Rashi's commentary on the Bible, in which he gives a different view of the passage in question.

Ibn Ezra⁴²³⁸ proposed the view that: 'all the heathen shall look to me to see what I shall do to those who pierced Messiah, the son of Joseph.' Abrabanel,⁴²³⁹ stated that: 'It is more correct to interpret this passage of Messiah, the son of Joseph, as our rabbis of blessed memory have interpreted in the treatise Sukkah, for he shall be a mighty man of valour, of the tribe of Joseph, and shall, at first, be captain of the Lord's host in that war, but in that war shall die.' Moses Alshekh,⁴²⁴⁰ proposed that: 'I will do yet a third thing, and that is, that *'they shall look unto me,*' for they shall lift up their eyes unto me in perfect repentance, when they see him whom they pierced, that is Messiah, the son of Joseph; for our rabbis, of blessed memory, have said, that he will take upon

⁴²³¹ dated to the year 1105AD

⁴²³² Cathcart & Gordon, authors and translators.

⁴²³³ Zech 12:12; Sukkah 52a

⁴²³⁴ Hebrew: jetzar hara, 'evil impulse.'

⁴²³⁵ cp. John 19:37b

⁴²³⁶ paraphrased from the *Soncino Talmud Edition*

⁴²³⁷ to Sukka 52a

⁴²³⁸ 12th-century AD

⁴²³⁹ 15th-century AD

⁴²⁴⁰ 16th-century AD

himself all the guilt of Israel, and shall then be slain in the war to make an atonement, in such a manner, that it shall be accounted as if Israel had pierced him, for on account of their sin he has died; and therefore, in order that it may be reckoned to them as a perfect atonement, they will repent, and look to the blessed One, saying that there is none beside Him to forgive those that mourn on account of him who died for their sin: this is the meaning of *'They shall look upon me.'*"

An alternative expedient, and a somewhat simpler one, can be seen in a version of the Jewish Bible.⁴²⁴¹ Here, the *'they'* in a phrase in Zechariah, *'And they shall look upon me'*⁴²⁴² *because they have thrust him through,*⁴²⁴³ is referenced in a footnote to mean the *'nations'* in verse nine, *'And it shall come to pass in that day, That I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.'*⁴²⁴⁴ This interpretation is usually accredited to Rashi.

The fundamental wanting in all of this, of course, is the lack of scriptural integrity. These Jewish 'explanations' do not mesh with the various prophecies concerning the comings of the Messiah.⁴²⁴⁵ Also, there is no mention in Scripture of the Messiah being of the house of Joseph called Ephraim: that is an invention of Judaism. For forces of the Antichrist—in the form of the nations which will come against Jerusalem in the end-time, and which are to be destroyed by the returned Messiah, an all-conquering spirit being—to be believed to be prophesied as weeping over their physical piercing of the Messiah, and to be joined with all Israel, weeping over their metaphorical piercing of Him, is nothing short of the most facile dissembling.

Baron gives the provenance of the 'double-messiah / Metatron' doctrine: 'The doctrine or theory of two Messiahs—a Messiah ben Joseph, who should suffer and die, and the Messiah ben David, who shall reign in power and glory—can be traced back to the third- or fourth-century AD, and very probably originated in the perplexity of the Talmudists at the apparently irreconcilable pictures of a suffering, and yet glorious Messiah, which they found in the prophecies. Instead of finding the solution in two advents of the one person, they explained the different Scriptures as referring to two different persons....[Who did the Rabbis mean by that epithet Messiah ben Joseph?]....We do not hesitate to answer: "None other person than Jesus, whom, after their great disappointment in the revolution of Bar-Cochba, they tacitly acknowledged as the suffering Messiah, and denominated Him by the name that He was commonly called in Galilee, in order, perhaps, to screen themselves against the hatred and persecution of their own followers, or of their Roman masters. This idea has been hinted at by Wolkenberg in his translation of the Pentateuch⁴²⁴⁶ and broadly asserted by Dr. Biesenthal in his Hebrew

⁴²⁴¹ The Jewish Publication Society of America, *The Holy Scriptures, according to the Masoretic Text: a New Translation* (published in 1917AD)

⁴²⁴² again, cp. John 19: 37b, *'look on him.'*

⁴²⁴³ Zech 12:10

⁴²⁴⁴ Zech 12:9

⁴²⁴⁵ q.v.

⁴²⁴⁶ Wolkenberg, Rev. M., *The Pentateuch according to the Talmud*, p.156

commentary on Luke.⁴²⁴⁷ This accounts for the remarkable fact that on the feast of Trumpets, before the blowing of the ram's horn, God's mercy is besought through 'Jesus, the Prince of the Presence of God, the Metatron,' or the One who shares the throne of God. At this same service, verses, mostly from [a] Psalm,⁴²⁴⁸ are repeated, whose first letters form the name of 'Christon,' but so ingeniously chosen, that they should at the same time read 'The Bruiser of Satan.' This name is also written on amulets and in Jewish houses when a child is born, as well as the name of the angel which is mentioned in the said service, with alteration of only one accountable letter, and which stands for the King our Righteousness, 'The King of Righteousness, Jesus our Messiah.' To this Metatron is again applied in the Talmud,⁴²⁴⁹ the passage in Exodus,⁴²⁵⁰ and it is added 'His name is the name of His Master.'⁴²⁵¹ And in the liturgy in the feast of Tabernacles reference is made to the glorious and dread Metatron,⁴²⁵² who was transformed from flesh to fire.

"Who cannot see in these mysterious hints a purposely covered belief in the Messiahship of Jesus, and that in a most orthodox manner?"^{4253 4254}

Bar the concluding comment on a transformation 'from flesh to fire,' this appears to be a very cogent explanation of the origin and development of the 'double-Messiah / Metatron' doctrine. In fact, it founds on the Kabbalistic false-messiah. It is important to note that Judaism, in common with all occult-related religions and organisations, has a higher, esoteric level of hidden knowledge for initiates which is kept from the mass of adherents. The quite extraordinary degree of cultic cant in the doctrine is obvious, exhibiting very Jewish acronym and word-play characteristics. The underlying knowledge that Jesus was the Messiah portends ill for many Jews, for, while behind their screen of hidden knowledge, the religious leaders readily admit to the matter privately, they deny it robustly in public: and those who know but deny Christ are doomed.⁴²⁵⁵

Of course there are some Jews who maintain that their human false-messiah to come will be capable of satisfying a core of the prophecies, with the reminder, presumably, being allegorised into comfortable obscurity. Others, like the Lubavitchers, hold that the person rebuilding the next Temple will be the 'true' Messiah of popular hope by definition, irrespective of his background and belief and any compliance with the messianic prophecies in the Bible.

⁴²⁴⁷ chpt. xxiii. 48

⁴²⁴⁸ Psalm 119

⁴²⁴⁹ Sanh. p.256

⁴²⁵⁰ Ex 23:20f.

⁴²⁵¹ i.e., JHVH!

⁴²⁵² Metatron, in reality, is a code- or cover word for Mithra / Mithras.

⁴²⁵³ Baron, David, *The Visions and Prophecies of Zechariah*, pp.441,442, footnotes

⁴²⁵⁴ excerpted from Baron, David, *Rays of Messiah's Glory*

⁴²⁵⁵ Mat 10:33

Summary

In this sad litany there is a recurring theme: the assumed hegemony of man. In all instances, man has set aside the word of God, or so twisted and mutated it as to render it worthless. In so doing, the very message of the blessed hope of salvation, and the very plan of God, has been first obscured, and then lost. In this way biblical prophecy is rendered meaningless, with the entire reduced to an incoherent garble. When man decides to place his thoughts above God, as well as his decrees and ordinances, the result is always the same: a rapid declension into apostasy and pagan practices. Down through the ages, this is exactly what happened to the houses of Israel and Judah. In both cases, it led to national captivity, slavery, and death.

The breadth and scope of Rabbinical Judaism's apostasy cannot be demonstrated adequately in these few pages, such is its depth and intensity. The same goes for Romanism, and its many harlot daughters. The apostasy is simply so immense, long since crowding out what little truth was ever held in possession.

Even though the two are linked in many surreptitious ways, it is this latter system, however, a world-girdling Cæsaro-papist, ecclesiastico-civil pagan and evil power with its stern and authoritarian leader, rather than the former, a mere national religious movement with many occult foundations, that is destined to play the leading central role in the soon-coming horrific events in the end-time.

Chapter 55

Roman Claim of Primacy

It is interesting to note that the great apostate religious system of this world, Roman Catholicism, chooses an interpretation of the passage, *'That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church,'*⁴²⁵⁶ which indicates that as Peter was the foundation stone of the church, he had primacy among the apostles, and that he became the bishop of Rome,⁴²⁵⁷ and that his primacy was passed on to his successors, the popes. The verse will scarcely bear the first of these propositions, however, and certainly none of the others. Both the historical record, and doctrinal continuity, deny that Peter could ever have been the bishop of Rome, and thus head of a Gentile church. The scriptural record also attests to this impossibility, as seen from Green's Literal Translation of Paul's epistle to the Galatians: *'But on the contrary, seeing that I have been entrusted with the gospel of the uncircumcision, even as Peter to the circumcision, for He working in Peter to an apostleship of the circumcision, also worketh in me to the nations [Gentiles].'*⁴²⁵⁸ Rome, a Gentile city, in a Gentile nation, patently was of the apostleship of Paul, not Peter.

'It may jolt them [Roman Catholics] to hear that the great Fathers of the church [sic] saw no connection between [that verse]⁴²⁵⁹ and the pope. Not one of them applies *'Thou art Peter'* to anyone but Peter. One after another they analyse it: Cyprian, Origen, Cyril, Hilary, Jerome, Ambrose, Augustine. They are not exactly Protestants. Not one of them calls the bishop of Rome a Rock or applies to him specifically the promise of the keys.

⁴²⁵⁶ Mat 16:18b

⁴²⁵⁷ Rome is famous for its saying: "Upon entering Catholicism, one must leave reason, like a lamp, at the door."

⁴²⁵⁸ Gal 2:7,8 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁴²⁵⁹ Mat 16:18

This is staggering to Catholics....The surprises do not stop there. For the Fathers, it is Peter's faith—or the Lord in whom he has faith—which is called the Rock, not Peter....

We already noted that not a single Father can find any hint of a Petrine office in the great biblical texts that refer to Peter. Papal supremacy and infallibility, so central to the Catholic church today, are simply not mentioned. Not a single creed, nor confession of faith, nor catechism, nor passage in patristic writings contains one syllable about the pope, still less about faith and doctrine being derived from him.⁴²⁶⁰

Acts clearly indicates that no one had a position of primacy in the apostles, and certainly neither Peter nor John had anything such, as it is written, *'Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John.'*⁴²⁶¹ Peter and John were sent by the apostles. Had Peter been the prince of the apostles, in the primacy, as some erroneously claim, then he would have commanded that some be sent, or have gone of his own accord, and would not have been sent by the collective will of the apostles. But, rather, Peter and John were so far from primacy that they assented to 'the will of the house,' and departed to Samaria.

As for Peter in Babylon, *'The church that is at Babylon, elected together with you, saluteth you,'*⁴²⁶² most probably he was there, and not in Rome, as at that time ancient Babylon in Mesopotamia had a significant number of Jews and Israelites resident, whereas Rome had precious few of either in the church, as evidenced by Paul's epistle to the Romans being the only one solely written to named recipients, rather than to a church group as a whole.

Roman claimants also cite an erroneous statement by Eusebius,⁴²⁶³ where the so-called 'church historian' inaccurately records that Peter went to Rome during the second year of the Roman Emperor Claudius to encounter the impostor Simon Magus.⁴²⁶⁴ The second year of the reign of Claudius would have been 42AD. However, Peter was a pillar in the church at Jerusalem, not Rome,⁴²⁶⁵ and is often mentioned in Acts as being active in Jerusalem up until and through the Council of Jerusalem, 49AD, so it would be extremely unlikely for Peter to be resident in Rome while undertaking daily duties in Jerusalem.

In addition, in his salutation at the end of the epistle to the Romans, Paul lists twenty-seven individuals by name: not one of them is Peter, and it would have been considered a slight of incredible magnitude for Paul to have omitted the very head of the Roman church had Peter been that head. Similarly, Luke, the writer of

⁴²⁶⁰ de Rosa, Peter, *Vicars of Christ*, pp.24,206 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁴²⁶¹ Acts 8:14

⁴²⁶² I Peter 5:13

⁴²⁶³ Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, Book II, chpt. 14

⁴²⁶⁴ the sorcerer who tried to buy the power of the Holy Spirit, cf. Acts 8:18,19, in order, so he thought, to avail of an initiation into a new, higher mystery, with a higher gnosis, and so be endued with commensurately higher magical powers.

Levi, Eliphas, *Histoire de la Magie*, p.189:

'Simon Magus became sorcerer to Nero.'

⁴²⁶⁵ Gal 2:9

Acts, and held to be the most accurate historian of the first-century, makes no mention of Peter as head of the church at Rome. The very notion of Peter, an apostle to the Israelites, acting as the chief apostle to the Gentiles, and the head of a Gentile church, is just too ludicrous a proposition by far to be given any serious consideration.

More sensibly, while the 'rock' has sometimes been identified with Peter's faith or confession, it is more often and correctly associated with the Lord Himself. That Peter was not the foundation of the church is borne out by Paul: *'Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone.'*⁴²⁶⁶ A clear indication of the identity of the 'rock' is given off here: the 'chief corner stone,' Jesus Christ. It is further confirmed in the words of Peter himself, where he refers to Christ as the 'rock': *'Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto to you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed.'*⁴²⁶⁷ David also referred to God as his 'rock': *'Unto thee will I cry, O Lord my rock,'*⁴²⁶⁸ and, *'The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer....For who is God save our Lord, or who is a rock, save our Lord?....The Lord liveth, and blessed be my rock.'*⁴²⁶⁹

Peter was also called Cephas,⁴²⁷⁰ meaning a piece of rock or stone: *'And when Jesus beheld him. he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, a stone.'*⁴²⁷¹ The Greek word translated 'Peter'⁴²⁷² in *'That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church,'* means, again, a piece of rock or stone, but the Greek word translated as 'rock'⁴²⁷³ in the same passage, means a mass of rock. Clearly, the reference to the 'rock' is a reference to Christ; the piece of stone being a reference to Peter. The passage in question in Matthew can thus be rendered, *'And I say also unto thee, that thou art a piece of rock, and upon this massive rock I will build my church.'*⁴²⁷⁴

The 'keys of the kingdom of heaven,'⁴²⁷⁵ recited by Peter, are: *'faith; virtue; knowledge; temperance; patience; godliness; brotherly kindness; charity,'*⁴²⁷⁶ described as *'an entrance....to the everlasting kingdom of*

⁴²⁶⁶ Eph 2:19,20

⁴²⁶⁷ I Peter 2:6-8 (sublinear emphasis added)

⁴²⁶⁸ Psa 28:1

⁴²⁶⁹ Psa 18:2,31:46; other references: Psa 31:2,3,42:9,61:2,62:2,6,7,71:3,78:35,89:26,92:15,94:22,95:1; II Sam 22:2,3

⁴²⁷⁰ Greek: Kephas.

⁴²⁷¹ John 1:42; cp. Greek: lithos, 'stone,' of smaller size.

⁴²⁷² Greek: Petros.

⁴²⁷³ Greek: Petra.

⁴²⁷⁴ Mat 16:18

⁴²⁷⁵ Greek: basileia ton ouranon, plural, viz., 'kingdom of heavens.'

⁴²⁷⁶ II Peter 1:5-11

our Lord.' They are not the trappings of pagan worship sported by the Roman pontiff claiming the right to permit or bar access to the kingdom of heaven.⁴²⁷⁷

Despite all of this, there are some who claim that a final, separate, and supervening commission was given to Peter by Christ at the lakeside: *'So when they had dined, Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.'*⁴²⁷⁸ The commandment to Peter was tripartite:

1. *'feed my lambs,'*⁴²⁷⁹

2. *'feed my sheep,'*⁴²⁸⁰ and,

3. *'feed my sheep.'*⁴²⁸¹

Romanists claim that here is the commission of pope given to Peter by Christ. After all, wasn't it Peter and Peter alone who was told to *'feed the sheep'* by Christ? But is this what was meant by the discourse on the shore of the sea of Galilee? Was Peter thence set up as the chief shepherd of God's flock, the church? There is nothing to suggest such a thing in Acts, and all that has been reviewed so far contradicts such a claim. But what was behind Christ's threefold questioning and commandments?

Christ had just revealed another miracle to His disciples: the abundant catch of fishes, one hundred and fifty-three in number.⁴²⁸² Once they had eaten, there was but a final teaching, specific to Peter. Peter, whose

⁴²⁷⁷ the actual location of the kingdom will be on earth, q.v. Revelation chpts. 21,22.

⁴²⁷⁸ John 21:15-17

⁴²⁷⁹ Greek: arnion, 'little lambs,' 'lambkins.'

⁴²⁸⁰ Better, 'tend my sheep,' or 'shepherd my sheep.'

⁴²⁸¹ Greek: probaton, 'something walking forward; a sheep.'

⁴²⁸² 153, gematria of 'I am the Lord thy God'; some see something quite interesting when looking at how many people, in the Gospel accounts were personally blessed by Christ. The book of Mark records Christ, on a total of three occasions, personally blessed three people. These events were the healing of a man with an unclean spirit (Mark 1:23), healing a man who was deaf (Mark 7:32) and making whole another who was blind (Mark 8:22). Matthew, however, writes that on 23 occasions Jesus blessed a total of 47 people. Some of those whom he bestowed God's grace include a leper (Mat 8:2), a non-Israelite woman and her daughter (Mat 15:22), Mary Magdalene (Mat 27:56) and Joseph of Arimathea (Mat 27:57). Luke writes that on 14 occasions 94 people were blessed. They include the seventy disciples sent out to preach and heal (Luke 10:1), ten lepers cleansed at the same time (Luke 17:12) and Zaccheus (Luke 19:2). Lastly, John bears record of 8 incidents where 9 people were helped by Jesus. Nicodemus (John 3:1), the woman accused of adultery (John 8:11) and Lazarus (John 11:1-46) are among those personally touched by the Savior of mankind. All told, the Lord directly blessed a grand total of 153 people in 48 separate incidents.

former love for Christ had been so ardent, yet in this same ardour it was found to be full of danger to himself. For mortal man, the danger lies not only in human deficiency, but it may be from an excess of feeling, a compelling emotionalism,⁴²⁸³ not commensurate with inward strength. Had Peter not already confessed, quite honestly, yet, as the event proved, mistakenly, that his love for Christ would endure even an ordeal that would disperse all others?⁴²⁸⁴ and had he not, almost immediately afterwards, and though prophetically warned of it, thrice denied his Lord? Jesus had, indeed, since then appeared specially to Peter as the risen One, but this threefold denial still stood, as it were, uncanceled before the other disciples; nay, before Peter himself, so Peter was given the opportunity of a commensurate, threefold recantation of his threefold denial of Christ. It was to this that the threefold question of the risen Lord now referred, and Peter, finally, understood it all. By now was gone the former confidence in his own abilities, his own strengths, and his own feelings, however ardent. Now there was much more: a true love, a growing faith, and an inner conviction, supervening and deep-seated. This time he would be able to follow Christ, literally, to the cross, for Christ signified such an end: *'This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he said unto him, Follow me.'*⁴²⁸⁵

The tripartite questioning by Christ, and responses from Peter, made good the wanting brought about by Peter's threefold denial of Christ at the Passover. Nothing had to be left undone, for the disciples were shortly to start on the great evangelising work among the Israelites. This closed the matter.

There is no divine ordination to the papacy. In fact, the contention is obscene.

Vatican centre of Babylonian cult

When the Babylonian mysteries spread westward, they gravitated to Rome, and not to Greece. This may seem surprising to some. Greece was the centre of culture and learning, but Rome had long been a centre of religion. And the most important part of Rome was Vatican hill. It is apposite that it was so, for Vatican derives from the Latin meaning 'diviner,' 'seer,' or 'oracle.'⁴²⁸⁶ Vatican hill is actually the former site of an old Etruscan oracle⁴²⁸⁷ and was a haunt of fortune-tellers. Hoeh adds background: 'Notice that this satanic oracle was a soothsayer; one who soothed the people by preaching what the people wanted to hear. And it was associated with a cemetery. The chief object of reverence at this location centuries before the time of Christ was the shrine or tomb of a "Peter"!

⁴²⁸³ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol.2, p.67:

'No man can live on emotion. A man has a mind and it is a moral obligation to have an intelligent faith....A sudden enthusiasm can also quickly become a dying fire.'

⁴²⁸⁴ Mat 26:33; John 13:37

⁴²⁸⁵ John 20:19

⁴²⁸⁶ Latin: vates or vatis.

⁴²⁸⁷ Keller, Warner, *The Bible as History*, p.390

But why would pagans be honouring "Peter" long before the apostle Peter was ever heard of? The answer once again points us back to Babylon and Nimrod. Nimrod, according to ancient tradition, was "the first-born" of deified human beings. He was the religious hero or star of that day—just as many have their "Hollywood idols" today. He was often symbolised by a bull—as Christ is by a lamb. Nimrod was therefore called a firstling—and in the Babylonian tongue (a dialect of Hebrew)⁴²⁸⁸ the word firstling was "Peter"!⁴²⁸⁹

But how did Nimrod become associated with Rome?

Nimrod Flees to Rome: Tyrants sooner or later meet their end. So, too, with Nimrod. After years of oppressing the people for his selfish interests, Shem, (according to ancient records) forced Nimrod to flee. And to where did he flee?—to Rome! The ancient name of Rome was "Saturnia," recorded Pliny.⁴²⁹⁰ But what does "Saturnia" mean? It means the dwelling place of "Saturn." And the inhabitants of ancient Italy called Nimrod "Saturn," meaning "the hiding one"—because he "lay hid" from his pursuers.⁴²⁹¹ A pagan shrine was later set up on Vatican hill to commemorate this event. And the birthday of Nimrod—December the twenty-fifth—was called the Saturnalia by the Romans.

Saturnia fell into decay. A new city, Rome, was later built on the same site—named after Romulus, according to Latin writers. But how is it that the Peter of Babylon came to be associated with the city named Rome? Again we must turn to the language of Babylon. According to the mystery of Babylon, Nimrod ascended "on high"—or was glorified. In the Semitic dialect of Babylon the word for "on high" was 'rome'!⁴²⁹² It is no wonder that wherever the Babylon Mystery spread the people heard that Peter, another name for Nimrod, went to Rome! And the customs of Nimrod's ancient Babylon gravitated there, too!

By the time of the Roman Empire, the city of Rome [had become] the religious centre of the world. Jerusalem, by contrast, was the headquarters of God's church....' After the flight to Pella by the Jerusalem church, amid persecution of Christians at Rome and elsewhere, some people started to cast around for a new headquarters location for the church, an exercise in human reasoning, not of God.⁴²⁹³

'At this moment in history, the centuries-old tradition was revived and widely circulated that "Peter" had been in Rome. The heathen had never heard of the apostle Peter. But everyone at Rome had heard that there was a shrine of a Peter on Vatican hill and that that Peter or Nimrod had come from Babylon. Anacletus, an

⁴²⁸⁸ *Wikipedia*: 'The language used by the Chaldeans was the Babylonian dialect of Akkadian, the same Semitic language, save for slight peculiarities in sound and in characters, as Assyrian Akkadian. In late periods both the Babylonian and Assyrian dialects of Akkadian ceased to be spoken, and Aramaic took its place across Mesopotamia, and remains the mother tongue of the Assyrian (also known as Chaldo-Assyrian) Christians of Iraq and its surrounds to this day.'

⁴²⁸⁹ q.v., *Young's Concordance*

⁴²⁹⁰ Pliny, *Natural History*, bk. III.

⁴²⁹¹ Jackson, John, *Chronological Antiquities*, p.233

⁴²⁹² q.v., *Young's Concordance*

⁴²⁹³ entire paragraph paraphrased.

elder or bishop in the apostate church at Rome, dedicated the shrine of the pagan Peter (or Nimrod) to the apostle Peter around 80AD.⁴²⁹⁴

It was now an easy task for Anacletus to convince the drifting, unemployed pagan population of Rome—which was becoming interested in the Mysteries—that the shrine at Rome was the site of burial of the apostle Peter, for had not the apostle Peter been at Babylon! And to cement his authority, he claimed to have been ordained by Peter.

Anacletus claimed to be the sole successor to Peter. He claimed that the two men who ruled in the church before him were Peter and Linus.⁴²⁹⁵ Now it so happens in ancient tradition, the son of Nimrod (the pagan Peter) was named Linus!⁴²⁹⁶ It ought to be plain by now that the pagan Babylonian Mystery had taken root in the local church at Rome. The bishop at Rome had the great advantage of being in the chief city of the Roman Empire.

The heathen did not mind Anacletus' use of the name of Christ so long as they could keep their old customs. Anacletus cleverly used the name of Peter—a name familiar to initiates in the pagan mysteries—to sanction these very customs, claiming that "Peter" approved those heathen abominations. The bishop of Rome never preached: "*Learn not the way of the heathen*"! Instead, he phrased it in practice: "Learn now the way of the heathen"!

When the news of the pretended authority of the bishop of Rome spread abroad, many other false teachers saw the advantage of casting in their lot with him. If they were associated with him, they, too, could use the name of Peter and take the customs celebrated in honour of the pagan saviour and attribute those customs to Christ in order to create a following after themselves.

That is how the new headquarters of the apostatising church quickly gravitated to Rome!⁴²⁹⁷

The Roman church actually traces its origins back to Babylon and Nimrod and Linus, even when propagating the supposed primacy of the papacy.

New Testament canon

A right arrogated by Rome is that of approving and settling the New Testament canon. Rome claims responsibility for having decided what should and should not appear in the New Testament. The statement of Jerome,⁴²⁹⁸ however, gives the lie to such a claim: 'This must be said to our people, that the epistle which is entitled 'To the Hebrews' is accepted as the apostle Paul's not only by the churches of the east but by all church

⁴²⁹⁴ according to a record in the *Liber Pontificalis*, i, p.125

⁴²⁹⁵ q.v., Catholic list of bishops in any World Almanac.

⁴²⁹⁶ q.v., Smith, William, *Classical Dictionary*

⁴²⁹⁷ Hoeh, Herman, article in *The Good News*

⁴²⁹⁸ in 414AD

writers in the Greek language of earlier times, although many judge it to be by Barnabus. It is of no great moment who the author is, since it is the work of a churchman and received recognition day by day in the churches' public reading. If the custom of the Latins does not receive it among the canonical scriptures, neither, by the same liberty, do the churches of the Greeks accept John's Apocalypse. Yet we accept them both, not following the custom of the present time, but the precedent of early writers, who generally make free use of testimonies from both works.'

Jerome's statement clearly shows that the canon came from traditional practices of lay members simply carrying on those of the earlier church. It is known that the canon was settled by the primitive church by the end of the first-century, following the completion of Revelation. There was no papacy at that time. It is interesting to note that Jerome cites custom, implying the early settlement of the canon, when writing⁴²⁹⁹ well after the councils of Nicæa;⁴³⁰⁰ Hippo Regius;⁴³⁰¹ and Carthage;⁴³⁰² and the papal decree early in the fifth century.⁴³⁰³ None of these had any impact on the settled canon. Rome had nothing to do with it, and its claim is nothing but baseless pretention. 'It goes without saying that the Church, understood as the entire body of believers, created the canon [led by the Holy Spirit, of course]....it was not the reverse; it was not imposed from the top, be it by bishops or synods.'⁴³⁰⁴

God led the church, through his Holy Spirit, to adopt and hold to the true canon. It wasn't done through the pagan offices of Rome

⁴²⁹⁹ again, in 414AD

⁴³⁰⁰ 325AD

⁴³⁰¹ 393AD

⁴³⁰² 397AD

⁴³⁰³ 405AD

⁴³⁰⁴ Aland, Kurt (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

Chapter 56

Roman Church 'Innovations'

<u>'Innovation'</u> ^{4305 4306}	<u>Inception: AD</u>
Prayers for the dead:	300
Sign of the cross:	310
Christmas: ⁴³⁰⁷	313
Wax votive candles:	320
Easter: ⁴³⁰⁸	325
Sunday worship & veneration: ⁴³⁰⁹	c.365
Prohibition on keeping God's Sabbath: ⁴³¹⁰	c.365

⁴³⁰⁵ Newman, Cardinal John Henry, *The Development of the Christian Religion*, p.359, admits that:

‘Temples, incense, oil lamps, votive offerings, holy water, holidays and season of devotions, processions, blessing of fields, sacerdotal vestments, the tonsure (of priests and monks and nuns), images ... are all of pagan origin.’

What will be the next invention? The Roman church says it never changes; yet, it has done nothing else but invent new doctrines which are contrary to the Bible, and has practiced rites and ceremonies taken boldly and bodily from paganism. Some scholars have found that 75% of the rites and ceremonies of the Roman church are of pagan origin.

⁴³⁰⁶ The Roman Catholic Church’s ‘inculturation’ process, down through the ages, has resulted in its wholesale incorporation of pagan beliefs and practices.

⁴³⁰⁷ held on the birthday of Mithras established by Aurelian c.274–275AD, and confirmed by Constantine as the birthday of Jesus in 313AD; first mentioned in documents in 354AD.

⁴³⁰⁸ observed earlier locally, and at Rome under bishop Xystus.

⁴³⁰⁹ Council of Laodicea.

Veneration of saints and angels:	375
Claim to ownership of keys of Janus & Cybele as 'keys of heaven':	378
Doctrine of the Trinity: ⁴³¹¹	381
Mass adopted as a daily celebration: ⁴³¹²	394
Lent: ⁴³¹³	c.420 / c.425
Mary declared 'Mother of God,' and dead saints go to heaven doctrine: ⁴³¹⁴	431
Priests begin wearing vestments:	500
Extreme unction: ⁴³¹⁵	526
Satan decreed an eternal being:	547
Eternal punishment of sinners in fires of hell:	553
Tithing to the Roman church:	585
Crosses on steeples:	586
First doctrine of Purgatory: ⁴³¹⁶	593
Worship in Latin:	600
Prayers directed to Virgin Mary, dead saints, and angels:	c.600
Bishops' wearing of pallium made systematic: ⁴³¹⁷	602
Title of pope / universal bishop: ⁴³¹⁸	607
Temporal power of papacy: ⁴³¹⁹	610

⁴³¹⁰ Council of Laodicea.

⁴³¹¹ Council of Constantinople.

⁴³¹² *Foxe's Book of Martyrs*, p.87:

Of Roger Oguier's response to the Inquisition:

""Whereas, first of all, you lay to my charge that I go not to mass; I refuse so to do indeed, because the death and precious blood of the Son of God, and His sacrifice, are utterly abolished there and trodden underfoot. '*For Christ by one offering hath he perfected for ever them that are sanctified*'; that is by the sacrifice of Himself. For do we read in all the Scriptures that either the prophets, Christ, or any of the apostles ever said mass? They knew not what it meant....If you please to read the Bible over, you will never find the mass once mentioned therein; therefore it is the mere invention of men.""

⁴³¹³ observed earlier locally, and at Rome under bishop Xystus.

⁴³¹⁴ Council of Ephesus.

⁴³¹⁵ in rudimentary form.

⁴³¹⁶ Gregory I.

⁴³¹⁷ initiated in 501AD

⁴³¹⁸ bestowed by emperor Phocas on Boniface III.

Feast days in honour of Mary:	650
Kissing of pope's foot: ⁴³²⁰	709
Temporal power of papacy confirmed: ⁴³²¹	750
Adoration of cross, Mary, saints, images, and relics legalised:	786 / 787
Holy water:	850
Anointing with oil for death: ⁴³²²	852
Veneration of Joseph:	890
College of cardinals:	927
Baptism of bells: ⁴³²³	965
Canonisation of dead 'saints':	995
Fasting on Fridays and Lent:	998
Mass attendance made mandatory:	1003
Feasts for the dead:	11 th -c.
Celibacy of priests: ⁴³²⁴	1079
Celibacy of priesthood effected universally:	1090
Rosary beads:	

⁴³¹⁹ partially granted by Phocas, but given in full in 750AD.

⁴³²⁰ beginning with Constantine.

⁴³²¹ by Pipin, king of the Franks.

⁴³²² Barclay, William, *And He Had Compassion*, p.238 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):
'Anointing with oil:

The extreme instance of [living in the twilight of no wonders or miracles] is anointing with oil [sic]. We have seen how James took it for granted that a sick person [it had to be one of the brethren, q.v. James 5:12ff.] would come to the elders to be anointed for his cure (James 5:14). Until the 8th-century, anointing was always designed to cure and never a preparation for death. But in 852AD it was laid down [by the Roman Catholic Church] that anointing was a preparation against death; and in 1151AD it became Extreme Unction, which is one of the seven Roman Catholic sacraments and is administered at the point of death. In medieval times a person who had received Extreme Unction was expected to die. If he recovered he had to live as one dead. He was not allowed to marry nor to alter his will (Weatherhead, Leslie D., *Psychology, Religion, and Healing*, pp.93,94). The wheel had gone full circle. In the early church anointing was for healing; by the time of the Middle Ages it was for death. In the beginning the person anointed was meant not to die; in the end the person anointed had no right to live. Something extraordinary had happened to the church's ministry of healing [and to the visible church itself].'

⁴³²³ Fosdick, Dr. Harry Emerson, *The Meaning of Faith*, p.180:

'Bells were first put into church steeples not to call folk to worship, but to scare the devils out of thunder-clouds, and the old cathedral bells of Europe are inscribed with declarations of that purpose.'

⁴³²⁴ decreed by Gregory VII.

Extreme unction:	1097
Inquisition of 'heretics': ⁴³²⁵	1123
Sale of indulgences:	1151
Ash Wednesday:	1184
Transubstantiation of the wafer: ⁴³²⁶	1190
Confession (auricular) to a priest:	1191
Adoration of the host: ⁴³²⁷	1215
Bible forbidden and placed on index of forbidden books: ⁴³²⁸	1215
Red hats for cardinals:	1220
Invention of the scapular: ⁴³²⁹	1229
Feast of Corpus Christi:	1245
Miraculous scapular:	1251
Roman church claim to be 'the one and only true church':	1264
Cup forbidden to laity at communion:	1287
Purgatory decreed as a dogma: ⁴³³⁰	1303
Doctrine of the seven sacraments:	1415
Ave Maria: ⁴³³¹	1439
Jesuit Order founded by Ignatius Loyola:	1439
Justification by works and church tradition of equal authority to Bible:	1508 / 1558
Romish Tradition placed on equal footing with Scripture:	1534
Apocrypha received into Romish canon:	1545
Doctrine of Original Sin:	1546

⁴³²⁵ Council of Verona.

⁴³²⁶ decreed by Innocent III.

⁴³²⁷ wafer god.

⁴³²⁸ Council of Tolouse.

⁴³²⁹ by the English monk, Simon Stock.

⁴³³⁰ Council of Florence.

⁴³³¹ completed in two parts.

Claim of universal temporal power:	1546
Doctrine of Extreme Unction:	1546
Creed: ⁴³³²	1550
Council of Trent doctrines made binding:	1551
Religious medals and edible religious stamps:	1560
Immaculate Conception of Mary:	1560
Proclamation of neo-mediaevalist 'Syllabus of Errors':	1600
Proclamation of pope's temporal authority over all civil rulers:	1854
Mary declared 'Queen of heaven': ⁴³³³	1854
Papal infallibility: ⁴³³⁴	1870

⁴³³² by Pius IV, made official creed.

⁴³³³ Juno, the principal goddess of the Romans, was termed Juno Regina, 'the queen of heaven.'

⁴³³⁴ Papal infallibility: A parody and misrepresentation of Christ's teaching. In effect, this quickly became a Roman Catholic policy of interdict and blood, or even diplomatic craft, for century after century.

The great spiritual blunder of the infallibilist's view of revelation lies in the assumption that there can be infallible teaching at all except by a mortal, sinning being as incapable of living a false life as of pronouncing a false proposition. There is no room for divine propositional revelation. Man, unfortunately, becomes inculcated with the prejudices and novelties of religious society. It becomes political, tendentious, and dogmatic.

A divine mind cannot be infallibly revealed, except by a character overflowing with the divine spirit. The papacy arrogates Christ's position without His spirit-overflowing personality.

An infallible church needs moral infallibility—infallibility of the will and the affections—even more than she (the woman or whore) needs infallibility of understanding, in order to inculcate God's truth in the world.

It is easy to see why the Roman Catholic Church has been led to rely more and more on her supposed intellectual infallibility, and to distinguish it sharply from moral or spiritual perfection, for in all, in truth, she is an abject pauper, no matter how vigorously she may seek to dissimulate and feign piety or even remorse. '*By their fruits ye shall know them,*' Mat 7:20. There can be no distinction drawn between theocratic theorising and the conduct of the theorists. Rome would have man believe that good fruit can come from a corrupt tree, a corrupt and worldly ecclesiastical system; Christ has it differently.

Assumed dogmatic infallibility of Romish religious rulers sits ill with a church that claims to be infallibly guided in doctrine, in spite of the many corruptions and the frightful sins which have marked the course of her ecclesiastical administration, being evident in the papal succession, an imperious self-confidence, and a predominant self-will. At the very nadir of his temporal powers, and by the use of a subterfuge, the pope announced his newly-found infallibility.

Romanism numbs the mind by the business-detail of religious observances and empty symbolism, in which all the scheme and architecture are man's, and the very cement of which is moral habit and association.

de Cesare, R., *The Last Days of Papal Rome*, pp.422,423,428-30,436,437 (sublinear emphasis added, with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'[Concerning] the Ecumenical Council in Rome....The *Civiltà Cattolica* suggested that Papal Infallibility should be substituted for the dogma of temporal power, and by the allocution *Pericunda* the council was proclaimed, and its opening fixed for December 8, 1869AD.

The government [of Italy] did not ignore that the proposal of the more violent [the most fanatical amongst the delegates to the council] was to reach....the dogma of temporal power....or [that it]....might be employed to rekindle that religious struggle which, for some years, seemed ended, or, at least, in abeyance.

Mixed marriages not celebrated by priest null & void:	1908
Public schools condemned: ⁴³³⁵	1930
Mary reaffirmed as 'Mother of God':	1931
Assumption of Mary: ⁴³³⁶	1950
Mary confirmed 'Queen of heaven':	1954
Mary proclaimed 'Mother of the Church': ⁴³³⁷	1965

Dogmatic decrees

Doctrine:	Session:	Date:	Canon:	Decrees:
On the symbolism of faith	3	4 February, 1546	None	1
The Holy Scriptures	4	8 April, 1546	None	1
Original Sin	5	7 June, 1546	5	4
Justification	6	13 January, 1547	33	16
The Sacraments in General	7	3 March, 1547	13	1
Baptism	7	3 March, 1547	14	1

Should the Infallibility of the Pope be proclaimed, declarations upon points of faith and upon any argument whatever would be pronounced by one who, being at the same time head of the [Roman] church and temporal Prince, might make his decisions serve both interests, and create difficulties between church and State.

The most extraordinary arguments were employed in support of Infallibility. For example, the bishop of Poitiers, in a report presented to the Conciliary Commission de fide, said that, since St. Peter was crucified head downward, thus causing the whole weight of his body to fall upon his head, it proved that the Pope was the foundation of the [Roman] church and therefore Infallible.

Immense was the pressure brought to obtain a unanimous vote. Unanimity was desired, although there was no doubt as to the majority. All the environment pointed that way. The ecclesiastical congregations, the Court, the convents, and especially the women, were full of deference only for those bishops who favoured Infallibility. Private interests and that species of hierarchical adulation so profound and invincible in ecclesiastical society ended by gaining the day. If the Pope desired Infallibility, why not grant it? Infallibility resuscitated the Syllabus [of Errors] accepted by the Episcopate six years previously without opposition.

With the promulgation of this dogma, the [Roman] church was identified more closely with the Pope. The ex sese represented the climax of the Ultramontane victories. Yet Pius IX., seven days after the promulgation, wrote to his nephew Luigi in this melancholic strain: "The things of this world grow even more disturbed. God alone can extract from this chaos a new order of things." So much for his belief in Infallibility.

No Council was ever poorer in practical and positive results; in none did political sentiments predominate more completely over religious interests; in none, perhaps, had the Pope taken so direct a part in favour of a thesis which interested him personally.'

⁴³³⁵ by Pius XII.

⁴³³⁶ personal corporeal presence in heaven.

⁴³³⁷ by Paul VI.

Confirmation	7	3 March, 1547	3	None
Holy Eucharist	13	11 October, 1551	11	None
Penance	14	15 November, 1551	15	8
Extreme Unction	14	25 November, 1551	4	15
Saints, Relics, Images	25	4 December, 1563	None	3
Indulgences	25	4 December, 1563	None	1

And, of course, the age-old Catholic dogma: 'Outside the [Roman] Church there is no salvation.'⁴³³⁸

Ten (or nine?) Commandments

K.J.V. Received Text

Roman Catholic Catechism

1. *I am the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before me.*

1. I am the Lord thy God, Thou shall have no strange gods before me.

2. *Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.*

DELETED

3. *Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.*

2. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.

4. *Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six*

3. Remember to keep holy the Lord's day.

⁴³³⁸ Latin: *extra ecclesia nulla salus*. 'No personal relationship with Jesus is possible outside the pope's and Catholic Church's mediation,' Francis I, 25 June, 2014.

days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.

5. Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

4. Honour your father and your mother.

6. Thou shalt not kill.

5. You shall not kill.

7. Thou shalt not commit adultery.

6. You shall not commit adultery.

8. Thou shalt not steal.

7. You shall not steal.⁴³³⁹

9. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.

8. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour.

10. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's.

9. You shall not cover your neighbour's wife.

10. You shall not covert your neighbour's goods.

There are many significant changes appearing in the Roman Catholic Catechism:

⁴³³⁹ some Roman Catholics report that there is a de facto weekly prescription, below which value, theft need not be admitted at Confession, on the ground that it insignificant.

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1. The first commandment is shortened to remove the identifier of the true God, He who led the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt. '*No other gods*' is redacted to 'no strange gods' in the Catechism, permitting the introduction of the god of Roman Catholicism to the exclusion of the true God;
 2. The second commandment is deleted in its entirety. Romanism cannot tolerate the loss of adoring its idols;
 3. The third commandment's penalty for taking the name of the Lord in vain is deleted;
 4. The fourth commandment's listing of those who have to do no work on the Sabbath is deleted, as is God's blessing and hallowing that day. In its place, there is a short reference to keeping the Lord's day, the Roman Catholic Sunday;
 5. The fifth commandment's blessing is deleted;
 6. The eighth commandment allegedly has a limit imposed, expressed in terms of moeny-value, below which confession of sin is not needed; and,
 7. The tenth commandment is split into two commandments in order to make up for the deletion of the second commandment, and references house, servants, ox, and ass are deleted. Since the ox was a beast used for tilling the land, namely, in the pursuit of productive work, the ass was the normal means of transport of the time, and the house was a necessity for the welfare of the family, and servants were also involved in productive labour, the deletions, representing the removal of all those productive and beneficial assets, accords with the limited rights of the individual under Rome's most favoured political / economic system: Fascism.⁴³⁴⁰

In total, more than 70% of the Law of God is removed in the Roman Catholic Catechism.

⁴³⁴⁰ Robbins, John W., *Ecclesiastical Megalomania: The Economic and Political Thought of The Roman Catholic Church*, p.58, citing Pius XI's encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno* (subtitled: *Reconstructing the Social Order*), issued in 1931AD, forty years after Leo XIII's encyclical: *On the Condition of Workers*:

'Under Fascism, property owners may keep their property, titles, and deeds, but the use of their property is, as Leo XIII wrote, "common." Fascism is a form of socialism that retains the forms and trappings of capitalism, but not its substance. Under Fascism, property deeds and titles are intact, but the institution of private property has disappeared. Government regulations and mandates have replaced it. For this distinction between legal ownership and actual use, the Fascists owe a debt to the Roman Church-State.'

Civilita Cattolica:

'Fascism is the regime that corresponds most closely to the concepts of the church of Rome.'

Von Paassen, Pierre, *Days of Our Years*, p.465:

'For today Rome considers the Fascist regime the nearest to its dogmas and interests.'

Summary

On papal arrogation: 'Without the slightest blush pope Gregory VII proclaimed that his Dictatus papae was based on the discovery in the papal archives of ancient Roman records dating back to Saint Peter's ministry in Rome. Upon their spurious authority, Gregory redefined the papal powers including: The pope can be judged by no one on Earth. The Roman church has never erred, nor can it make mistakes. Only the pope can depose bishops. He alone is entitled to Imperial insignia. He alone can dethrone emperors or kings. Gregory then "discovered" the pseudo-Isidorian Decretals. [O]f its three hundred and twenty-four passages—the penultimate Catholic document in the code of canon law—his forgers / counterfeiters inserted three hundred and thirteen passages falsely attributed to early Christian fathers.'⁴³⁴¹

⁴³⁴¹ Campbell, Alan, *The Idol Shepherd of Zechariah*, Appendix, augmented; Hogue, John, *The Last Pope*, pp26,27, cited in *Bible Readings for the Home Circle*, pp.30,31:

“The celebrated letter of Justinian to the pope in the year 533AD, not only recognized all previous privileges, but enlarging them, and entitling the pope and his church to many immunities and rights, which afterward gave origin to the pretensions displayed in the canon law.” (Gavazzi, Alessandro, *Lectures*, p.66).

It is clearly evident, therefore, that just as soon as the last opposition to the papacy was removed, it became firmly seated by the famous letter of Justinian—that the bishop of Rome should be recognized as the head of the universal church and the corrector of heresies.’

On papal arrogation:

The pope calls himself “the vicar of Christ.” Leo X. blasphemously styled himself “The lion of the tribe of Judah.” Leo XII. allowed himself to be called “The Lord our God.” Pope Martin V. called himself “the most holy and the most happy, who is the arbiter of heaven and the lord of the earth, the successor of SAINT Peter, the anointed of the Lord, the father of kings, the light of the world.”

Augustinus Triumphus, a popish author, said: “The very doubt whether the council be greater than the pope is absurd, because it involves the contradiction that the supreme pontiff is not supreme. He cannot err, he cannot be deceived. It must be conceived that concerning him he knows all things.” This blasphemy was solidly indorsed by the cardinals and bishops of the Catholic church, in the Ecumenical Council of 1870AD, which declared the pope to be infallible.

The following is a portion of the infallibility dogma as translated by Hon. W. E. Gladstone, in the *Vatican Council*, p.201: “All the faithful of Christ must believe that the holy apostolic see and the Roman pontiff possesses the primacy over the whole world, and that the Roman pontiff is the successor of blessed Peter, prince of the apostles, and is true vicar of Christ, and head of the whole church, and father and teacher of all Christians; and that full power was given to him in blessed Peter to rule, feed, and govern the universal church by Jesus Christ our Lord.”

Where was Peter told by Christ to rule and to govern?

“They have assumed infallibility, which belongs only to God. They profess to forgive sins, which belongs only to God. They profess to open and shut heaven, which belongs only to God. They profess to be higher than all the kings of the earth, which belongs only to God. And they go beyond God in pretending to loose whole nations from their oath of allegiance to their kings, when such kings do not please them. And they go against God, when they give indulgences for sin. This is the worst of all blasphemies.” (Clarke, A., on Dan 7:25).

Cited in *Bible Readings for the Home Circle*, pp.31-33:

‘Has the papacy worn out the saints?—by its relentless persecutions of Christians, having put to death more than fifty million [no independent corroboration of this handily-rounded number has come to light, so far as is known] during the period of its supremacy.

Scott's Church History:

“No computation can reach the numbers who have been put to death, in different ways, on account of their maintaining the profession of the gospel, and opposing the corruptions of the Church of Rome. A million of poor Waldenses perished in France; nine hundred thousand orthodox Christians were slain in less than thirty years after the institution of the order of the Jesuits. The Duke of Alva boasted of having put to death in the Netherlands thirty-six thousand by the hand of the common executioner during the space of a few years. The Inquisition destroyed, by various tortures, one hundred and fifty thousand within thirty years. These are a few specimens, and but a few, of those which history has recorded. But the total amount will never be known till the earth shall disclose her blood, and

The nineteenth-century historian, Lord Macauley sums matters admirably: 'The experience of twelve hundred eventful years, and the ingenuity and patient care of forty generations of statesmen, have improved the polity of the church of Rome to such perfection, that among the contrivances which have been devised for deceiving and controlling mankind, it occupies the highest place.'

no more cover her slain."—For further evidence, see Barnes, Albert, *Notes on Daniel*, p.328; Buck's *Theological Dictionary*, art. 'Persecutions'; Dowling's *History of Romanism*; Fox's *Book of Martyrs*; Charlotte Elizabeth's *Martyrology*; *The Wars of the Huguenots*; histories of the Reformation, etc.

"To parry the force of this damaging testimony from all history, papists deny that the church has ever persecuted anyone; it has been the secular power; the church has only passed decision on the question of heresy, and then turned the offenders over to the civil power, to be dealt with according to the pleasure of the secular court. The impious hypocrisy of this claim is transparent enough to make it an absolute insult to common sense. In those days of persecution, what was the secular power?—Simply a tool in the hand of the church, and under its control, to do its bloody bidding. And when the church delivered its prisoners to the executioners to be destroyed, with fiendish mockery it made use of the following formula: 'And we do leave thee to the secular arm, and to the power of the secular court; but at the same time do most earnestly beseech that court to so moderate its sentence as not to touch thy blood, nor to put thy life in any sort of danger.' And then, as intended, the unfortunate victims of popish hate were immediately executed." (Smith, Uriah, *Thoughts on Daniel and the Revelation*, p.141. See Geddes's *Tracts on Popery; View of the Court of Inquisition in Portugal*, p.446; Limborch, vol. 2, p.289).

What change has the papacy sought to make in the Law of God?

It has expunged the greater part of the second commandment, in order to establish the adoration of images, dividing the tenth to complete the number ten. It has also abolished the fourth commandment (as far as its power extends) by substituting the first day of the week for the seventh....

"The keeping holy the Sunday is a thing absolutely necessary to salvation; and yet this is nowhere put down in the Bible; on the contrary, the Bible says, Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy (Ex 20:8), which is Saturday, and not Sunday; therefore the Bible does not contain all things necessary to salvation, and, consequently, cannot be a sufficient rule of faith." (Baddeley, Thomas, *A Sure Way to Find Out the True Religion*).

The Bible is clear and consistent in this matter. *Bible Readings for the Home Circle*, pp.49,50 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

"God rested on [the Sabbath]; he blessed it; he sanctified it." "Sanctify: to make sacred or holy; to set apart to a holy or religious use."—Webster.

Joel 1:14 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets): "Sanctify [i.e., appoint and hallow] ye a fast, call a solemn assembly, gather the elders and all the inhabitants of the land into the house of the Lord." In all places in the sacred text it means to appoint, or proclaim, as in Josh 20:7; II Kings 10:20,21; Zeph 1:7, margins. So when the Sabbath was sanctified, as the last act by which it was made for man, an appointment, or proclamation, of the Sabbath was made.

"If we had no other passage than this of Gen 2:3, there would be no difficulty in deducing from it a precept for the universal observance of a Sabbath, or seventh day, to be devoted to God as holy time, by all of the race for whom the earth and its nature were specifically prepared. The first men must have known it. The words "he hallowed it" can have no meaning otherwise. They would be a blank unless in reference to some who were required to keep it holy."—Lange's *Commentary*, vol.1, p.197.

"And sanctified it." Hebrew: kadesh. It is by this term that the positive appointment of the Sabbath as a day of rest to man is expressed. God's sanctifying the day is equivalent to his commanding men to sanctify it."—Notes on Gen 2:3, George Bush, professor of Hebrew and Oriental Literature, New York City University.

How long was the Sabbath in place?

"And [Moses] said unto them, This is that which the Lord hath said, Tomorrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord." (Ex 16:23, with added comment and clarification in square brackets). This was a full month, and more, before the proclamation of the Sabbath from Sinai.'

There was no 'before the Sabbath' in terms of mankind. The Sabbath was instituted at the time of recreation, when God rested on the seventh day.

The scale and intensity of Rome's importation of outright pagan ideas and practices is both breathtaking and horrifying, as is the nature and scope of the arrogation.⁴³⁴² All who find themselves inveigled in her scheming and machinations, whether doctrinal, ritual, ceremonial, civil, political, or financial, quickly sink into the most evil and satanic slough.

⁴³⁴² papal arrogation even extended to a presumed right of allocation of the 'new world' and any lands to be discovered thereafter. The 'Line of Demarcation' was a line drawn by pope Alexander VI in 1493–1494AD to assign colonial spheres of interest in the Americas and elsewhere to Roman Catholic Portugal and Spain. Portugal was assigned Brazil, the west and east coasts of Africa, the southern and eastern shores of Asia, and the East Indies. Spain was assigned the Americas, the Philippines, and lands encountered by or to be encountered by Columbus. This was accompanied by the grants of ecclesiastical patronage to both kingdoms, the padroado to the Portuguese and the patronato to the Spanish.

Chapter 57

Roman Church: Intolerance, Dogma, & Tradition

It is informative to reflect on various statements and pronouncements made by leading members of the Roman Catholic Church in the fourth-century, and later, which throw some light on her attitude and intolerance which can be expected in the end-time.

Firstly, the matter of the Passover versus Easter, a bone of contention between Rome and the churches in Asia,⁴³⁴³ remained 'unresolved,' if viewed through the mind of man, until the Council of Nicæa.⁴³⁴⁴ By the time the fourth-century had come round, apostasy had taken a firm hold of the name of Christianity, as a false- or counterfeit-Christianity. Allied with the greatest temporal power in the then world, it issued the Nicene Creed which forbade 'Christians' to celebrate The New Testament Passover, a sacred occasion on the fourteenth of the first month, the day of Christ's death. The first Sunday after the vernal equinox now became the 'legal' day for the celebration, not of His death for our sins, but of the resurrection, although even then on the wrong day. This is the festival which later became known in north-western Europe as 'Easter.'

This formed the foundation of what was to become the later wholesale persecution, for it marked out those who held firmly to God's commandments, shunning man's perversions. About forty years later, the twenty-ninth canon of the Council of Laodicea⁴³⁴⁵ pronounced: 'Christians must not judaize by resting on the Sabbath, but must work on that day....and, if they can, resting then (on Sunday) as Christians. But if any be found to be

⁴³⁴³ i.e., Asia Minor.

⁴³⁴⁴ 325AD

⁴³⁴⁵ c.365AD

judaizers, let them be anathema from Christ.' A little later,⁴³⁴⁶ Augustine declared, 'The holy doctors of the church have decreed that all glory of the Jewish Sabbath is transferred to it (Sunday). Let us therefore keep the Lord's Day as the ancients were commanded to do the Sabbath.' In the west, the pope, Gregory of Rome, specifically anathematised: '[t]hose who taught that it was not lawful to do work on the day of the Sabbath.'⁴³⁴⁷

Sabbath keeping was completely obliterated from Rome by the sixth-century.⁴³⁴⁸ The Eastern churches extirpated Sabbath observance in about another four hundred years or so.⁴³⁴⁹ Rome stamped out true Christian worship wherever it was found. Often, this was by ruthless and bloody means: pogroms, purges, crusades, and inquisitions.⁴³⁵⁰ *'And John answered him, saying, Master, we saw one casting out devils⁴³⁵¹ in thy name, and he followed not us: and we forbid him, because he followed not us. But Jesus said, Forbid him not: for there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me. For he that is not against us is on our part.'*⁴³⁵² 'Here is a lesson in tolerance, and it is a lesson that nearly everyone needs to learn. Every man has the right to his own thoughts. Every man has a right to think things out and to think them through until he comes to his own conclusions and his own beliefs. And that is a right we should respect. We are often too apt to condemn what we do not understand.'⁴³⁵³

Spiritual failings

Some of the spiritual failings of the leading counterfeit church, Rome, are identified by Siddle: 'There are several reasons for the spiritual weakness of the Roman church, not the least being the ambitions of the several popes to dominate the nations in secular as well as in spiritual affairs. With this as their aim they had no interest in the spiritual welfare of the masses who were left to the ineptitude of the corrupt and ignorant priests. The Roman church also taught false doctrine, if it taught at all. Rather it is more true to say that Satan's distortions of truth were encouraged for the benefit of the Papal system, giving rise, amongst many abuses, to the sale of indulgences. Simply stated, this evil practice developed from the custom of doing penance as a remission of sins, according to the church's scale of values, but this only gave a false peace of mind to the sinner, and brought no revenue to the church. Satan put the idea into somebody's mind (and that is the correct way of stating it) that a scale of monetary charges in place of doing penance would bring money into the church's coffers, and at the same time give peace of mind to the sinner. Splendid idea! Though there were rulers and people

⁴³⁴⁶ c.400AD

⁴³⁴⁷ Gregory of Rome, *History of the Popes*, Vol. II, p.378

⁴³⁴⁸ Garbett, Edward, *The History of the Sabbath*, p.375

⁴³⁴⁹ c.1000AD

⁴³⁵⁰ Pius IX's *Syllabus of Errors* and Pius X's *Lamentabili* were voted out of favour at the Second Vatican Council, but not rescinded.

⁴³⁵¹ should read '*demons*.'

⁴³⁵² Mark 9:38-40

⁴³⁵³ Barclay, William, *The Daily Study Bible, Gospel of Mark*, p.226

who objected to the system, this was not on spiritual grounds, and Luther was the one who saw the true wickedness of it and he was the one who tackled the Pope on the spiritual illegality of it....Such a farcical situation is the logical outcome of the confusion set up in the minds of people by Satan's subtle poisons, for he is the author of confusion, and by these means he has brought into confusion the churches. From this point of view the Reformation failed at the cost of much bloodshed, murder, anguish, torture, and many thousands of lives, all in the name of religion, for the many churches which issued from the Roman church through the struggles of the reformers, are still confused in their teachings.'⁴³⁵⁴

Roman indulgences⁴³⁵⁵ were sold, in the past, to fund various abuses, including war and armed conflict, by paying for mercenary and lackey armies under the 'spiritual guidance' and control of the pope. The uses, historically, of such devices, especially that of the plenary, in raising and motivating armies of sheer demonic hatred, are summed well in a Catholic reference: 'The period of the crusade marks a turning point in the history of indulgences, for they were given more and more freely from that time onward....For example, at the Council of Sienna,⁴³⁵⁶ a plenary indulgence was offered to those who took arms against the Hussites; while wars against the Waldenes, Albigenses, Moors, and Turks were stimulated by the same means.'⁴³⁵⁷

Unfortunately, the widespread sale of indulgences, so long discarded by the Roman Catholic Church as an unworkable doctrine, and long-perceived as serving only to court criticism and drive people out of her Babylonian system, was re-introduced by John Paul II just in time for the 'New Millennium.' There was even a 'plenary indulgence' on offer. This is claimed to be a complete amnesty from time to be spent in Purgatory, and, in the past, as now, is extended by the popes to pilgrims visiting all of a list of shrines in Rome during what is deemed 'Holy Year.' This is an interesting and futile concept, however, for reasons which are all too obvious. The world waits to see to what abuses these fraudulently obtained funds ultimately will be put.

Roman 'theme park'

The basic strategy of Rome is to place itself centre-stage in the matter of salvation in the minds of man. The resulting Roman Catholic 'theme-park' is discernible in the following bulls and pronouncements:

1. Innocent III,⁴³⁵⁸ Fourth Lateran Council,⁴³⁵⁹ speaking 'ex cathedra': 'There is but one universal church of the faithful, outside of which no one at all is saved;'

⁴³⁵⁴ Siddle, T. S., *Light on the Reformation*, pp.84-86

⁴³⁵⁵ the construction of St. Peter's Basilica in Rome was part-funded through the sale of indulgences by the pope's representatives.

⁴³⁵⁶ in 1425AD

⁴³⁵⁷ *The Catholic Dictionary*, p.442

⁴³⁵⁸ Savage, Katherine, *The History of World Religions*, pp.151,152,155 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

2. Boniface VIII, in the papal bull 'Unam Sanctam',⁴³⁶⁰ speaking 'ex cathedra': 'We declare, say, define, and pronounce that it is absolutely necessary for the salvation of every human creature to be subject to the Roman Pontiff.' And worse: 'I am all in all and above all....God Himself and I....have but one consistory....I am able to do all that God can do.'

3. Eugene IV, in the papal bull 'Cantante Domino',⁴³⁶¹ 'The most Holy Roman Catholic Church firmly believes, professes, and preaches that none of those existing outside the [Roman] Catholic Church, not only pagans, but also Jews and heretics and schismatics, can have a share in life eternal; but that they will go into the eternal fire which was prepared for the devil and his angels, unless before death they are joined with Her [sic]; and that so important is the unity of this ecclesiastical body that only those remaining within this unity can receive an eternal recompense for their fasts, their almsgiving, their other works of Christian piety and the duties of a Christian soldier. No one, let his almsgiving be as great as it may, no one, even if he pour out his blood for the name of Christ, can be saved, unless he remain in the bosom and the unity of the [Roman] Catholic Church.'

Roman dogmas

In view of these 'ex cathedra' pronouncements, anyone claiming a means of salvation outside the confines of the Roman Catholic Church is believed to be denying the 'true faith.' In the Roman belief, all souls in heaven enter through membership of the 'one true church,' Rome, although the Roman teaching on invincible

'At the end of the 12th-century an outstanding statesman and scholar was elected pope. He took the name of Innocent III and raised the papacy to the very zenith of its power. Innocent believed that the church should dominate the state, and that the word of the pope should override the dictates of emperors and kings. In 1215AD he summoned over four hundred bishops, eight hundred abbots and priors, and kings, princes, and ambassadors from every country in Christendom to take part in the deliberations of the Roman church. This Fourth Lateran Council was the greatest ecclesiastical assembly of the whole Middle Ages and its final pronouncements had a lasting effect on the future of [mainstream, so-called] Christianity.

One of the most important decrees gave the popes the absolute right to appoint bishops to dioceses anywhere in Christendom, a power that was later ill-used by popes less upright than Innocent himself. They sold church livings to the highest bidder regardless of the protests of the princes and parishioners, and aroused indignation that, with other abuses, led eventually to outright rebellion, the break-up of Western Christianity, and the formation of the Protestant Churches.

Other Lateran resolutions provided for the organised suppression of revolutionary groups within the church, and severe penalties for men and women who voiced opinions out of keeping with official doctrine [and people who criticised the Roman Catholic Church]. These opinions were termed 'heresy' and the people who expressed them 'heretics.' [The Roman Catholic dictum '*Heresy has no rights*' is apposite, for that was the doctrine used to such devastating effect in the protracted inquisitions].

Above all [Martin Luther] protested against the practice of auctioning church livings and selling Indulgences, or pardons, for sin. He was shocked to find that the church offered people a place in Heaven in return for a donation to the building of the grand new church of Saint Peter in Rome. He preached passionately that only God could grant forgiveness, and that faith was the pathway to salvation.'

⁴³⁵⁹ 1215AD

⁴³⁶⁰ 1302AD

⁴³⁶¹ 1441AD

'ignorance,' 'baptism of desire,' and 'baptism of blood' appear inimical to this. Such a dilemma is sometimes resolved by the banal, mind-numbing statement that, 'all those who enter heaven by definition must have achieved in some way or other a conscious, explicit desire to belong to the Roman church and submit to her authority.'

The following summary of major Roman Catholic beliefs, doctrines, (capital 'T') Traditions, and (small 't') traditions, has been prepared in part with reference to McCarthy,⁴³⁶² inter alia, in abbreviated, paraphrased, amended, augmented, or expanded form, as considered necessary.⁴³⁶³

Creeping infallibility

The decree of Papal infallibility,⁴³⁶⁴ when the Pontiff speaks ex cathedra on matters such as theological dogma affecting the whole Roman church, has transmuted over time to whereby papal encyclicals, or 'ordinary teachings,' have come to be regarded as warranting acceptance without argument, even amongst those well placed to discuss and debate on contentious matters. Consider the phraseology used by Pius XII: 'If the Supreme Pontiffs in their official documents purposely pass judgement on a matter up to that time under dispute, it is obvious that that matter, according to the mind and will of the same Pontiffs, cannot be any longer considered a question open to discussion among theologians.'

In circumstances where the then future popes were to pronounce a decision settling an argument, no further discussion was to take place, even among those who otherwise would have naturally participated in the debates and contentions. This movement, later termed 'creeping infallibility,' was intended to stifle and kill liberal and 'modernist' thinking, or, indeed, any thinking other than that of the whim and fancy of the pope. In the self-estimation of the pope, he is the supreme arbiter of moral values on earth, beyond whom there is no appeal: for he claims to be the Vicar, that is, in the place of Christ. Thus the 'top down' system of control within Romanism was bolstered, and, despite a brief dalliance with liberalism, Rome had reverted to dogmatic type under John Paul II. He had continued in many of the repressive values and beliefs not only of Pius XII, but also of Pius X before him. The attendant politics of beatification, seen in John Paul's elevation of Pius XII, represent a marker of the ascendancy and superiority of authoritarian rule.

An individual's searching of the Scriptures, guided by the Holy Spirit, proving all things, has no place in the Roman system; neither has equity or reason. Pius IX⁴³⁶⁵ indicated to the assembled bishops in that fateful Vatican Council that the main item on the agenda was papal infallibility. Despite much coercion and very intensive lobbying, the pope suffered a major defeat when only four hundred and fifty one bishops out of more than

⁴³⁶² McCarthy, James, *The Gospel According to Rome, Comparing Catholic Tradition and the Words of God*

⁴³⁶³ accreditation has been given, where appropriate.

⁴³⁶⁴ 1870AD

⁴³⁶⁵ who summoned the Vatican Council in 1870AD.

one thousand voted for the motion. However, by an agreed strategy, all but two of the dissenters left Rome before a final vote was taken. At the very last meeting of the council,⁴³⁶⁶ it was decided by five hundred and thirty-five votes to two that the pope was infallible when defining a doctrine concerning faith or morals.⁴³⁶⁷

The disdain for any alternative form of belief which the doctrine of infallibility instils, and its chilling ramifications in circumstances where the papacy has power of life and death over people and nations, can be gauged from the Roman belief that 'error has no rights.' In its absolute form, 'no rights' means 'no right to life.'

Pagan accretions

Pagan religious mores accreted along the way, throughout the Middle Ages, included the Rosary, the Angelus, and the Salve Regina. Later, in comparatively more recent times, came the idea of placing education under the patronage of Mary, Queen of Purity, and the whole panoply of shrines and other places of devotion in many locations of nineteenth- and twentieth-century Marian apparitions.

Eternal punishment

In the K.J.V., the Greek meaning 'age',⁴³⁶⁸ is rendered, incorrectly, 'eternal'.⁴³⁶⁹ When the Greek was translated into the Latin Vulgate, the Greek word became aeternum and seculum. Over time, this had the effect of changing for many the early church concept of punishment confined to, or at the end of, the age, to one of eternal, everlasting punishment. 'Life eternal' for the 'elect' is the very opposite, for this accords with the Bible's teaching on the purpose of life.⁴³⁷⁰

The very champion of the doctrine of eternal punishment in the Roman church, Augustine, was an adherent of the Manichæan religion for nine years prior to becoming 'Christianised.' This Perso-Buddhist religion, based on fire-worship, held that the universe was divided forever between good and evil, and that the evil would be consigned to everlasting torment by fire. Augustine brought much pagan baggage with him into the early Roman church, which, filled with unconverted pagans, structured its teaching and doctrine away from the original Scripture, and—while restricting all to its corrupted Vulgate form—brought in wholesale what pagans had taught for centuries: eternal torment and punishment in hell for the wicked—defined as all beyond the Roman pale. This became compounded, inevitably, with the following importations or actions:

1. Idolatry of every description;

⁴³⁶⁶ 18 July, 1870AD

⁴³⁶⁷ of course, no pope is infallible in anything; only Jesus Christ is infallible.

⁴³⁶⁸ Greek: aion

⁴³⁶⁹ cp. Mat 25:46; Greek: kolasin aionion, 'punishment of the age,' i.e., with an definite ending.

⁴³⁷⁰ John 3:16

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2. Pagan doctrines and practices;
 3. Falsification through translation of many earlier church writings to conform to these pagan doctrinal imports;
 4. Production of forged documents and spurious emendations;
 5. Destruction by fire of many original Christian writings; and,
 6. Introduction of an oppressive hierarchy using fear and dread rather than love to maintain order.

The vile process is described by Thayer: 'One or two citations,⁴³⁷¹ must suffice [for the sake of brevity], with this prefatory remark, that one of the chief causes of the adaptation of Christian doctrines and rites to the Pagan standard was the hope of alluring them in this way into the [worldly] church. "Among the Greeks and the people of the East nothing was held more sacred than their 'Mysteries.' This led the [worldly] Christians, in order to impart dignity to their religion, to have similar mysteries, or certain holy rights concealed from the vulgar. A large part, therefore, of the Christian observances and institutions, even in this century⁴³⁷² has the aspect of the Pagan Mysteries."

Speaking of the fifth-century, he says, "As no one objected to [converts] retaining the opinions of their Pagan ancestors respecting the soul, heroes, demons, temples, and the like; and as no one proposed utterly to abolish the ancient Pagan institutions, but only to alter them somewhat and purify them; it was unavoidable that the religion and the worship of the [Roman] Christians should in this way become corrupted. This I will also add, that the doctrine of the purification of souls after death by means of some sort of fire, which afterwards became so great a source of wealth to the clergy, acquired in this age more development and a more imposing aspect."

Finally, he says, "The barriers of ancient truth once being violated, the state of theology waxed worse and worse; and the amount of the impure and superstitious additions to the religion of Christ is almost indescribable. The controversial theologians of the East continued to darken the great doctrines of revelation by the most subtle distinctions, and I know not what philosophical jargon. Those who instructed the people at large made it their sole care to imbue them more and more with ignorance, superstition, [and] reverence for the clergy."⁴³⁷³

When the lives of those leaders who brought in the doctrine of eternal punishment are examined, a litany of envying, persecutions, plots, intrigues, character assassinations, book-burning, idolatry, torture, murders and the like comes to light. This same apostate church brought the world into a state of darkness: The Dark

⁴³⁷¹ Murdock, James, and Mosheim, Johann Lorenz, *History of Theology*; fully confirmed by Neander, Augustus, *History of Christianity*.

⁴³⁷² 2nd century AD

⁴³⁷³ Thayer, Thomas B., *The Origin and History of the Doctrine of Endless Punishment*, chpt. VI. (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

Ages. Therein lay pagan idolatry, corruption, rewritten history, inquisitions, torture unto death, crusades, the production and sale of relics, indulgences, dire and bloody pogroms, Mariolatry, and all the rest of it: collectively nothing other than the contents of the sewer of Satan.

But does Scripture anywhere say that Christ came to redeem us from eternal punishment? [Christ] *gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity.*⁴³⁷⁴ If not that, then perhaps from some future evil underworld? [Christ] *gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father.*⁴³⁷⁵ Not that either. There is absolutely nothing in the Bible stating that Christ saves His own from everlasting torment. And for good reason: there is not and there cannot be everlasting torment for mortal beings.

The purpose behind the doctrine of everlasting punishment is exposed by Thayer: 'The heathen invented the doctrine of endless punishment—shown by their own confessions: Any one at all familiar with the writings of the ancient Greeks or Romans, cannot fail to note how often it is admitted by them that the national religions were the inventions of the legislator and the priest, for the purpose of governing and restraining the common people. Hence, all the early lawgivers claim to have had communications with the gods, who aided them in the preparation of their codes. Zoroaster claimed to have received his laws from a divine source; Lycurgus obtained his from Apollo, Minos of Crete from Jupiter, Numa of Rome from Egeria, Zaleucus from Minerva, etc. The object of this sacred fraud was to impress the minds of the multitude with religious awe, and command a more ready obedience on their part....

Of course, in order to secure obedience, they were obliged to invent divine punishments for the disobedience of what they asserted to be divine laws. "Hence," says Bishop Warburton, "they enforced the belief of a future state of rewards and punishments by every sort of contrivance." And speaking of the addition of metempsychosis, or the transmigration of souls, he says, "This was an ingenious solution, invented by the Egyptian lawgivers, to remove all doubts concerning the moral attributes of God."

Egypt has been called the "Mother of Superstitions," and her whole religious history shows the propriety of the appellation. Greek and Roman lawgivers and philosophers acknowledge their indebtedness to her in this respect, and freely credit her with the original invention of the fables and terrors of the invisible world; though it must be allowed that they have improved somewhat upon the hints given, and shown a wonderful inventive faculty of their own....

[The] records of the ancient Greeks, confirmed by the monuments as illustrated by modern scholars, open to us the origin of the doctrines of a judgement after death, and of future endless rewards and punishments, for the good or evil deeds of this life. From the Egyptians it passed, with suitable modifications, to the Greeks and Romans. Diodorus himself clearly shows that the fables of the Acherusian lake, of Hecate, Cerb-

⁴³⁷⁴ Titus 2:14 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁴³⁷⁵ Gal 1:4 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets; sublinear emphasis added).

erus, Charon, and the Styx, have their originals in these Egyptian ceremonies and doctrines. And Professor Stuart, in a note to Greppo's 'Essay on Hieroglyphics,' accepts the statement of Spineto, that the Amenti of the Egyptians originated the classic fables of Hades and Tartarus, Charon, Pluto, the judges of hell, the dog Cerebus, the Chimeras, Harpies, Gorgons, Furies, "and other such unnatural and horrible things with which the Greeks and Romans peopled their fantastic hell."

The whole thing is designed for effect, to influence the multitude, to restrain their passions, and to aid the magistrate and ruler in keeping them subject to authority. It is the invention of priests and law-makers, who take this as the easiest method of governing the people. They claim the "divine right" to govern; claim that their laws originated with the gods, and that, therefore, the gods will visit on all offenders the terrors and tortures of the damned. Hence, through the joint cunning of priest and legislator, of church and state, mutually supporting each the other, we have all the stupendous frauds and falsehoods respecting the invisible world....I will introduce the testimony of the heathen themselves on this point, and those the best informed among them, who will tell their own story in their own way. One preliminary observation, however, partly made already, I wish to repeat, and I desire the reader to have it always in mind: The rulers and magistrates, or priests, invent these terrors to keep the people, the masses, in subjection; the people religiously believe them; while the inventors, of course, and the educated classes, the priests and the philosophers, though they teach them to the multitude, have themselves no manner of faith in them.

Polybius, the historian, says: "Since the multitude is ever fickle, full of lawless desires, irrational passions and violence, there is no other way to keep them in order but by the fear and terror of the invisible world; on which account our ancestors seem to me to have acted judiciously, when they contrived to bring into the popular belief these notions of the gods, and of the infernal regions."⁴³⁷⁶

Dioysius Halicarnassus treats the whole matter as useful, but not as true.⁴³⁷⁷ Livy, the celebrated historian, speaks of it in the same spirit; and he praises the wisdom of Numa, because he invented the fear of the gods, as "a most efficacious means of governing an ignorant and barbarous populace."⁴³⁷⁸

Strabo, the geographer, says: "The multitude are restrained from vice by the punishments the gods are said to inflict upon offenders, and by those terrors and threatenings which contain dreadful words and monstrous forms impart upon their minds....For it is impossible to govern the crowd of women, and all the common rabble, by philosophical reasoning, and lead them to piety, holiness and virtue—but this must be done by superstition, or the fear of the gods, by means of fables and wonders; for the thunder, the aegis, the trident, the

⁴³⁷⁶ Polybius, B. vi 56.

⁴³⁷⁷ *Antiq. Rom.* B.ii.

⁴³⁷⁸ Livy, *Hist.*, I 19.

torches (of the Furies), the dragons, etc., are all fables, as is also the ancient theology. These things the legislators used as scarecrows to terrify the childish multitude."⁴³⁷⁹

Seneca says: "Those things which make the infernal regions terrible, the darkness, the prison, the river of flaming fire, the judgement seat, etc., are all a fable, with which the poets amuse themselves, and by them agitate us with vain terrors." Sextus Empiricus calls them "poetic fables of hell." Cicero speaks of them as "silly absurdities and fables." Aristotle says: "It has been handed down in mythical form from earliest times to posterity, that there are gods, and that the divine compasses all nature. All beside this has been added, after the mythical style, for the purpose of persuading the multitude, and for the interests of the laws, and the advantage of the state." ⁴³⁸⁰

The question of "Whence came the doctrine of future endless punishments?" is now answered by a sufficient number of witnesses to settle the matter beyond dispute. The heathens themselves confess to the invention of the dogma, and of all the fabulous stories of the infernal regions; the legislators and sages very frankly state that the whole thing was devised for its supposed utility in governing the gross and ignorant multitude of men and women, who cannot be restrained by the precepts of philosophy. They have not the slightest faith in these things themselves; they do not think them at all necessary to regulate their own lives, or keep them in order; but it is for the common people, the coarse rabble, who can only in this way be terrified into good behaviour. One cannot help noting the resemblance between these wise men and some of our own day, who seem so anxious to maintain the doctrine on the ground that it is necessary to restrain men from sin. But, unfortunately for this theory, the revelations of history, both Pagan and Christian, are all in opposition to it.⁴³⁸¹

'When the Lord spoke, the doctrine of unending torment was believed by many of those who listened to His words, and they stated it in terms and employed others, entirely differently, in describing the duration of punishment, from the terms used by those who taught universal salvation and annihilation, and so gave to the terms in question the sense of unlimited duration.

For example, the Pharisees, according to Josephus, regarded the penalty of sin as torment without end, and they stated the doctrine in unambiguous terms. They called it eternal imprisonment⁴³⁸² and endless torment,⁴³⁸³ while our Lord called the punishment of sin age-long chastisement.⁴³⁸⁴ Kolasis, in secular Greek, originally meant the pruning of deadwood from a tree.

⁴³⁷⁹ Strabo, *Geog.*, B.I.

⁴³⁸⁰ Neander, Augustus, *History of Christianity*, Vol. I, p.7

⁴³⁸¹ Thayer, Thomas B., *The Origin and History of the Doctrine of Endless Punishment*, Section II (sublinear emphasis added; slightly paraphrased for brevity).

⁴³⁸² Greek: eirgmos aidios.

⁴³⁸³ Greek: timorion adialeipton.

⁴³⁸⁴ Greek: aionion kolasin; or age-ending chastisement.

'Josephus used the word aionos with its current meaning of limited duration.⁴³⁸⁵ He applies it to the imprisonment of John the Tyrant; to Herod's reputation; to the glory acquired by soldiers; to the fame of an army as a "happy life and aionian glory." He used the words as do the Scriptures to denote limited duration, but when he would describe endless duration he used different terms.

Of the doctrine of the Pharisees, he says: "They believe....that the wicked spirits are to be kept in an eternal imprisonment.⁴³⁸⁶ The Pharisees say all souls are incorruptible, but while those of good men are removed into their bodies, those of bad men are subject to eternal punishment."⁴³⁸⁷ Elsewhere, he says that the Essenes, "allot to bad souls a dark, tempestuous place, full of never-ceasing torment,"⁴³⁸⁸ where they suffer an endless torment."⁴³⁸⁹ Aidian and athanaton are his favourite terms for duration, and timoria (torment) for punishment."⁴³⁹⁰

Purgatory & prayers for the dead

The germ of the Roman Catholic dogma of Purgatory can be found in the Egyptian myth surrounding the punishment of the dead who had refused burial with the virtuous in the regions of Amenti or Hades. It was believed that the spirit could not be at rest until the body was buried. The duration of this punishment was limited according to the extent of crimes of which the accused had been found guilty before the forty-two judges or assessors, whose office it was to decide upon the character of the deceased, and then to appoint the day for funeral ceremonies and burial. When the devotion of friends, aided by liberal donations in the service of religion, and the influential prayers of the priests, had sufficiently softened the otherwise inexorable nature of the gods, the period of this state of purgatory was doubtless shortened. The liberal donations and the prayers for the dead are family features too marked to be mistaken.⁴³⁹¹ It might be noted in passing that the 'forty-two' of the pagan

⁴³⁸⁵ olethron destruction; olethros extinction. cp. olethron aionion; olethron—destruction; olethros—extinction.

Vincent, Marvin R., *Word Studies in the New Testament*, note on olethron aionion, 'eternal destruction':

'Aristotle (*Peri Ouravou*, I, 9, 15) says: "The period which includes the whole time of one's life is called the aeon of each one." Hence it often means the life of a man, as in Homer, where one's life is said to leave him or consume away (Homer: *Iliad* v.685; *Odyssey* v.160). It is not, however, limited to human life; it signifies any period in a course of events....There are as many aions as entities, the respective durations of which are fixed by the normal conditions of the several entities. The length of aion depends on the subject to which it is attached.'

⁴³⁸⁶ Greek: eirgmon aidion.

⁴³⁸⁷ Greek: aidios timoria.

⁴³⁸⁸ Greek: timoria adialeipton.

⁴³⁸⁹ Greek: athanaton timorion.

⁴³⁹⁰ Thayer, Thomas B., *The Origin and History of the Doctrine of Endless Punishment*, Section III (with added comment and clarification in square brackets).

⁴³⁹¹ like Roman Catholics, the Jews have prayers for the dead called kaddish. This is a pagan practice (q.v. Hislop, Alexander, *The Two Babylons*, chpt. 4, §5 etc., 'Purgatory & Prayers for the Dead,' where Hislop traces its origin to the pagan religions of Egypt, Greece, India, and the East.). For their part, Muslims all over the world celebrate the sacred Shab-e-Baraat on the fifteenth night of the Islamic month of Shaban, fifteen days before the start of Ramadan. The term refers to shab, a Persian word which means 'night,' and baraat which means 'salvation.' It is the night on which

judgement is the biblical number of man's opposition to God. The Roman view, taught by Bellarmine, is that the pains of Purgatory endure for entire centuries, and Aquinas observed that these pains were endured in the same fires that torment the reprobate in Hell, but this time used in purging souls. 'Perfecting fire' is the literal meaning of Tammuz. The notion of a purgatorial fire to perfect men's souls at last, and to purge away all the sins they have carried with them into the unseen world, is profoundly pagan.

The use made of this demonic doctrine by Rome is seen in this malevolently emotive excerpt: 'If they're in Purgatory, they're all looking to you to intercede for them for the alleviation of their sufferings. They need our prayers and indulgences....They can no longer help themselves....It just breaks our hearts to think how some Catholics neglect the suffering souls of their family and friends in Purgatory today.'⁴³⁹²

The Roman route of amelioration, of course, is through the payment of money to the church for prayers for the dead and retrospective indulgences on their behalf. But this comes without any guarantee of success, or, indeed, specification: 'I would say that the Catholic church claims no jurisdiction over souls [sic] in the other world, and professes absolute ignorance regarding God's particular application of the infinite merits of the passion and death of His Son to the souls in Purgatory. All Masses and prayers for the dead are applied by way of sufferage—that is our dependence on God's secret mercy and will, who in His infinite justice may apply to another soul altogether the Masses said for a certain individual.'⁴³⁹³

'[Jesus's] coming dissipated the darkness of death. The ancient world feared death. At the best, death was an annihilation and the soul of man shuddered at the thought. At the worst, it was torture by whatever gods there may be and the soul of man was afraid.'⁴³⁹⁴ In this, Roman Catholicism, with its purgatorial tortures and purgings, meshes exactly with its pagan forebears.

Infant baptism, adult baptism, & 'pre-Limbo' doctrine

Romanists and Protestant strike hands with the heathen, borrowing from them the detestable and ancient pagan dogma of infant damnation: "The condemnation of children dying without having been baptised," says the Catholic Bossuet, "is an article of firm faith of the church. They are guilty, since they die in the wrath of God, and in the powers of darkness. Children of wrath by nature, objects of hatred and aversion, cast into hell with the other damned, they remain there everlastingly subject to the horrible vengeance of the Devil. Thus the

Muslims visit graveyards and offer prayers for departed souls. Many believe that destinies for the coming year are set at this time.

According to the Kabbalah, communication with the dead is permitted only when initiated by the dead or when doing a tikkum (a prayer of healing) for the dead. Prayers for the dead, a pagan practice shared with Romanism, inter alia, and communication with spirits masquerading as dead relatives, is occult and prohibited by Scripture.

⁴³⁹² ex *The Apostolate for Family Consecration*

⁴³⁹³ *Question Box*, pp.460,461

⁴³⁹⁴ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of John*, Vol.1, p.55 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

learned Denis Peteau has decided, as well as the most eminent Bellarmin, the Council of Lyons, the Council of Florence, and the Council of Trent."

The pagan view of the magical efficacy of water is reviewed later, but there is more by way of confusion from that quarter, intent on reducing water baptism to the act of procreation. Odeberg suggests that: 'The word water is used in John chapter three in the sense of what the Jews taught: a divine efflux of creative energy.'⁴³⁹⁵ 'Terms like "water," "dew," "rain," and "drop" are often used of male sperm in many ancient writings including rabbinic writings. The celestial [sic] waters of Genesis⁴³⁹⁶ came to represent a source of spiritual creation to the Jews. So, in some metaphorical way, this "born of the water," which may also be translated as "begotten [sic] of the water," possibly has reference to the male semen (water, rain, dew, and drop are often used of semen in various Rabbinic and other writings), as well as to Christian baptism.'⁴³⁹⁷ The linkage this tripe has with the pagan idea of the mystical regenerative properties of water is all too apparent.

Much the same treatment is meted out on the word 'seed,' which is developed by Strachan to tie all aspects of this pagan myth together. 'It is quite consistent with the Johannine thought that to be born of water and the Spirit should mean to be born of a spiritual seed, in contrast with the seed of semen of physical generation⁴³⁹⁸....[Christians] are begotten by a spiritual 'seed,'⁴³⁹⁹ begotten of God into a new kind of life. They become 'children of God.'⁴⁴⁰⁰

The first thing which must be done in untangling the web spun by Strachan is to correct his errant view of the K.J.V. version of the Johannine verse he cites: '*Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin because he is born of God.*'⁴⁴⁰¹ The impossibility of sinning after being born of God attests to the spiritual nature of the birth, thus this is a reference to being born of the Spirit into the eternal kingdom of God; not a so-called 'born-again' human experience on the part of one who can, will, and does sin. The text cannot admit of a connection to or description of a sinning human being.

Despite this, the notion that the water of baptism is somehow bound in with some mystical impregnation by the Holy Spirit leading to some form of human / spiritual birth continued to be developed. Grenier opines: 'The interpretation which most commends itself to me is one which understands water as having reference to the issue of maternal fluid which accompanies childbirth. This would help to clarify the contrast which Jesus

⁴³⁹⁵ Odeberg, Dr., *The Fourth Gospel*

⁴³⁹⁶ Gen 1:7

⁴³⁹⁷ Morris, L., *The Gospel According to John*, p.216

⁴³⁹⁸ cf. I Peter 1:23; the phrase 'born again' should be translated 'regenerated' since it refers to humans, who 'wither as grass,' I Peter 1:24b.

⁴³⁹⁹ I John 3:9

⁴⁴⁰⁰ Strachan, R. H., *The Fourth Gospel*, p.135

⁴⁴⁰¹ I John 3:9

makes in his rather cryptic statement in the following verse, '*What is born of flesh is flesh, and what is born of spirit is spirit.*'⁴⁴⁰²

The conviction of being begotten of the Holy Spirit at the point of baptism is held widely, although an erroneous one. The idea of an embryonic kingdom of God in the form of the Worldwide Church of God was promoted vigorously by Herbert Armstrong, relying heavily on a range of human impregnation, embryonic, foetal, and birthing analogies. Barrett⁴⁴⁰³ compares the water of baptism with spiritual semen which itself is perhaps equated with the primal heavenly water, or so he opines. The fertility cults of the Near- and Middle East would be well at home with such a doctrine. Anat and Baal, ancient pagan deities, had intercourse through rain acting as semen. In mythology, water in the form of rain and male semen were held to be manifestations of the divine means of causing seeds to grow and mature into plants, and foetuses to grow and be born as babies. This absurdity is even taken further, with the notion: '[And causing], interestingly enough, the bodies of the dead to rise from their graves. The dead, like seeds, are buried in the soil. And just as the rain moistens seeds which germinate and sprout, the world of the Bible expects the rain to bring the dead back to life as well.'⁴⁴⁰⁴

So ingrained is this belief that many cannot escape its fatal embrace.

Limbo

This, a refinement of infant damnation, is the special dispensation for innocent but unbaptised children, in the place called Limbo.⁴⁴⁰⁵ It is also available to those who gave heartily during their life on earth to the Roman church, although both have been downplayed in more recent times, for lack of any scriptural or 'other' authority. Another limbo, this time of the Fathers, is supposed to be the abode of the likes of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, pending eventual admission to heaven. Irrespective of the taxonomy, the doctrines of infant damnation and limbo are founded on the pagan doctrine of original sin.⁴⁴⁰⁶

Immortal soul

This is dealt with in the chapter entitled: 'The Primal Lie.'

⁴⁴⁰² John 3:6; Grenier, Brian, *St. John's Gospel*, p.85; cryptic? No, it's very straightforward!

⁴⁴⁰³ Barrett, C. K., *The Gospel According to St. John*, p.209

⁴⁴⁰⁴ Matthews, V. H., and Benjamin, D. C., *Social World of Ancient Israel 1250-587BCE*, pp.76,77 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁴⁴⁰⁵ meaning, literally, 'on the border.'

⁴⁴⁰⁶ q.v. sup.

Saint-making

Papal saint-making has become a central preoccupation. John Paul II canonised more saints during his pontificate than all of the other popes combined since the formal process was established. Scripture has a different definition of the word 'saint': those who keep God's commandments and do His will.

Prayers to angels

A common and popular Roman Catholic prayer, allegedly to one's guardian angel, runs as follows:

'Angel of God,
My guardian dear,
To whom his love commits me here,
Ever this day be at my side,
To light and guard,
To rule and guide,
Amen.'

Rome's teaching on a personalised guardian angel—with every person on earth being allocated one at birth, a life companion especially suited to the individual concerned—extends to the active encouragement of devotion to, and contact with the 'angelic' being. There is even an annual 'Feast of the Guardian Angels,' celebrated in October.⁴⁴⁰⁷

Communion of saints

The Roman belief in a form of necromancy—talking with the dead and departed who are allegedly in heaven, whether or not deemed 'official saints' —is widespread, and deeply occult. For example, many spend cumulative hours kneeling at gravestones 'talking' to departed friends and loved ones, believing that they hear, and asking advice, guidance, counsel, divination of the future, or that an intercessory word on their behalf be put to the Virgin Mary. This practice is expressly forbidden in the Bible.⁴⁴⁰⁸ Although the 'conjuring' of spirits was prosecuted by civil and ecclesiastical authorities in the Middle Ages as a form of witchcraft, paradoxically, the 'lesser' form of communion with dead 'saints' in heaven was actively encouraged and promoted—a practice rooted in ancient Greece, where there were pagan oracles of the departed dead, and necromancy was practised in the temples by the priests and other religious functionaries.

⁴⁴⁰⁷ on 2 October.

⁴⁴⁰⁸ Deut 18:10-12

Assumption of Mary

Pius XII decreed⁴⁴⁰⁹ that: 'The Immaculate Mother of God, Mary ever a Virgin, when the course of her life was run, was assumed in body and soul to heavenly glory.' This dogma, entitled 'God the most generous,'⁴⁴¹⁰ proclaims that Mary's body did not die and corrupt, but was taken or 'assumed into Heaven, in a state of glory, where she sits enthroned as 'Queen of Heaven,'⁴⁴¹¹ in all majesty and power. While this has no scriptural basis whatsoever, it is firmly rooted in the pagan queen of heaven,⁴⁴¹² of whose worship, involving the baking of cakes and the burning of incense, Jeremiah gave dread warning, together with a judgement from God,⁴⁴¹³ the last verse reading: *'Behold, I will watch over them for evil, and not for good, and all the men of Judah that are in the land of Egypt shall be consumed by the sword and by the famine, until there be an end of them.'*⁴⁴¹⁴

In his bull, Pius XII quoted the eighth-century John Damascene: 'There was need that the body of her who in childbirth had preserved her virginity intact, be preserved incorrupt after death.' When viewed as a development from the dogma of the 'Immaculate Conception' of almost a century beforehand, the 'grandiloquent amplification'⁴⁴¹⁵ signalled a massive shift in Roman Catholicism towards the 'cult of Mary.' Subsequent manifold 'Marian apparitions' have only served to bolster the fervour, and Marian devotion prevails, with a strong emphasis on miraculous and Gnostic-style revelations.

Pius IX's declaration of the doctrine of the 'Immaculate Conception' contained the following statements concerning Mary: 'We declare, pronounce, and define that the doctrine which holds that the most Blessed Virgin Mary, in the first instance of her conception, by a singular grace and privilege granted by Almighty God, in view of the merits of Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the human race, was preserved free from all stain of original sin, is a doctrine revealed by God and therefore to be believed firmly and constantly by all the faithful....From the very beginning, and before time began, the eternal Father chose and prepared for his only begotten Son a Mother in whom the Son of God would become incarnate and from whom, in the blessed fullness of time, he would be born into this world. Above all creatures did God so love her that truly in her was the Father well pleased with singular delight.'⁴⁴¹⁶

Without any biblical proof, and contrary to all that the Bible teaches in the matter of human sin, Pius IX claimed that Mary was: '[E]ver absolutely free of all stain of sin, all fair and perfect''preserved free from all stain of original sin''remaining free of every personal sin throughout her whole life.'

⁴⁴⁰⁹ in November, 1950AD

⁴⁴¹⁰ Latin: Munificentissimus Deus.

⁴⁴¹¹ Juno, the principal goddess of the Romans, was termed Juno Regina, 'the queen of heaven.'

⁴⁴¹² Semiramis, otherwise Astarte.

⁴⁴¹³ cf. Jer 7:17-20,44:18-27

⁴⁴¹⁴ Jer 44:27

⁴⁴¹⁵ 1950AD

⁴⁴¹⁶ Latin: Ineffabilis Deus.

Rome chooses to ignore the death of Mary as proof of her sin, '*For the wages of sin is death.*'⁴⁴¹⁷ Dissembling, Catholicism claims that: 'God was pleased that Mary should in all things resemble Jesus; and as the Son died, it was becoming that the mother should also die.'⁴⁴¹⁸

Both the matter and danger are summed by McCarthy: 'The Mary of Roman Catholicism is not the Mary of the Bible. Scripture says nothing of a woman conceived without sin [sic], perfectly sinless, ever virgin, and assumed into heaven.

Nevertheless, the church, with greater regard for Tradition and human reason than for sacred Scripture, has declared the virgin Mary to be 'the ever virgin Mary,' the mother of Jesus to be 'the mother of God,' and the favoured woman to be 'Mary full of grace.' Determined to exalt Mary, the church has distorted and disregarded the plain teaching of the Bible. In the process, having left the truth and security of Scripture, the Roman Catholic Church has exposed its people to mystical and even bizarre apparitions of a self-promoting spirit who identifies itself as Mary. These appearances have led Catholics away from undistracted devotion to Christ and dependence upon Him alone for salvation. Whether these apparitions are real or imagined, by their fruits they have proven themselves to be not from God.'⁴⁴¹⁹

Of the titles flowing from the fount of Rome, bestowed upon Mary, none is appropriate; all are unbiblical, many have pagan roots, while others are simply appropriated from Christ, the church, the kingdom of God, or whatever, and simply given over to the Virgin. It is by these means that Mary, a chthonian goddess of the underworld,⁴⁴²⁰ is described variously as:

'All Holy One,'	'Vessel of life,'
'Mater Dolorosa'	'Tabernacle of glory,'
'Mother of God,'	'Heavenly temple,'
'Mother immaculate,'	'Heavenly helper,'
'Mother of grace,'	'Mistress of the heavens,'
'Mother of mercy,'	'Celestial dove,'
'Mother of the heavenly church,'	'Hope of the world,'
'Mother of the earthly church,'	'Hope of the faithful,'
'Mother of perpetual help,'	'Hope of the guilty,'

⁴⁴¹⁷ Rom 6;23

⁴⁴¹⁸ de Liguori, Alphonsus, *The Glories of Mary*, p.407

⁴⁴¹⁹ McCarthy, James G., *The Gospel According to Rome, Comparing Catholic Tradition and the Word of God*, p.198

⁴⁴²⁰ Tartarus.

'Mother of all,'	'Sign of hope,'
'Mother of the living,'	'Grand refuge of sinners,'
'Great mother,'	'Recreation of life,'
'Spouse of the Holy Spirit,'	'Refuge of sinners,'
'Spouse of God,'	'Mistress of the tribes,'
'Diadem of the twelve stars,'	'Advocate of the people of God,'
'Immaculate conception,'	'Mother of the church,'
'Immaculate heart,'	'Mother of the world,'
'Blessed and eternal virgin,'	'Mother of the orphans,'
'Virgin of heaven,'	'Mother of nature,'
'Weeping virgin,'	'Mother of the Eucharist,'
'Sorrowful heart,'	'Weeping Mother,'
'Light of the world,'	'House of gold,'
'Light of the Gentiles,'	'Breast of the infants,'
'Lily of the valley,'	'Queen of heaven,'
'Bride of Christ,'	Queen of peace,'
'Daughter of the heavenly Father,'	'Queen of the universe,'
'Daughter of Zion,'	'Queen of life,'
'Our Lady,'	'Queen of purity,'
'Our Lady of good counsel,'	'Queen of angels,'
'Our Lady of good success,'	'Queen of beauty,'
'Our Lady of charity,'	'Immaculate heart,'
'Lady immaculate,'	'Heart of grace,'
'Lady of mount Carmel,'	'Morning star,'
'Lady of the world,'	'Burning bush,'

'Lady of love,'	'Second Eve,'
'Lady of mercy,'	'The rainbow,'
'Lady of peace,'	'Restorer of life,'
'Lady of life,'	'Star of evangelisation,'
'Lady of victory,'	'Star of the sea,'
'Lady of deliverance,'	'Stella Maris,'
'Lady of sorrow,'	'Ark of the Covenant,'
'Lady of the blue army,'	'Jacob's ladder,'
'Lady of all nations,'	'Ladder of heaven.'
'Lady of the sea,' ⁴⁴²¹	'Gate of heaven,'
'Spoiler of demons,'	'Seat of all divine graces,'
'Confusion of the Jews,'	'The cloud that led Israel,'
'Seat of wisdom,'	'Tower of David,'
'Blessed benefactress,'	'Paradise of delight,'
'Blessed helper,'	'Foundation of the church,'
'Mediatrice of salvation,'	'Intercessor and Advocate,'
'Mediatrice of atonement,'	'Dispensatrix of the graces,'
'Reparatrix of the lost world,'	'Mystical rose.'

Historically, many of these have been used to refer to Semiramis, the 'whore-virgin' of Babylon. The whore church, Rome, actually worships and adores the whore Madonna of Babylon: Semiramis. Pagan Rome, the counterfeit church, in its pomp and circumstance, worships its counterfeit pagan Madonna.

Perpetual virginity of Mary

Further claims by Rome on behalf of Mary include the fatuous statement that God preserved her virginity intact throughout her entire life, notwithstanding the fairly frequent mention in the Bible of Jesus's half-

⁴⁴²¹ Canaanite goddess, Asherah, also known as Athirat, was known as 'The Lady of the Sea.'

brothers and half-sisters.⁴⁴²² Despite proof to the contrary, Rome disdainfully disregards these half-brothers and half-sisters of Jesus, instead calling them 'cousins.' However, the Greek words used in Scripture for cousin⁴⁴²³ are not used in the foregoing examples; rather, it is brother and sister.⁴⁴²⁴ The Catechism of the Council of Trent has it thus: '[Jesus was] born of His Mother without any diminution of her maternal virginity....just as the rays of the sun penetrate without breaking or injuring in the least the solid substance of glass, so after a like but more exalted manner did Jesus Christ come forth from His mother's womb without injury to her maternal virginity.' Paganism's frequent veneration of a perpetual virgin, to whom they trace their genealogy,⁴⁴²⁵ has, as the 'impregnator,' a sunbeam, or other similar, miraculous device. The proximity of this to the Catechism's analogy is striking.

Rome has it, this time correctly, that Mary did not suffer birth pangs, quoting, in support, *'Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child.'*⁴⁴²⁶ The Protestant and Non-conformist view of this is to the contrary, quoting Micah, *'But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from old, from everlasting. Therefore will he give them up, until the time that she which travaileth hath brought forth: then the remnant of his brethren shall return unto the children of Israel.'*⁴⁴²⁷ The Tanakh translation of verse two reads, *'Truly, He will leave them helpless until she who is to bear has borne; then the rest of his countrymen shall return to the children of Israel.'*⁴⁴²⁸ This verse is marked in a footnote as 'meaning of Hebrew uncertain.' It is extremely poor exegesis to cling to a verse of uncertain meaning in the original Hebrew when other biblical passages render the matter patently clear.

In the matter of travailing and not travailing, the Bible has the following:

Travailing:

*'Who hath heard such a thing? Who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? Or shall a nation be borne at once? For as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children.'*⁴⁴²⁹

Non-travailing:

*'Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child.'*⁴⁴³⁰

⁴⁴²² Mat 12:46,13:55,56; Mark 3:31,6:3,4; Luke 8:19; John 2:12,7:5; Acts 1:14,15:13-19; I Cor 9:5; Gal 1:19

⁴⁴²³ Greek: suggenes, anepsios.

⁴⁴²⁴ Greek: adelphos, adelphe.

⁴⁴²⁵ cf. Hislop, Alexander, *The Two Babylons*, p.302

⁴⁴²⁶ Isa 66:7

⁴⁴²⁷ Micah 5:2,3 (sublinear emphasis added)

⁴⁴²⁸ Micah 5:2 Tanakh; corresponding with Micah 5:3 in the K.J.V.

⁴⁴²⁹ Isa 66:8; Zion, bringing forth children (plural).

⁴⁴³⁰ Isa 66:7; Mary, bringing forth the (singular) man-child Jesus as her first child.

*'Therefore will he give them up, until the time that she which travaileth [Tanakh: 'bringeth forth'] hath brought forth: then the remnant of his brethren shall return unto the children of Israel.'*⁴⁴³¹

*'And there appeared a great wonder in heaven, a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.'*⁴⁴³²

Surprisingly, Rome, while claiming Isaiah⁴⁴³³ for the Virgin Mary, also claims Revelation⁴⁴³⁴ for her, without any apparent sense of the absurdity of holding to such a paradoxical and irreconcilable view. She either travailed in the birth of Jesus, or she didn't. Rome can't have it both ways.

One title which Rome always attributes to Mary is 'The Mother of God,' something which never appears in Scripture. Despite the impossibility of such a title obtaining, and the fact that Mary is referred to in the Bible as the '*mother of Jesus*,' by John, '*And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there,*'⁴⁴³⁵ and by Luke in Acts, '*These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren,*'⁴⁴³⁶ Rome still clings to its notion. The Roman Tradition in this originated in the chaotic Ecumenical Council of Ephesus,⁴⁴³⁷ held in the church of Ephesus which was dedicated to the Blessed Virgin, where Mary was endowed with the title of 'God-bearer.'⁴⁴³⁸

The Catholic Encyclopedia notes that Marian devotion is the practical application of the doctrine of the communion of the saints. The Roman belief that the resurrected saints inhabit heaven, making intercession for the living upon request to do so, is well known.⁴⁴³⁹ The encyclopedia also notes that the same basic concept was derived from the pre-Christian cult of the angels, a view subsequently heartily embraced by Rome where angels were thought to intercede on behalf of cultic supplicants.

The idea that Mary would become an advocate for fallen Eve appears around the time of Irenæus, who also seems to have considered Eve to be the virgin through whom man had fallen, and Mary the perpetual

⁴⁴³¹ Micah 5:3 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets); a reference to the true church.

⁴⁴³² Rev 12:1,2; a reference to the true church; also cf. Micah 4:10,13.

⁴⁴³³ Isa 66:7

⁴⁴³⁴ Rev 12:1,2

⁴⁴³⁵ John 2:1(sublinear emphasis added)

⁴⁴³⁶ Acts 1:14 (sublinear emphasis added)

⁴⁴³⁷ in 431AD

⁴⁴³⁸ Greek: theotokos.

⁴⁴³⁹ q.v. sup.

virgin through whom man would be redeemed. It was not a universal creed at that time, as certain 'Church Fathers,' as Romanists term them—such as Tertullian, Hedevidius, and quite possibly Hegesippus—disputed the doctrine of Mary's perpetual virginity.

Apocryphal writings, such as the Protevangelion, taken to be a work of the second-century, strongly affirm Mary's virginity.⁴⁴⁴⁰ Being apocryphal, they are of fictitious authenticity, and obviously not part of Holy Scripture. A little later, certain passages in the Sibylline Oracles, probably dating from the third-century, claim for Mary a role in the redemption of man.

The sect of the Collyridians, denounced by Epiphanius in the fourth-century for their sacrificial offering of cakes to Mary,⁴⁴⁴¹ seems to attest to an early cultic veneration of the Virgin. In any event, Syriac manuscripts prove that a 'fully-fledged' system of veneration had developed by the sixth-century at the latest.

The memorial feast of the Virgin, despite considerable time spent wandering around the calendar, finally settled in September.⁴⁴⁴² Proclus, the Patriarch of Constantinople,⁴⁴⁴³ admirably illustrates the depth of dejection and confusion: 'The Virgin's festival incites our tongue today to herald her praise....[Mary], handmaid and Mother, Virgin of heaven, the only bridge of God to men, the awful loom of the Incarnation, in which by some unspeakable way the garment of that union was woven, whereof the weaver is the Holy Ghost; and the spinner the overshadowing from on high; the wool the ancient fleece of Adam; the woof the undefiled flesh from the virgin; the weaver's shuttle the immense grace of Him who brought it about; the artificer the Word gliding through the hearing.'

'[T]he only bridge of God to men' places Mary at the centre of the divine plan for mankind, and, refusing Christ, claims redemption through Rome's Madonna. Acts repels this paganism, *'Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole. This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved,'*⁴⁴⁴⁴ as does John, *'And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.'*⁴⁴⁴⁵

Holy Trinity

This is dealt with in the chapter entitled: 'Holy Trinity—Whose Idea?'

⁴⁴⁴⁰ Latin: in partu et post partum.

⁴⁴⁴¹ cf. Jer 7:18,44:19 for the self-same degeneration in Judah.

⁴⁴⁴² 8 Sept.

⁴⁴⁴³ preaching in 429

⁴⁴⁴⁴ Acts 4:10-12

⁴⁴⁴⁵ I John 2:1

Transubstantiation: accidents & substance

The Roman thaumaturgic⁴⁴⁴⁶ doctrine known as transubstantiation, while lacking biblical authority and foundation, and, for that matter, any scientific one, appears to have its philosophical roots firmly in the teachings of Aristotle. Rome teaches that while the bread and the wine do not change their outer appearance when they become the body and blood of Christ, they change inwardly. Aristotle taught that matter has two components: accidents and substance, with 'accident' being the outer appearance, and 'substance' the inner essence. This duality is claimed to be the 'Mystery of the Eucharist.' But Aristotle was merely musing. He was attempting to anchor the concept of the immortal soul, and to extend a similar view to all matter. Philosophical and errant musings, allied to ancient pagan forms of worship in which the sacred cult-meals to the gods involved consuming representations of the gods' flesh and blood for the purpose of communion with them, can never result in the truth.

At the Last Supper, Christ used the bread and wine as symbols. Eating human flesh and drinking human blood is totally repulsive, and against the Law: *'But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat.'*⁴⁴⁴⁷ To the priests of Baal,⁴⁴⁴⁸ however, it was the correct form. And to the descendants of these high priests of pagan worship, it still is. The Roman view of the purpose of the Mass, in producing 'heavenly food for the nourishment of the soul,' and protection against evil, is wholly pagan. Man does not have an immortal soul to nourish.⁴⁴⁴⁹ There is no need of 'transubstantiated soul-food' for a non-existent immortal soul.

The liturgy of the Mass requires partakers to worship the Eucharist 'with supreme adoration.'⁴⁴⁵⁰ A large host, or consecrated wafer, claimed to be the body of Christ, is placed in a glass receptacle and then mounted in the centre of an ornate gold vessel termed a 'monstrance,' resembling a sunburst. The ensemble is then placed on the altar for the adoration of the faithful. Not only is this rite idolatrous, but through the pagan doctrine of transubstantiation,⁴⁴⁵¹ it involves participants in a subsequent rite of eating the body of Christ, and drinking His blood. In other words, the followers of Rome celebrate the death of Christ by ritually cannibalising Him in a pagan ceremonial every day of the year.

Rome's attempts to legitimise the ceremony have been many and varied. Normally the preferred modus is to mount an appeal to John: *'Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me,*

⁴⁴⁴⁶ i.e., magical.

⁴⁴⁴⁷ Gen 9:4

⁴⁴⁴⁸ from which, some say, derives the word cannibal.

⁴⁴⁴⁹ q.v. 'The Primal Lie'

⁴⁴⁵⁰ *The Code of Canon Law*, Canon 898.

⁴⁴⁵¹ i.e., subpanation: the doctrine that the body and blood of Christ are materially present in the Eucharist.

*even he shall live by me. This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: for he that eateth of this bread shall live forever.'*⁴⁴⁵²

Eating flesh and drinking blood were prohibited in Scripture, as already seen. The entire of the cited tract in John is metaphorical, and cannot be a literal command to break the Law. *'I am the bread of life,'*⁴⁴⁵³ does not mean that Christ was a loaf. It is a metaphor. At the Last Supper, Jesus's words are recorded: *'And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.'*⁴⁴⁵⁴ When seated at the table, Christ gave the bread and wine as symbols. If the ludicrous contention of the Roman church were to be followed, then this bread and wine was part-and-parcel of Christ's actual body, and, if that were the case, then His sacrifice would have been premature, occurring on the evening before His anguish on the cross. He would also have been handing out part of His own body and blood for consumption by His disciples, and He would have consumed Himself.

Rome has a different Jesus: a counterfeit Jesus for a counterfeit church, wed to its cannibalistic, blood-soaked and blood-stained rituals, and, to cap it all, a pagan virgin Madonna as the gateway to God. All are pagan in tooth and claw, through and through. There is, however, one very ancient belief system that does hold to the doctrine of transubstantiation: witchcraft.

Christ 'victim' of Roman Mass

Rome maintains that Christ instituted a new Passover: *'[Christ]....instituted a new Passover, namely the offering of himself by the church through its priests under visible signs, in memory of his own passage from this world to the Father.'*⁴⁴⁵⁵ This new Passover, according to Rome, is in furtherance of the redemption of man: *'As often as the sacrifice of the cross by which "Christ our Pasch is sacrificed"*⁴⁴⁵⁶ *is celebrated on the altar, the work of our redemptive council is carried out.'*⁴⁴⁵⁷

Paul instructs: *'Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.'*⁴⁴⁵⁸ Paul was referring to the annual Passover, and, in chief, to the proper keeping of the annual feast of unleavened bread.

⁴⁴⁵² John 6:53-58

⁴⁴⁵³ John 6:35

⁴⁴⁵⁴ Mat 26:26-28

⁴⁴⁵⁵ Council of Trent, Session 22, chpt. 1 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁴⁴⁵⁶ I Cor 5:7

⁴⁴⁵⁷ Second Vatican Council, *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church*, #3

⁴⁴⁵⁸ I Cor 5:7,8

There is nothing whatsoever concerning the sacrifice of Christ over and over again on the pagan altars of pagan Rome.

Rome has it that the Mass is a 'true and proper sacrifice.' It is not merely symbolic, but an 'actual sacrifice of the Eucharist.'⁴⁴⁵⁹ In offering the Mass, the Roman Catholic Church has its victim: Christ, under appearance of the bread and wine. The consecrated bread wafers are referred to as 'hosts,' Latin for 'victim.' Sacrifice is the core and essence of the Mass. John Paul II wrote, 'The Eucharist is above all else a sacrifice. It is the sacrifice of the Redemption and also the sacrifice of the New Covenant.'⁴⁴⁶⁰

The Roman church has a real victim, an immolation, sacrificed 'unbloodied' every day, all around the world, despite the fact that the Bible has no mention of an 'unbloody sacrifice.' Rather, Scripture teaches that, '*And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission,*'⁴⁴⁶¹ and in Leviticus, when referring to the conduct and ritual of the Levitical priesthood long prior to the sacrifice of Christ on the cross, '*For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul,*'⁴⁴⁶² and in Hebrews, '*By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.*'⁴⁴⁶³

Rome teaches that the sacrifice on the cross and the Mass are 'one and the same sacrifice.'⁴⁴⁶⁴ In fact, Rome even claims that the priest is another Christ, irrespective of his state of impurity: 'The priest no longer exists as an individual person. He has turned into a sacramental sign, the representative of Christ, present upon the altar and offering himself in sacrifice. Christ is the real priest; it is he who consecrates bread into his body and wine into his blood and offers both as a sacrificial gift to the heavenly Father.'⁴⁴⁶⁵ The daily immolation / sacrifice of Christ in the Roman system is seen exposed: 'For in the sacrifice of the Mass Our Lord is immolated when "he begins to be present sacramentally as the spiritual food of the faithful under the appearances of bread and wine."⁴⁴⁶⁶

By dint of this, Roman Catholics '*crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame,*'⁴⁴⁶⁷ '*and deny the once-for-all sacrifice made by Christ,*'⁴⁴⁶⁸ '*Who needeth not daily, as those high pries-*

⁴⁴⁵⁹ Council of Trent, Session 22, Canon 1; Second Vatican Council, *Sacred Liturgy*, #9

⁴⁴⁶⁰ John Paul II, *On the Mystery and Worship of the Eucharist*, #9

⁴⁴⁶¹ Heb 9:22

⁴⁴⁶² Lev 17:11; the acceptance by the Lord of Christ's once-for-all sacrifice, signalled in the rending of the veil of the Temple, and its wider significance, is dealt with in the chapter entitled: 'Law & Royal Priesthood.'

⁴⁴⁶³ Heb 10:10

⁴⁴⁶⁴ Second Vatican Council, *Sacred Liturgy*, #2

⁴⁴⁶⁵ Premm, Matthias, *Dogmatic Theology for the Laity*, p.345

⁴⁴⁶⁶ Second Vatican Council, *Sacred Liturgy*, #3b; Paul VI's *Mysterium Fidei*.

⁴⁴⁶⁷ Heb 6:6

⁴⁴⁶⁸ Heb 6:6....but falling away, so as to perish, may be supposed, and is true of many professors of religion; who may fall from the profession of the Gospel they have made, and from the truth of it, and into an open denial of it; yea, into an hatred and persecution of what they once received the external knowledge of and of their former fellows; and so shall fall short, and into condemnation.

ts, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once,⁴⁴⁶⁹ when he offered up himself,⁴⁴⁷⁰ and, 'By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.'⁴⁴⁷¹ There is no need of sin offerings, 'For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin.'⁴⁴⁷²

While immolation is the sacrificial killing of a victim, the Roman church maintains that in the Mass Christ does not suffer, pour out His blood, or die. Rather, He is said to experience an 'unbloodied immolation': 'The august sacrifice of the altar, then, is no mere empty commemoration of the passion and death of Jesus Christ, but a true and proper act of sacrifice, whereby the High priest by an unbloody immolation offers Himself a most acceptable victim to the Eternal Father, as He did upon the cross.'⁴⁴⁷³

The Liturgy of the Eucharist has it thus: 'Look with favour on your Church's offering, and see the Victim whose death has reconciled us to yourself....Lord, may this sacrifice, which has made our peace with you, advance the peace and salvation of all the world.'⁴⁴⁷⁴

In Rome's long-running attempt to reconcile continuing sacrifice in the Mass with Christ's once-for-all sacrifice, the Council of Trent proclaimed: 'In this divine sacrifice which is performed in the Mass, the very same Christ is contained and offered in bloodless manner who made a bloody sacrifice of himself once for all on the cross. Hence the holy council teaches that this is a truly propitiatory sacrifice, and brings it about that if we approach God with sincere hearts and upright faith, and with awe and reverence, we receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.'⁴⁴⁷⁵ For the Lord is appeased by this offering, he gives the gracious gift of repentance, he absolves even enormous offences and sins.'⁴⁴⁷⁶

The Roman Catholic Catechism describes the 'mystical mechanisms' of the Eucharist—termed the Viaticum when administered to the dying during the Roman church's 'last rites'—in the following terms: 'The body of Christ we receive in Holy Communion "is given up for us," and the blood we drink "shed for the many for the forgiveness of sins." For this reason the Eucharist cannot unite us to Christ without at the same time cleansing us from past sins.' This is held to benefit both the living and the dead: 'Therefore it is quite properly offered according to apostolic tradition not only for the sins, penalties, satisfactions and other needs of the faithful who are living, but also for those who have died in Christ but are not yet fully cleansed.'⁴⁴⁷⁷

This view, which equates the Mass with an actual sacrifice, renders any appeal to Peter patently beyond the reach of the apologist of the Roman system, although this has not prevented attempts at this in the

⁴⁴⁶⁹ Greek: ephapax, 'once for all.'

⁴⁴⁷⁰ Heb 7:27 (sublinear emphasis added)

⁴⁴⁷¹ Heb 10:10 (sublinear emphasis added)

⁴⁴⁷² Heb 10:14,18

⁴⁴⁷³ Pius XII, *Mediator Dei*, #68

⁴⁴⁷⁴ Third Eucharistic Prayer; Memorial Prayer; Prayer of Intercession for the church.

⁴⁴⁷⁵ Heb 4:16

⁴⁴⁷⁶ Council of Trent, *Teaching and Canons on the Most Holy Sacrifice of the Mass*.

⁴⁴⁷⁷ Council of Trent, *Teaching and Canons on the Most Holy Sacrifice of the Mass*.

past: 'Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.' Paul also uses the phrase 'lively stones,' and identifies the 'spiritual sacrifices,'⁴⁴⁷⁸ 'But by him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name. But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.'⁴⁴⁷⁹ There is nothing here about a continual sacrifice on the part of Christ at the hands of the Roman priesthood.

Hislop discusses the pagan origins of the 'The Sacrifice of the Mass': 'We have evidence to show the Babylonian origin of the idea of that "unbloody sacrifice" very distinctly. From Tacitus we learn that no blood was allowed to be offered on the altars of Paphian Venus....the altars of the Paphian goddess were required to be kept pure from blood.....who was first worshipped by the Assyrians....[as] Venus, that is, the great goddess of Babylon....and after these by the Paphians, and the Phœnicians....The "bloodless" altars of the Paphian goddess⁴⁴⁸⁰ show the character of the worship peculiar to the Babylonian goddess from whom she was derived. In this respect the goddess-queen of Chaldea differs from her son, who was worshipped in her arms. He was.... represented as delighting in blood. But she, as the mother of grace and mercy, as the celestial "Dove," as "the hope of the whole world," was adverse from blood, and was represented in a benign and gentle character. Accordingly, in Babylon she bore the name of Mylitta—that is, "The Mediatrix." In accordance with the character of Mediatrix, she was called Aphrodite—that is, "wrath subduer"—who by her charms could soothe the breast of angry Jove, and soften the most rugged spirits of God or mortal men....Now, thus we see how it comes that Rome represents Christ—the "Lamb of God," meek and lowly in heart....who wept over Jerusalem, who prayed for His murderers—as a stern and inexorable judge, before whom the sinner "might grovel in the dust, and still never be sure that his prayers would be heard," while Mary is set off in the most winning and engaging light, as the hope of the guilty, as the grand refuge of sinners; how is it that the former is said to have "*reserved justice and judgment to Himself*," but to have committed the exercise of all mercy to His Mother! The most standard devotional works of Rome are pervaded by this very principle, exalting the compassion and gentleness of the mother at the expense of the loving character of the Son. Thus, Saint [sic] Alphonsus Liguori tells his readers that the sinner that ventures to come directly to Christ may come with dread and apprehension of His wrath; but let him only employ the mediation of the Virgin with her Son, and she has only to "show" that Son "the breasts that gave Him suck," and His wrath will immediately be appeased....Yet this idea, which is not to be found in Scripture, which the Scripture expressly repudiates,⁴⁴⁸¹ was widely diffused in the realms of paganism....All this is done only to exalt the Mother, as more gracious and more compassionate than her glorious Son. Now, this

⁴⁴⁷⁸ referred to in Heb 13:15,16

⁴⁴⁷⁹ I Peter 2:5

⁴⁴⁸⁰ Paphia, Cyprus.

⁴⁴⁸¹ cf. Luke 11:27,28

was the very case in Babylon: and to this character of the goddess queen her favourite offerings exactly correspond.

Therefore, we find the women of Judah represented simply as '*burning incense, pouring out drink-offerings, and offering cakes to the queen of heaven.*'⁴⁴⁸² The cakes were "the unbloody sacrifice" she requiredIn the fourth-century, when the queen of heaven, under the name of Mary, was beginning to be worshipped in the [so-called] Christian church, this "unbloody sacrifice" also was brought in....the very shape of the unbloody sacrifice of Rome may indicate whence it came. It is a small, thin, round wafer, and on its roundness the church of Rome lays so much stress, to use the pithy language of John Knox in regard to the wafer-god: "If, in making the roundness the ring is broken, then must another of his fellow-cakes receive that honour to be made a god, and the crazed or cracked miserable cake, that once was in hope to be made a god, must be given to a baby to play withal."⁴⁴⁸³

The importance, however, which Rome attaches to the roundness of the wafer, must have a reason; and that reason will be found, if we look at the altars of Egypt. "The thin, round cake," says Wilkinson, "occurs on all altars." Almost every jot or tittle in the Egyptian worship had a symbolic meaning. The round disk, so frequent in the sacred emblems of Egypt, symbolised the sun. Now, when Osiris, the sun-divinity, became incarnate, and was born, it was not merely that he should give his life as a sacrifice for men, but that he might also be the life and nourishment of the souls of men. It is universally admitted that Isis was the origin of the Greek and Roman Ceres. But Ceres, be it observed, was worshipped not simply as the discoverer of corn; she was worshipped as "The Mother of Corn." The child she brought forth was He-Siri, "the Seed," or, as he was most frequently called in Assyria, "Bar," which signifies at once "the Son" and "the Corn." That the initiated pagans actually believed that the "Corn" which Ceres bestowed on the world was not the "Corn" of this earth, but the Divine "Son," through whom alone spiritual and eternal life could be enjoyed, we have clear and decisive proof. The Druids were devoted worshippers of Ceres, and as such they were celebrated in their mystic poems as "bearers of the ears of corn." Now, the following is the account which the Druids give of their great divinity, under the form of "Corn." That divinity was represented as having, in the first instance, incurred, for some reason or other, the displeasure of Ceres, and as fleeing in terror from her. In his terror, "he took the form of a bird, and mounted into the air. That element afforded him no refuge; for The Lady, in the form of a sparrowhawk, was gaining upon him—she was just in the act of pouncing upon him. Shuddering with dread, he perceived a heap of clean wheat upon a floor, dropped into the midst of it, and assumed the form of a single grain. Ceridwen⁴⁴⁸⁴ took the form of a black high-crested hen, descended into the wheat, scratched him out, distinguished, and swallowed him. And, as the history relates, she was pregnant with him nine months, and

⁴⁴⁸² Jer 44:19

⁴⁴⁸³ Begg, James, *Handbook of Popery*, p.259

⁴⁴⁸⁴ i.e., the British Ceres.

when delivered of him, she found him so lovely a babe, that she had not resolution to put him to death." Here it is evident that the grain of corn, is expressly identified with the "lovely babe"; from which it is still further evident that Ceres, who, to the profane vulgar was known only as the Mother of "Bar," "the Corn," was known to the initiated as the Mother of "Bar," "the Son." And now, the reader will be prepared to understand the full significance of the representation of the Celestial sphere of "the Virgin with the ear of wheat in her hand." That ear of wheat in the Virgin's hand is just another symbol for the child in the arms of the Virgin Mother.

Now, this Son, who was symbolise as "Corn," was the sun-divinity incarnate, according to the sacred oracle of the great goddess of Egypt: "No mortal hath lifted my veil. The fruit which I have brought forth is the Sun." What more natural then, if this incarnate divinity is symbolised as the "bread of God," than that he should be represented as a "round wafer," to identify him with the Sun? Is this a mere fancy? Let the reader peruse the following excerpt from Hurd, in which he describes the embellishments of the Romish altar, on which the sacrament or consecrated wafer is deposited, and then he will be able to judge: "A plate of silver, in the form of a Sun, is fixed opposite to the sacrament on the altar; which, with the light of the tapers, makes a most brilliant appearance."⁴⁴⁸⁵ What has that "brilliant" "Sun" to do there, on the altar, over against the "sacrament," or round wafer? In Egypt, the disk of the Sun was represented in the temples, and the sovereign and his wife and children were represented as adoring it....In the worship of Baal, as practised by the idolatrous Israelites in the days of their apostasy, the worship of the sun's image was equally observed; and it is striking to find that the image of the sun, which apostate Israel worshipped, was erected above the altar⁴⁴⁸⁶....From all this, it is manifest that the image of the sun above, or on the altar, was one of the recognised symbols of those who worshipped Baal or the Sun. And here, in a so-called Christian church, a brilliant plate of silver, "in the form of a Sun," is so placed on the altar, that everyone who adores at that altar must bow down in lowly reverence before that image of the "Sun." Whence, I ask, could that have come, but from the ancient sun-worship, or the worship of Baal? And when the wafer is so placed that the silver "Sun" is fronting the "round" wafer, whose "roundness" is so important an element in the Romish Mystery, what can be the meaning of it, but just to show to those who have eyes to see, that the "Wafer" itself is only another symbol of Baal, or the Sun. If the sun-divinity was worshipped in Egypt as "the Seed," or in Babylon as "the Corn," precisely so is the wafer adored in Rome. "Bread-corn of the elect, have mercy upon us," is one of the appointed prayers of the Roman Litany, addressed to the wafer, in the celebration of the Mass. And one at least of the imperative requirements as to the way in which that wafer is to be partaken of, is the very same as was enforced in that old worship of the Babylonian divinity. Those who partake of it are required to partake absolutely fasting. This is very stringently laid down....[look] at this provision in regard to the "unbloody sacrifice" of the Mass in the light of the Eleusian Mysteries, and it is accounted for at

⁴⁴⁸⁵ Hurd, William, *Rites and Ceremonies*, p.196

⁴⁴⁸⁶ II Chron 34:4

once; for there the first question put to those who sought initiation was, "Are you fasting?" and unless the question was answered in the affirmative, no initiation could take place.

Although the god whom Isis or Ceres brought forth, and who was offered to her under the symbol of the wafer or thin round cake, as "the bread of life," was in reality the fierce, scorching Sun, or terrible Moloch, yet in that offering all his terror was veiled, and everything repulsive cast into the shade. In the appointed symbol he is offered up to the benignant Mother, who tempers judgement with mercy, and to whom all spiritual blessings are ultimately referred; and blessed by that Mother, he is given back to be feasted upon, as the staff of life, as the nourishment of her worshippers' souls. Thus the Mother was held up as the favourite divinity. And thus, also, and for an entirely similar reason, does the Madonna of Rome entirely eclipse her Son as the "Mother of Grace and Mercy."

In regard to the pagan character of the "unbloody sacrifice" of the Mass, we have seen not little already. But there is something yet to be considered, in which the working of the mystery of iniquity will still further appear. There are letters on the wafer that are worth reading. These letters are I.H.S. What mean these mystical letters? To a Christian these letters are represented as signifying, "Jesus the Saviour of men."⁴⁴⁸⁷ But let a Roman worshipper of Isis⁴⁴⁸⁸ (for in the age of the emperors there were innumerable worshippers of Isis in Rome) cast his eyes upon I.H.S., and how will he read them? He will read them, of course, according to his own well-known system of idolatry: "Isis, Horus, Seb," that is, "The Mother, the Child, and the Father of the gods,"—in other words, "The Egyptian Trinity." Can the reader imagine that this double sense is accidental? Surely not. The very feast of the Christian Joannes, retaining at the same time all its ancient paganism, skilfully planned the initials I.H.S. to pay the semblance of a tribute to Christianity, while paganism in reality has all the substance of the homage bestowed upon it.⁴⁴⁸⁹

The wholesale importation of pagan beliefs and rites into Romanism is openly admitted by Sullivan: 'It is interesting to note how often our church has availed herself of practices which were in common use among pagans....Thus it is true, in a sense, that some Catholic rites and ceremonies are a reproduction of those pagan creeds; but they are the taking of what was best from paganism, the keeping of symbolic practices which express the religious instinct that is common to all races and times.'⁴⁴⁹⁰

God's commandment in this is asolute, immutable, and crystal clear: *'Take heed to thyself that thou be not snared by following them....and that thou inquire not after their gods, saying, How did these nations serve their gods? Even so will I do likewise. Thou shalt not do so unto the Lord thy God, for every abomination to the*

⁴⁴⁸⁷ Latin: Iesus Hominum Salvator; despite the commonly held belief, the first three Greek letters of Jesus' name are found in Iesous, not I.H.S.

⁴⁴⁸⁸ 19 July is also the date of the occult festival of Isis.

⁴⁴⁸⁹ Hislop, Alexander, *The Two Babylons*, pp.156-164 (paraphrased for brevity; with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁴⁴⁹⁰ Msgr. Sullivan, *Externals of the Catholic Church*, p.156

*Lord, which he hateth, have they done unto their gods; for even their sons and their daughters they have burnt in the fire to their gods. What things soever I command you, observe to do it; thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it.'*⁴⁴⁹¹ In her wantonness, Rome does as she pleases, not as God commands.

Born again

'The Roman Catholic Church teaches that every newborn child must be baptised to remedy a deadly spiritual disease. The church traces the problem back to the Garden of Eden....Every newborn child comes into the world with original sin on his or her soul and alienated from God.

According to the Roman Catholic Church, an infant receives the benefits of Christ's death through the sacrament of baptism: 'Holy Baptism is the basis of the whole Christian life, the gateway to life in the Spirit, and the door which gives access to the other sacraments. Through Baptism we are freed from sin and reborn as sons of God; we become members of Christ, are incorporated into the church and made sharers in her mission: "Baptism is the sacrament of regeneration through water in the Word."⁴⁴⁹²

The Roman Catholic Church annually baptises about sixteen million children under the age of seven years old. Most are only a few weeks old. As they grow up, the church teaches these children that original sin has been removed from their souls and divine life resides within them. Consequently, most Catholics go through life confident that they are right with God and on the road that leads to heaven. Their confidence, however, is unwarranted, for the Scriptures teach that lost sinners are justified by faith, not baptism.⁴⁴⁹³

The New Testament word for justification is from the root meaning upright, just, or righteous. To justify means to show to be righteous or to declare to be in a right state. According to the Bible, justification is a divine act: "*God is the one who justifies.*"⁴⁴⁹⁴ Biblical justification is an act of God in which He declares an unworthy sinner to be righteous in His sight⁴⁴⁹⁵....The Bible says that God justifies "*the one who has faith in Jesus.*"⁴⁴⁹⁶ The gospel is preached. Some, being persuaded that it is true, place their trust in Christ to save them. These believers God justifies, declaring them righteous in His sight.⁴⁴⁹⁷

Membership induction & obedience

'Adult baptismal justification into the Roman Catholic Church is undertaken in stages:

⁴⁴⁹¹ Deut 12:30-32

⁴⁴⁹² *Catechism of the Catholic Church*

⁴⁴⁹³ man is saved by Grace, justified by Faith, and rewarded according to his works.

⁴⁴⁹⁴ Rom 8:33

⁴⁴⁹⁵ Rom 4:3-5

⁴⁴⁹⁶ Rom 3:26

⁴⁴⁹⁷ McCarthy, James G., *The Gospel According to Rome, Comparing Catholic Tradition and the Word of God*, pp.24,25,29,30

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1. The precatechumenate, a period of introduction to the Roman faith;
 2. The catechumenate, or formal instruction in the doctrines and practices of the Roman church, involving optional rights of exorcism, the giving of a new name, and the presentation of a cross; the entire completing in the affirmation, conducted by a bishop, 'I now declare you to be members of the elect, to be initiated into the sacred mysteries at the next Easter Vigil.'⁴⁴⁹⁸ From this point on the church refers to the candidates as the 'elect'; and,
 3. Purification, reflection, and enlightenment. Three 'scrutinies' are involved: 'The scrutinies, which are solemnly celebrated on Sundays and are reinforced by an exorcism, are rites for self-searching and repentance and have above all a spiritual purpose. The scrutinies are meant to uncover, then heal all that is weak, defective, or sinful in the hearts of the elect; to bring out, then strengthen all that is upright, strong, and good.'⁴⁴⁹⁹ This period of justification customarily takes place during Lent, the forty days preceding Easter, culminating on Easter Sunday with baptism by a priest in a rite similar to that for infants, the sacraments of Holy Eucharist, with confirmation immediately after.'

This lengthy process, involving justification at the hands of bishops and priests, is completely alien to the Judæo-Christian baptism.⁴⁵⁰⁰ Once membership is gained, complete and unquestioning obedience to the pontiff is demanded: '[A] proper primacy of jurisdiction over the whole church was conferred on Saint Peter directly and singly, and not mediately through any delegation to him, as chief minister of the church, of a primacy held by the church corporately. [T]his Petrine primacy vests only by divine institution and right in the line of Roman pontiffs. The Pope's jurisdiction is immediate in all churches—that is, he is the universal ordinary, the actual bishop of every see (all other bishops being merely his curates and deputies), and is not a remote or merely appellate authority—so that in questions not of faith or morals alone, but of discipline and government also, all the faithful, of whatever rite or dignity, both pastors and laity, are bound, individually and collectively, to submit themselves thereto. [I]t is unlawful to appeal from the judgements of the Roman pontiffs to an ecumenical council, as though to a higher authority. [T]he Roman pontiff, when he speaks *ex cathedra* and defines a doctrine of faith or morals to be held by the universal church, is infallible, and such definitions are accordingly irreformable of themselves, and not from the consent of the church.'^{4501 4502}

⁴⁴⁹⁸ *The Rites of the Catholic Church*, Vol. 1, p.101

⁴⁴⁹⁹ *The Rites of the Catholic Church*, Vol. 1, p.109

⁴⁵⁰⁰ which involves repentance, faith, and baptism by complete immersion in water for the remission of sins.

⁴⁵⁰¹ *Encyclopedia Americana*

⁴⁵⁰² McCarthy, James G., *The Gospel According to Rome, Comparing Catholic Tradition and the Word of God*, pp.43-45 (paraphrased for brevity)

Rosaries, relics, & rites

'What do these three things have in common? Each is a sacred sign of the Roman Catholic Church, called a 'sacramental,' intended to bring a spiritual dimension to the events of everyday life. Virtually any religious object or action may qualify. Some of the better known officially sanctioned sacramentals of the church⁴⁵⁰³ are:

Stations of the cross,	Ashes on the forehead,
Crucifixes,	Observing Roman holy days,
Scapulars,	Blessed palms,
Miraculous medals,	Blessing of new cars,
Genuflecting,	Blessing of boats,
Lighting candles,	Blessing of fishing nets,
Statues,	Blessing of fields and crops,
Pictures of the saints,	Blessing of businesses,
Anointing with holy oil,	Blessing of buildings,
Holy water,	The blessing of throats,
Ringling of bells,	Exorcisms.

According to Roman Catholic theology, sacramentals are similar to sacraments, but are not as powerful. Sacraments⁴⁵⁰⁴ give sanctifying and actual grace by virtue of the performance of the rite. Sacramentals do not. Their purpose is to help Catholics prepare for the fruitful reception of grace from the sacraments. Each of the seven sacraments has a special purpose and is said to result in one or more of the following benefits:⁴⁵⁰⁵

Baptism;	The reception of actual grace;
Penance (confession);	Material blessings such as health or safety;
Eucharist;	An increased love of God;
Confirmation;	A sorrow for sin;

⁴⁵⁰³ of 125 sanctioned.

⁴⁵⁰⁴ Barclay, William, *The Plain Man's Guide to Ethics*, p.25:

'The word sacrament has many meanings. Its simplest is that the word sacramentum is the standard Latin word for a soldier's oath of loyalty to his general and to his emperor.'

⁴⁵⁰⁵ McCarthy, James G., *The Gospel According to Rome, Comparing Catholic Tradition and the Words of God*, pp.58,59

Matrimony;	Atonement of temporal punishment due for sin;
Holy orders;	The forgiveness of venial sins;
Anointing of sick.	The reception of actual grace.

Rote prayers,⁴⁵⁰⁶ crucifixes, statues, bells, holy water, holy relics, wax candles, and the like, all derive from the pagan worship system of ancient Babylon. This has been well-documented by Hislop. The correlation with Babylon is even greater, however, as can be seen from the following brief but illustrative excerpt: 'As in recent times, we hear of weeping images and winking Madonnas, and innumerable prodigies besides, continually occurring in the Romish church, in proof of this Papal dogma or that, so was it also in the system of Babylon. There is hardly a form of "pious fraud" or saintly imposture practised at this day on the banks of the Tiber that cannot be proved to have had its counterpart on the banks of the Euphrates, or in the systems that came from it. Has the image of the Virgin been seen to shed tears? To these tender-hearted idols Lucan alludes, when, speaking of the prodigies that occurred during the civil wars, he says:

"Tears shed by gods, our country's patrons,
And sweat from Lares, told the city's woes."

Virgil also refers to the same, when he says:

"The weeping statues did the wars foretell,
And holy sweat from brazen idols fell."

When, in the consulship of Appius Claudius and Marcus Perpenna, Publius Crassus was slain in battle with Aristonicus, Apollo's statue at Cumæ shed tears for four days without intermission. The gods had also their merry moods as well as their weeping fits. If Rome counts it a divine accomplishment for the sacred image of her Madonna to "wink," it was surely not less becoming in the sacred images of Paganism to relax their features into an occasional grin. That they did so, we have abundant testimony: "When the priests put forth their magic powers, then statues laughed, and lamps were spontaneously enkindled."⁴⁵⁰⁷

When the images made merry, however, they seem to have inspired other feelings than those of merriment in the breasts of those who beheld them....in the fumes of the incense which burned before the statue of Hecate, the image was seen to laugh so naturally as to fill the spectators with terror. There were times, however, when different feelings were inspired. Has the image of the Madonna been made to look benignantly upon a favoured worshipper, and send him home assured that his prayer was heard? So did the statues of the

⁴⁵⁰⁶ e.g., oft-recited Hail Mary, Rosary and Novena.

⁴⁵⁰⁷ Psellus, *On Demons*, pp.40,41

Egyptian Isis. They were so framed, that the goddess could shake the silver serpent on her forehead, and nod assent to those who had preferred their petitions in a way pleasing to her.⁴⁵⁰⁸

All devotees of the occult covet religious relics because they are supposed to possess inherent and supernatural powers. This belief in the power of relics is one of the most basic common points of belief of occultists in every land, every culture, and every age. Like its occult forebears, the Roman Catholic Church covets religious relics in a massive way. Despite the external trappings of a religion, which they insist on calling 'Christian,' the base and occult nature of it all is plain to be seen in its 'true crosses,' 'blessed bones,' 'holy shrouds,' and all the rest of it.

Auricular confession

The practice of auricular confession of penitents, whispered in secret to a priest, is based on pagan principles: 'It is a public fact, which no learned Roman Catholic has ever denied, that auricular confession became a dogma and obligatory practice of the church only at the Council of Lateran,⁴⁵⁰⁹ under the pope Innocent III. Not a single trace of auricular confession, as a dogma, can be found before that year....

Let those who want more information on that subject read the poems of Juvenal, Propertius, and Tibellus. Let them peruse all the histories of Old Rome, and they will see the perfect resemblance which exists between the priests of the pope and those of Bacchus, in reference to the vows of celibacy, the secrets of auricular confession, celebration of the so-called "sacred mysteries," and the unmentionable corruption of the two systems of religion. In fact, when one reads the poems of Juvenal, he thinks he has before him the books of Den, Liguori, Lebreynne, and Kenric.⁴⁵¹⁰

In attempted riposte, Romanists often cite '*binding and loosing*,'⁴⁵¹¹ and '*remitting and retaining*,'⁴⁵¹² but, in all cases, these are perfect past participles in the original, indicating the later earthly confirmation and communication of a prior heavenly decision.⁴⁵¹³

Roman priests, or any others for that matter, do not forgive sins. It is Jesus Christ Who forgives sins: '*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.*'⁴⁵¹⁴ This is allied to the instruction to Judæo-Christians to admit offenses and shortcomings, side-slips, to others in the church: '*Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous*

⁴⁵⁰⁸ Hislop, Alexander, *The Two Babylons*, chpt. 5, pp.257,258

⁴⁵⁰⁹ in 1215AD

⁴⁵¹⁰ Chiniquy, Charles Paschal Telesphore, *The Priest, the Woman, and the Confessional*, pp.117,140

⁴⁵¹¹ Mat 16:19,18:18; q.v. 'Disfellowshipping' sup.; and 'Penance.'

⁴⁵¹² John 20:21-23; q.v. 'Disfellowshipping' sup.; and 'Penance.'

⁴⁵¹³ q.v. sup.

⁴⁵¹⁴ I John 1:9,10

*man availeth much.*⁴⁵¹⁵ The Greek translated '*faults*'⁴⁵¹⁶ refers to offenses against others and side-slips concerning the Law; unintentional sin, as opposed to presumptive, wilful sin. This is important, for the church is to be healed and kept pure and clean, as a fit Bride for Christ.

Penance

'[Rome] teaches that the sacrament of penance re-establishes a right relationship between God and a wayward Catholic.... Catholics often refer to the sacrament of penance as the sacrament of confession, or simply confession, for in the rite the Catholic discloses his sins to a priest.... Before the priest will forgive the Catholic guilty of mortal sin, the person must demonstrate sorrow for his sins and a determination to avoid sinning in the future.... Roman Catholicism teaches that though only God can forgive sins, He has willed to do so through the church. Consequently, in the sacrament of penance it is the responsibility of the priest to judge the sinner.... If the priest forgives the sinner, and he usually does, he then administers absolution. To absolve means 'to set free, to release from the consequences of guilt.' Absolution frees the person guilty of mortal sin from eternal punishment. Indeed, the church claims that "there is no offence, however serious, that the church cannot forgive." This absolution is not simply a declaration that God has forgiven a sinner, but a judicial act of the priest.'^{4517 4518}

Scripture has it differently: '*and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. Confess your faults one to another,*'⁴⁵¹⁹ not to a priest; '*If we confess our sins [to God], he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*'⁴⁵²⁰ There is no judicial role for a priest, or any man here. Biblical confession is directly to God. Sinning man cannot forgive the sins of others. Sinning man did not suffer the penalty of death for the sins of others. The penalty for sin has been paid by Christ, once-for-all, and cannot be paid by the sinner through acts of penance. All sin is mortal; none is venial: '*the soul that sinneth, it shall die.*'⁴⁵²¹ There is no biblical distinction of this ilk between sins: sin is sin.⁴⁵²² Paul puts it succinctly: '*For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*'⁴⁵²³

The Roman church, in riposte, frequently points to the following passage in John, '*Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, so send I you. And when he had said this, he*

⁴⁵¹⁵ James: 5:16

⁴⁵¹⁶ Greek: paraptoma.

⁴⁵¹⁷ Council of Trent, Session 14, Canon 9

⁴⁵¹⁸ McCarthy, James G., *The Gospel According to Rome, Comparing Catholic Tradition and the Word of God*, pp.76,77 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁴⁵¹⁹ James 5:15,16

⁴⁵²⁰ I John 1:9 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁴⁵²¹ Ezek 18:4

⁴⁵²² there is, of course, a biblical distinction between repented sin of weakness / error and unrepented wilful sin; the ramifications of which are dealt with sup. in the chapter entitled, 'The Law & The Royal Priesthood.'

⁴⁵²³ Rom 6:23

*breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Spirit: Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.'*⁴⁵²⁴ This is a quite woeful translation, in part, for the verbs '*remit*' and '*retain*' are perfect past participles in the original, and should be translated '*have been remitted,*' and '*have been retained,*' clearly referring to a state of having been remitted or retained by God beforehand.

This passage did not confer on the hearers of Christ's words, the apostles, a right to take judgement into their own hands and absolve people from sin according to their whim or disposition. Christ said that He was sending them, the same 'sending forth' message contained in Matthew, '*Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.*'⁴⁵²⁵ Part of this work of baptising and preaching the gospel involved the remission of sins. They baptised people in the name of the Lord for the remission of sins. They healed people through miraculous healing, and this, too, involving the remission of sins. The sins were remitted back to the originator of all sin: Satan. If parties presented themselves for baptism they were baptised. In the case of Simon in chapter eight of Acts, however, an earlier baptism '*in the name of the Lord Jesus,*'⁴⁵²⁶ was not made good subsequently by Peter and John, for it was patent that Simon only wished to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit for the purposes of self-aggrandisement, power, and financial gain. The Lord is the One granting the gift of the Holy Spirit, therefore it is the Lord who remits sin. Matthew clearly identifies the source of the gift: '*And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.*'⁴⁵²⁷

It is significant that the whole passage referring to the remission of sins occurs immediately upon Christ speaking of the apostles receiving the Holy Spirit. Without this divine gift, which brings with it the extraordinary spirit of discernment, they would not have been fit to be entrusted with such an authority. In the strictest sense, this is a special commission, for they would be able, through the Holy Spirit, God's Power, to discern who was in the '*gall and bitterness of iniquity,*'⁴⁵²⁸ and who was not. As such, they were the physical and earthly agents of Christ, acting according to His will, and not their own. By virtue of this power, working through Peter, Ananias and Sapphira were struck dead, and through Paul Elymas was struck blind. By this means the early church was secure in large measure against the influx of satanically driven, impenitent, and sin-ridden hypocrites.

In all cases of remission of sin, it was in the context of an earthly confirmation and communication of a prior decision made in heaven. There is no biblical example whatsoever of any form of sacramental confession to a priest in the entire of the New Testament. The account given by Luke of the same event recorded in John,

⁴⁵²⁴ John 20:21-23

⁴⁵²⁵ Mat 28:19

⁴⁵²⁶ Acts 8:15,16

⁴⁵²⁷ Mat 26:27,28

⁴⁵²⁸ Acts 8:23

⁴⁵²⁹ clearly shows that Christ was speaking of the preaching of repentance and the remission of sins.⁴⁵³⁰ *'And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, starting at Jerusalem.'*⁴⁵³¹ This was in *'His name,'* for there is none other, *'Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.'*⁴⁵³² No one can be saved from sin by the judgement and pronouncement of a Roman or any other priest. Christ said, *'And ye are witnesses of these things.'*⁴⁵³³ The apostles were witnesses, not man-appointed confessors and absolvers.

Inquisition

Seven centuries of bloody Roman Inquisition and papal tyrannicide are seen 'excused' in the following facile terms: 'There is nothing exceptionally cruel or intolerant about the statute....which provides that heretics convicted before a spiritual court and refusing to recant, were to be handed over to the secular arm and burnt.... Far from being inhuman, [the Inquisitors] were, as a rule, men of spotless character and....admirable sanctity.... not a few have been canonized by the church.'⁴⁵³⁴

Oh, so demonically perverted!

Blasphemy

Examples are myriad, but one that perhaps sums them all is this: Pius IX, at the foot of the column of the Immaculate Conception erected at Rome to perpetuate and honour the 'permission' granted him to decree the dogma of the Immaculate Conception, in an obscene parody, has Moses, David, Isaiah, and Jeremiah casting crowns before the Virgin, saying: *'Thou art worthy, for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood.'*⁴⁵³⁵

⁴⁵²⁹ q.v. sup.

⁴⁵³⁰ through baptism into His church.

⁴⁵³¹ Luke 24:47

⁴⁵³² Acts 4:12

⁴⁵³³ Luke 24:48

⁴⁵³⁴ *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. V, p.441; Vol. VIII, p319 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets); Dufty, William, *Sugar Blues*, p.32 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'Ten years later [1454AD] the Pope [Nicholas V] was induced to extend his blessing to the slave traffic. Papal authority was extended to "attack, subject, and reduce to slavery the Saracens, Pagans, and other enemies of Christ." The ostensible rationale of Christianity abroad was the same one that justified hounding of heretics and Jews at home: to save their souls. The fact that the sweat of black brows could tend the new fields of sugar cane in Madiera and the Canary Isles was a providential fringe benefit for the [Roman Catholic] Portugese empire. For centuries the Scriptures were systematically perverted to provide solace for slave-holding sugar pushers....Sugar and slavery were two sides of the coin of the Portugese realm.'

⁴⁵³⁵ Rev 5:9

Seven sacraments

'The Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox churches have each preserved their own elaborate ritual and brilliant pageantry, their many altar candles, their incense, and the holy relics of the saints. They recognise seven sacraments as channels of divine grace between God and man:

1. Baptism, when the human body enters into Christ;
2. Confirmation, when Catholic children confirm their membership of the church;
3. Confession and penance, to restore the union with God damaged or broken by sin;
4. Marriage, which seeks the blessing of God for family life;
5. Extreme unction, when a priest anoints with oil those on the verge of death;
6. Holy orders, which create the institution of priesthood; and the most sublime and mysterious experience of all, and,
7. The Holy Eucharist, or Mass, when they believe that the actual body of Christ is offered and received in the form of bread and wine.⁴⁵³⁶

Summary

The above recital is by no means comprehensive since many, many more pagan beliefs, practices, superstitions, and rites underpin the Roman Catholic Church. Indeed, these have become the very warp and weft of the fabric of the whole enterprise. The recital should be sufficient, however, to give a broad view of the origin, nature and content of Roman Catholic doctrine, belief, and practice. The entire fabrication is demonically structured to divert its devotees from any real possibility of securing a hold on the truth by focussing their attention on a bewildering array of myths, rituals, routine, repetitions, pomp, processions, and pagan musings. What little doctrine of any worth that was ever in place has been completely submerged in a flood of mysticism and overt worldliness.

⁴⁵³⁶ Savage, Katherine, *The History of World Religions*, pp.160,161

Chapter 58

Trinity Doctrine—Whose Idea?

The question of the provenance and scriptural integrity of the doctrine of the Holy Trinity has been addressed,⁴⁵³⁷ but here some time is taken to chart its roots and development.

Hislop, as stated previously, mentions an ancient Trinitarian belief found in pagan Egypt.⁴⁵³⁸ Fakhoury, in a generally succinct paper, but with some anomaly and excursion, expands on this point:⁴⁵³⁹ 'Roman Catholic leaders and officials recognise the Trinity as not a teaching of the Apostles, but an invention and proclamation of their church. Karl Rahner, perhaps Catholicism's most respected twentieth-century scholar, remarked that his fellow theologians have been: 'embarrassed by the simple fact that in reality the Scriptures do not explicitly present a doctrine of the 'imminent' Trinity.'

⁴⁵³⁷ q.v. sup., 'Father & Son—or Trinity?' 'Roman Church Innovations,' and 'Roman Catholic Church's Intolerance, Dogma, and Tradition.'

⁴⁵³⁸ Hislop, Alexander, *The Two Babylons*, p.164 (sublinear emphasis added):

'In regard to the pagan character of the "unbloody sacrifice" of the Mass, we have seen not little already. But there is something yet to be considered, in which the working of the mystery of iniquity will still further appear. There are letters on the wafer that are worth reading. These letters are I.H.S. What mean these mystical letters? To a Christian these letters are represented as signifying, "Iesus Hominum Salvator," "Jesus the Saviour of men." But let a Roman worshipper of Isis (for in the age of the emperors there were innumerable worshippers of Isis in Rome) cast his eyes upon them, and how will he read them? He will read them, of course, according to his own well-known system of idolatry: "Isis, Horus, Seb," that is, "The Mother, the Child, and the Father of the gods,"—in other words, "The Egyptian Trinity."

Despite a commonly held belief to the contrary, the first three Greek letters of Jesus' name are Iēs (from Iēsous), not I.H.S.

⁴⁵³⁹ together with the question of the validity of Mat 28:19

The Catholic Encyclopedia explains why: '[The Trinity], the church teaches, is the revelation regarding God's nature which Jesus Christ, the Son of God, came upon earth to deliver to the world: and which [the Roman Catholic Church] proposes to man as the foundation of the whole dogmatic system.'

That the emphasis here is on the church and not on Scripture is significant; as we know, the Roman Catholic Church claims the authority to originate doctrines⁴⁵⁴⁰ by fiat through its belief in the apostolic succession of their popes....

A brief history: If, in fact, the Apostles believed God is triune, we should expect to see two things:

First, and most obviously, we would expect to see that belief expressed in the pages of the New Testament. Protestant Trinitarians claim we do, in fact, see such an expression in Matthew.⁴⁵⁴¹ We'll examine this verse later. Second, we should expect to see the trinity spoken of or taught in some form by the Apostle's disciples. Those charged by the Apostles to lead Christians after their death were expected to preserve the teachings of the Apostles and pass them uncontaminated to future generations of Christian converts.

The Apostles' preoccupation with doctrinal purity in their later writings is striking. They explicitly and repeatedly instructed their younger members and assistants to preserve the faith once delivered and remove from their fellowships, or otherwise avoid, those who brought in damnable heresies.⁴⁵⁴²

So, if the belief in a triune God was one of the doctrines to be preserved, we should see a reflection of that in the writings of the next generation of leaders whose job it was to carry out this duty.

If the Trinity was not one of the doctrines to be preserved, we would expect to see the triune nature of God not taught or spoken of by the Apostles' successors. And that is precisely what we see.

The Apostolic Fathers: 'Apostolic Fathers' is the name given by theologians to the men purported to be pupils of the Apostles. They included Barnabus (not the Barnabus of Acts), Clement of Rome, Hermas, Ignatius, Papias, Polycarp, and the author of the epistle to Diogenetus.

It is Clement, Ignatius, and Polycarp, however, who are the undisputed students of the Apostles. Their careers span roughly the end of the first- and the first half of the second-centuries.

The writings of this period are fragmentary with respect to the nature of God. They do not reflect an effort to systematise—or even analyse, it seems—Christians' beliefs about the nature of God. Nevertheless, there are scattered references from these men that bear on the subject.

The most important feature to note in the writings of the Apostolic Fathers is that all the direct references to the Godhead are dyadic, or two-centred, in nature. Such references are found in Barnabus I and especially Ignatius who wrote: 'There is one God, Who has revealed Himself through His Son Jesus Christ, Who is

⁴⁵⁴⁰ Cox, Wade, C.C.G., paper p095, *The Millennium and the Rapture*, p.6:

'Gregory of Nazianus, Gregory of Nissa, and Basil of Cæsarea are the three who developed the doctrine of the Trinity. They were the founders of the Roman Catholic Church.'

⁴⁵⁴¹ Mat 28:19

⁴⁵⁴² Acts 20:29,30; II Tim 3:13–4:5; II Peter 2:1-3; I John 2:18-23,4:1-3; II John 7-11; Jude 1-25

His Word emerging from silence.⁴⁵⁴³ Ignatius consistently expressed the Godhead in dyadic terms (the Father and Son).

This is not to say that there is no mention of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit together in their writings. For instance, Clement of Rome asks: 'Have we not [all] one God and one Christ? Is there not one Spirit of grace poured out upon us?' And the Didache⁴⁵⁴⁴ specifies baptism in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. (The authorship of the Didache is uncertain).

But nowhere in the writings we have from this period is God spoken of as a triune. Nowhere are the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit spoken of as one being. And, of course, nowhere does the term 'Trinity' appear.

When speaking of the Godhead specifically, the writings of these men always mimic the dyadic, or two-centred, expressions of their theological forebears, the Apostles.⁴⁵⁴⁵ About this point there is no dispute among church historians. As a last resort, some have suggested that the Apostolic Fathers did understand God as a triune, but we just don't have a record of it.⁴⁵⁴⁶

If this is true, then certainly we should at last find a clear expression of Trinitarianism in the next generation of leaders. Once again, we do not.

The Apologists: The next generation of writers whose works have passed down to us have been called the Apologists. They were the first to feel the need to justify the teachings of the Christian faith to philosophical schools steeped in contemporary currents of Greek thought.⁴⁵⁴⁷

Their aim was to prove to the Greek intelligentsia that Christianity was true philosophy; in fact, that it was that thing to which all true philosophy pointed. Accomplishing this required, however, that they demonstrate the rationality of their beliefs at every turn and explain with precision their theological claims.⁴⁵⁴⁸

Thus the Apologists were the first theologians to attempt to engineer a rational construct of the relationship between Jesus and the Father. Their careers span roughly the second half of the second-century.

Since the Apologists' principal preoccupation was with the pre-existent relationship of the Father and the Son, they referred often to the Logos of John,⁴⁵⁴⁹ often suggesting it as an expression of the Son being the Father's thought or mind.⁴⁵⁵⁰

⁴⁵⁴³ epistle to the Magnesians, 8:2

⁴⁵⁴⁴ Didache 7:1-3

⁴⁵⁴⁵ this is pushing the connection to extremes in some cases; as found in passages like Rom 1:1; 15:6; I Cor 3:23,8:6,11:3,15:24-28; Gal 1:3; Eph 1:2,17,3:14,5:20,6:23; Philp 4:21,22; Col 2:2,3:17; I Thes 3:11; II Thes 2:16; I Tim 1:2,6:13; Titus 1:4; Phmn 3; II Peter 1:1,2; II John 3

⁴⁵⁴⁶ i.e., claiming that it is an argument from silence.

⁴⁵⁴⁷ sadly, an exercise of complete worthlessness, since those holding the tenets of human philosophy have no hope of grasping spiritual truth; their homespun 'wisdom' blinds them.

⁴⁵⁴⁸ in accordance with the rules of Greek 'rational' thought.

⁴⁵⁴⁹ importing its Gnostic usage in the minds of the philosophers.

⁴⁵⁵⁰ Gnostic again.

This is especially seen in Justin Martyr,⁴⁵⁵¹ his disciple Tatian,⁴⁵⁵² and Theophilus of Antioch.⁴⁵⁵³ But there is no clear doctrine in any of their writings of the precise nature of the Godhead, nor is there even a widely accepted understanding of the relationships between the Father and Son.

On the contrary, in these writings there is freewheeling speculation about the eternal Godhead; for instance, the assertion is made in this period that the Logos did not have personality until His generation.⁴⁵⁵⁴

Similarly, the material about the Spirit from this period is all over the map. Athenagoras equated it with the Wisdom of the Old Testament,⁴⁵⁵⁵ Justin suggests the Spirit and the Logos were really one and the same,⁴⁵⁵⁶ and Tatian doubted the existence of the Spirit at all.⁴⁵⁵⁷

There is, incidentally, no suggestion in any of the writings from this period that the spirit is a ground of consciousness distinct from the Father and Son.

As with the previous generation of leaders, there is no mention in the writings of the apologists of a triune God. In fact, there is no effort to systematise their beliefs about the composition of the Godhead at all. Once again, this is not a subject of debate among historians.

But in this period we do see critical first steps made in the development of Trinitarian expression. The first was made by a man named Athenagoras, who introduced the term 'triad,' referring to three 'types': God, His Word, and His Wisdom.⁴⁵⁵⁸ He later speaks of Christians as men who 'acknowledge the Father, God the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and declare both their power in union and their distinction in order.'⁴⁵⁵⁹

Theophilus of Antioch, speaking of the creation week, wrote: 'In like manner the three days which were before the luminaries, are types of the trinity, of God, and His Word, and His Wisdom.'⁴⁵⁶⁰ There is no question that we are seeing, if not Trinitarian doctrine proper, certainly a primitive Trinitarian terminology.

But we should note that neither Athenagoras nor Theophilus in any way suggests that God is triune: three persons in one being. They were simply attaching terms, namely 'triad' and 'trinity,' to the three known entities of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.⁴⁵⁶¹ As we will see, it was left to later generations of thinkers to develop the notion of 'trinity' as it has come down to us today through the Trinity doctrine.

⁴⁵⁵¹ Martyr, Justin, *First Apology*, 5.4;46.3,59,63.10,64.5; *Second Apology*, 6.3,10.1,2

⁴⁵⁵² Tatian, *Oration to the Greeks*, 7.1,2

⁴⁵⁵³ Theophilus of Antioch, *To Autolychus*, 2.10

⁴⁵⁵⁴ yet another Gnostic idea.

⁴⁵⁵⁵ Athenagoras, *To Autolychus*, 1.7,2.18

⁴⁵⁵⁶ Martyr, Justin, *First Apology*, 33.4f.,33.9,36.1

⁴⁵⁵⁷ Tatian, *Oration to the Greeks*, 13.3

⁴⁵⁵⁸ Athenagoras, *To Autolychus*, 2.15

⁴⁵⁵⁹ Athenagoras, *A Plea for the Christians*, 10.3

⁴⁵⁶⁰ *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Theophilus to Autolychus

⁴⁵⁶¹ actually, the third was termed Wisdom, presumably deriving from its frequent use throughout the book of Proverbs.

Irenæus: Irenæus is generally recognised as the first true theologian of the post-apostolic era. His greatest work is considered *Against Heresies*, written sometime toward the end of the second century.⁴⁵⁶² Irenæus was a contemporary of the Apologists, but, unlike them, he had little interest in demonstrating Christianity's compatibility with Greek philosophy. He was a bishop, and his interest was in preserving and defending the faith. Thus his writings on the nature of God were developed largely as a reaction to gnosticism, the principal doctrinal threat of the period.

But he does offer two statements that touch upon our subject: '[We] should know that He which made and formed and nourishes us by means of the creation, establishing all things by His Word, and binding them together by His Wisdom—this is he who is only true God.'⁴⁵⁶³

Theologians came later to term such practical expressions of the distinct work of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit as 'economic Trinitarianism.' That is to say, although there is no expression here of triunity of being, there is an expression of unity of action; that is, the three have different tasks but work together to accomplish them.

The third-century: The third-century saw great growth in theological speculation as theologians for the first time made a concerted effort to harmonise Hebrew monotheism with belief in the divinity of both the Father and Son. Thus, much of this thinking centred upon the person and nature of the Word–Son–Christ, and the theological category of Christology was born. The explosion of Christological ideas in this century revolved, not around the composition and organisation of the Godhead per se, but in reconciling the divine and human natures of Jesus of Nazareth.

The work of Tertullian and Origen, however, is relevant to our subject and should be mentioned.

Tertullian: It was Tertullian who gained recognition for his use of the term 'Trinity'⁴⁵⁶⁴ and for Trinitarianism proper. It was Tertullian who first strongly related the Spirit to the Godhead, and his formula 'one substance, three persons' served as a template upon which the final work would be patterned in the next century.

The reason more work needed to be done is that his Latin persona did not have the same meaning that 'person' came to mean. The sense of persona was that of a mask that ancient actors wore to play a stage role. Neither the Greek nor Latin word carried with it the same sense of independent self-consciousness that we associate with the term person.⁴⁵⁶⁵ That, and the issue of co-equality of the Spirit, critical to the final formulation of the Trinity, were left for others to sort out.

But Tertullian's breakthrough was that, unlike thinkers before him, he did not vacillate between dyadism and triadism. He was resolutely triadic and more very nearly Trinitarian in the fourth-century sense.

⁴⁵⁶² between 180–200AD.

⁴⁵⁶³ Irenæus, *Against Heresies*, 3.24.2

⁴⁵⁶⁴ from the Latin: trinitas.

⁴⁵⁶⁵ Erickson, Millard J., *God in Three Persons*, pp.6,7

This is clear when he refers to: 'the mystery of the economy, which distributes the unity into Trinity, setting forth the Father, Son, and Spirit, as three.'⁴⁵⁶⁶ He accomplishes this by insisting that the Spirit is itself a persona, as the 'deputy' of the Son.⁴⁵⁶⁷

Tertullian's writing by no means ended the discussion. For instance, his suggestion that the Holy Spirit is a deputy of the Son would someday be scrapped in favour of the idea that the Holy Spirit is entirely coequal with the Father and Son. For this reason, Tertullian's writings on the nature of God would be considered heresy among the orthodox today.

But there is no question that Tertullian pushed the discussion of the nature of the Godhead irrevocably forward to the next century, when his ideas would be adapted to form the Trinitarian creeds.

Origen: Origen, as perhaps the premier theologian of this period, also contributed to the development of the Trinity. His chief contribution was in his suggestion of hypostases, with the meaning of individual subsistence, over against the prevailing view to that time, modalism, which tended to treat the Father and Son as only modes of activity within a single being.⁴⁵⁶⁸

Hupostases

[In the third verse of Hebrews]⁴⁵⁶⁹ '[t]he word translated 'person' in the Greek is hupostases. Early translators reconfigured its meaning to correspond with its later Greek philosophical definition in order to accommodate the conception of the Trinity, which by their time was established as dogma. However, the Bible itself defines it for us clearly. Every time Paul meant 'person' he used the word prosopon; every time he meant 'an underlying foundation as in ground of confidence' he used hupostases, and that is the only way he used it and the only way it is used in the Bible. Had hupostases been translated here in the same manner as in its other occurrences in Scripture, the meaning would have been so clear that it could never have been used as a proof-text for Trinitarians. What Paul was saying can be made clear and eliminate all possibility of using this Scripture as a Trinitarian proof-text. Let's note there are three more words to consider in this passage: The Greek word translated as "brightness,"⁴⁵⁷⁰ means "effulgence, light or splendour emitted or issuing from a luminous body—hence, radiating." The word "glory," comes from the original Greek word meaning "thought or opinion," hence, God's opinion marks the true value of things. In brief, it can mean appearance and reputationIn the Bible it refers to the recognition, honour or renown belonging to a person....In reference to God it indicates His character and all that is excellent in God's Character; all the He is about." The word translated as

⁴⁵⁶⁶ Tertullian, *Against Praxeus*, 2

⁴⁵⁶⁷ Tertullian, *Prescription of Heretics*, 18

⁴⁵⁶⁸ Erickson, Millard J., *God in Three Persons*, p.71

⁴⁵⁶⁹ Heb 1:3 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets), 'Who being the brightness of his [i.e., the Father's] glory, and the express image of his person.'

⁴⁵⁷⁰ Greek: apaugasasma—only place used in the Bible; Zodhiates, Th.D., #541

“express image”⁴⁵⁷¹ meant an engraver or an engraving tool “(the ter suffix signifies agency). Later it meant the impression itself, usually something engraved, cut in, or stamped....This impression with its particular features was considered as the exact representation of the object whose image it bore.” So, placing the proper meanings into Scripture opens up a whole new significance. We now see Paul’s statement [as]: “God....has spoken unto us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, by whom he also made the worlds;⁴⁵⁷² Who⁴⁵⁷³ being the light that reveals⁴⁵⁷⁴ all that is excellent in God—His character and reputation; and is the engraver and engraving tool⁴⁵⁷⁵ and the engraving,⁴⁵⁷⁶ the underlying foundation of God’s confidence;⁴⁵⁷⁷ and upholding⁴⁵⁷⁸ all things by the word⁴⁵⁷⁹ of His power,⁴⁵⁸⁰ when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become so much better than the angels, as He had by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.”⁴⁵⁸¹

‘Origen is more dyadic in his concerns than Tertullian; his primary focus is the relationship between the Father and Son. But he insists that the Spirit is: ‘the most honourable of all the things brought into existence by the Word, the chief in rank of all the beings originated by the Father through Christ.’⁴⁵⁸²

Notice here that, like Tertullian, Origen did not consider the Spirit co-equal with the Father or, for that matter, the Son, for Origen considers the Son to be derivative of the Father, as ‘secondary God,’⁴⁵⁸³ nevertheless, Origen’s contribution of hypostasis was critical for the trinity’s development into the fourth-century.

The fourth-century and the road to Nicæa: By this time a massive theological dispute had emerged, and pope [sic] Dionysius wanted it resolved. The two major streams of thought among theologians to this point were Monarchianism, with its monotheistic emphasis, over against reverence for what had by then become known as the ‘divine trias,’ Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, which obviously involved some sense of plurality.

To avert an ecclesiastical split, Pope Dionysius ordered nothing less than the conflict among theologians be resolved, but that both streams of thought be preserved. This was an extraordinary task, but it

⁴⁵⁷¹ Greek: character; Zodhiates, Th. D., #5481

⁴⁵⁷² Heb 1:1,2

⁴⁵⁷³ at the time Paul was sitting there writing Jesus had already been made better than the angels, and had by inheritance already obtained a more excellent name; in other words, the resurrected Jesus Christ, a separate Being from God the Father.

⁴⁵⁷⁴ light, effulgence as it emits or radiates from a luminous body (a light source) to reveal and make visible what would otherwise not be seen.

⁴⁵⁷⁵ as in engraving, carving, stamping, writing.

⁴⁵⁷⁶ being written in our hearts.

⁴⁵⁷⁷ Christ is the Plan, and also the assurance, guarantee, proof that God’s Plan is being spoken, written and accomplished: the Word now being engraved and sealed in our hearts.

⁴⁵⁷⁸ viz., ‘governing.’

⁴⁵⁷⁹ viz., ‘command.’

⁴⁵⁸⁰ viz., ‘will.’

⁴⁵⁸¹ Lacey, Lon, *Who and What was Jesus—Was He a Man, God, or Both?* Footnote 7

⁴⁵⁸² Origen, *Commentary on John*, 2.10.75

⁴⁵⁸³ Origen, *Against Celcus*, 5.39

provided the theological direction and momentum necessary to finally arrive at the creedal formulations of Nicæa and Constantinople.

As it happened, that effort would be distorted somewhat by a related but somewhat different theological and ecclesiastical emergency: the Christological controversy precipitated by Arius.

Arius's exegesis of Proverbs,⁴⁵⁸⁴ together with the strongly monotheistic ['Shema,']⁴⁵⁸⁵ led him and his followers to the conviction that it was impossible that the Son was eternal. Therefore, they reasoned, he must have been brought into being from some non-eternal substance at some point from the single, original God (Father). In other words, the Word was a creation of the Father, not co-eternal with the Father.

Arius's ideas were so persuasive, and so divisive, that the emperor of the Roman Empire felt forced at last to intervene.⁴⁵⁸⁶

The Council of Nicæa: To stave off a political crisis, Emperor Constantine, a newly minted Christian convert, called for a council of bishops at Nicæa.⁴⁵⁸⁷ About three hundred bishops attended, and they were ordered to settle once and for all the theological disputes plaguing the (by now) Catholic Church;⁴⁵⁸⁸ indeed, the entire empire.

After much discussion, and not a little politicking, a formal creed was developed, drafted as an outright repudiation of Arianism: 'We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of all things, visible and invisible, and in One Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, begotten of the Father (the only-begotten, that is, of the essence of the Father, God of God), Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father; by whom all things were made (both in heaven and on earth); who for us men, and for our salvation came down and was incarnate and became man; he suffered, and the third day he rose again, ascended into heaven; from whence he will come to judge the quick and the dead. And in the Holy Ghost.'

By proclaiming Jesus Christ as one substance⁴⁵⁸⁹ with the Father, this creed proclaimed that the Son is not of any derivation but the Father, an open repudiation of Arianism.

Somewhat contrary to historic teaching, the creed drafted at Nicæa does not quite explicate the triunity of the Godhead; its purpose was to proclaim the full divinity of the Son in reaction to Arianism.

⁴⁵⁸⁴ Prov 8:22-31

⁴⁵⁸⁵ Deut 6:4

⁴⁵⁸⁶ one of the major reasons why Arius (260–336AD) denied that the Son had existed co-eternally with the Father as the Word was because he applied Plato's concept of the indivisible Monas to God the Father, as he interpreted Scripture. Plato also considered the attributes of the indivisible Monas, or First Cause, to be incommunicable, meaning they couldn't be shared with any other entity outside of itself. Following this 'logic,' Arius denied that the Son had the attributes of the Father, such as eternity and omniscience. He placed the Son, whom he labelled the 'Duas'—another Platonic term—between the created world and God as a kind of demigod, who was neither fully God nor only man. Arius' concept of Jesus Christ is similar to Plato's portrayal of the Demiurge in his dialogue the *Timæus*, as the semi-divine actual creator of the material universe, but his attributes were finite, not infinite.

⁴⁵⁸⁷ in 325AD

⁴⁵⁸⁸ q.v. sup. for a more compelling date for the start of the Roman church in terms of worldly power and authority.

⁴⁵⁸⁹ Greek: homoousios.

Trinitarianism, as it has come to be understood, is not expressed here because there is no resolution yet of the personhood of the Holy Spirit, as is plainly evident in the briefest possible comment made in the creed about the Spirit.

So here we see a [waymark] on the road to the Trinity, but not yet full Trinitarianism. That will have to wait for the development of ideas about the nature of the Holy Spirit by the 'Three Cappadocians' and the subsequent council of Constantinople.⁴⁵⁹⁰

'With the seeds of the trinity cultivated at Nicæa, it took many years for this doctrine to become deeply ingrained in Catholic thought. Eventually it took hold and has stayed firmly in place. In fact, none of the Protestant sects that separated during the [sixteenth-century] ever questioned its validity. It had become blindly accepted, despite its completely non-biblical origins. The Protestant acceptance of this doctrine is succinctly expressed in this way: "In regard to the Trinity, Protestantism has nothing very new to say..."^{4591 4592}

The road to Constantinople: Arianism did not die easily, in spite of the Nicæan council's proclamation. In the following decades, in fact, Arianism was widely taught, and one of the few public figures to make a strenuous attempt to head it off was Athanasius.

Athanasius championed the creed of Nicæa as a bulwark against Arian heresy and encouraged theologians to further develop its conclusions. These included the 'Three Cappadocians,' Basil, Gregory of Nazianzus, and Gregory of Nyssa. Their work revolved primarily around the nature of the Holy Spirit.

Ideas promulgated about the nature of the Holy Spirit in this time were legion. The Spirit was, depending upon whom you spoke to, either a nonentity, the Logos, an impersonal power brought forth by the Logos

⁴⁵⁹⁰ Fakhoury, Gary, *The Journal*, paper entitled, 'History of the Trinity: Who Developed the Trinity Doctrine?' (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁴⁵⁹¹ *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 11th. ed., vol. 26, p.780

⁴⁵⁹² even the Catholic church recognizes that any who study the trinity should do so with "qualifiers" in mind. Notice the candour with which the *New Catholic Encyclopedia* talks about this teaching:

'...one should not speak of Trinitarianism in the New Testament without serious qualification...when one does speak of an unqualified Trinitarianism, one has moved from the period of Christian origins to, say, the last quadrant of the 4th century. It was only then that what might be called the definitive Trinitarian dogma 'one God in three Persons' became thoroughly assimilated into Christian life and thought. Herein lies the difficulty. On the one hand, it was the dogmatic formula 'one God in three Persons' that would henceforth for more than fifteen centuries structure and guide the Trinitarian essence of the Christian message...On the other hand, the formula itself does not reflect the immediate consciousness of the period of origins; it was the product of three centuries of doctrinal development.'

This is an astonishing admission! In other words, the idea of "three beings in one God" did not originate with the New Testament church. Neither Christ nor the original twelve apostles taught it. Nor did Paul. The *New Catholic Encyclopedia* readily admits this, and as much as declares openly that the idea was derived from outside the body of Scripture.' Remember, the term "trinity" is found *nowhere* in Scripture. Nor are the phrases "three-in-one," "triune god" or any similar term.

Let's establish this as an admission from Trinitarians; *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, 'Trinity':

'The term 'Trinity' is not a Biblical term, and we are not using Biblical language when we define what is expressed by it as the doctrine.'

Harper's *Bible Dictionary*, pp. 1098,1099 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'The word [Trinity] does not occur in the Bible...The formal doctrine of the Trinity as it was defined by the great church councils of the fourth and fifth centuries is not to be found in the N.T. [New Testament].'

after His ascension, a created divine being, an angel, a second derivation of the Father, the 'Wisdom' of the Old Testament, or a fully-fledged person of the Godhead.⁴⁵⁹³

The three Cappadocians well understood the problem they faced vis-a-vis Scripture, for it was not explicit about the Spirit's 'nature.' As Gregory of Nazianzus explained: '[Scripture did not] very clearly or very often call Him God in so many words, as it does first the Father, and later on the Son.'⁴⁵⁹⁴

So most of their work would entail reasoning from what *is* in the Scripture to arrive at some kind of extrapolated conclusion. For instance, they noted the divine titles, qualities and operations given to the Spirit; especially '*Holy*,' which Gregory of Nazianzus took to imply the 'fulfilment of His nature,' concluding therefore that the Holy Spirit must be sanctified by nature, not sanctified by some primary source.

Thus the Spirit, Basil argued, was not to be thought of as holy only by association, but by nature.⁴⁵⁹⁵ After all, he asked himself, if it was the Spirit who regenerated and sanctified, how could He be anything less than divine?⁴⁵⁹⁶

Furthermore, Basil argued, 'spirit' itself necessarily meant unchangeable and eternal.⁴⁵⁹⁷ This, combined with the inclusion of the name of the Holy Spirit in the tripartite baptismal formula that had, by then, become standard practice,⁴⁵⁹⁸ led Basil to conclude that rejecting the deity of the Holy Spirit was tantamount to setting aside the very essence of salvation itself.⁴⁵⁹⁹

These reasonings formed the basis of the creed adopted at the council of Constantinople,⁴⁶⁰⁰ which finally proclaimed the Holy Spirit as a person co-equal and co-essential to the Father and Son. Thus the formal doctrine of the Trinity was complete: 'one ousia, three hypostases,' or, roughly, 'one substance, three distinct grounds of being.' From this is derived the simplest and most popular Trinitarian formula: 'one God in three persons.'

[Sixth-century: One-and-a-half centuries after the council of Constantinople adopted Trinitarianism, the Roman Catholic Church issued the Justinian Code⁴⁶⁰¹ that declared death for two heresies in general:

1. Anti-Trinitarianism; and,
2. Rebaptism outside the Roman church].

⁴⁵⁹³ Erickson, Millard J., *God in Three Persons*, pp.87,88

⁴⁵⁹⁴ Gregory of Nazianzus, *Orations*, 31:12

⁴⁵⁹⁵ Cyril of Alexandria, *Dialogues of the Trinity*, 7

⁴⁵⁹⁶ Gregory of Nazianzus, *Orations*, 40:44

⁴⁵⁹⁷ Basil, *Holy Spirit*, 9.22

⁴⁵⁹⁸ q.v. Mat 28:19 comments inf.

⁴⁵⁹⁹ Basil, *Holy Spirit*, 10.26

⁴⁶⁰⁰ in 381AD

⁴⁶⁰¹ in 529AD

Conclusion: The pages of history reveal a remarkably clear, step-by-step evolution in thought from dyadic expressions regarding the Godhead (the expression of the existence of a divine Father and Son) early in the post-apostolic period to triunity (an expression of three co-equal persons unified in a divine being) some three centuries later.

The record of history shows the earliest triune expression appears not until the third century, from the pen of Tertullian. Triunity in its final understanding was not accomplished until the late fourth-century at Constantinople.⁴⁶⁰²

References to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit abound in various places before Tertullian, as we saw, but none of them claims that the three are one essential God being, which is the fundamental claim of Trinitarianism.

In all, the record of history is clear. Trinitarianism was devised by theologians at the behest of officials of the Roman Catholic Church. Its fundamentals date back only as far as the third-century, and there is no evidence anyone believed it or taught it before this period.

Therefore, those who teach the Trinity as fact do so not on the authority of Jesus, His apostles, or even their successors, for they did not teach this doctrine. Indeed, they could not have taught this doctrine, or else all the theological development we [see] in succeeding centuries would not have been necessary.

The only authority Trinitarians can fairly appeal to is officials of the Roman Catholic Church, for it is they who persuaded theologians of the fourth-century to develop this doctrine, and it is they who declared it orthodox belief, which it has remained in Christendom ever since.⁴⁶⁰³

While the idea of a 'divine trinity' has been seen from the writings of Hislop to be of considerable antiquity, pre-dating Christianity by millennia, its route into mainstream or orthodox Christendom was one of comparatively recent vintage, only occurring about or after the time of the church's flight into the wilderness for its own protection. It had and has no part in Judæo-Christianity.

Mat 28:19

Fakhoury then goes on to discuss the authenticity of the '*Father, Son, and Holy Spirit*' wording appearing in Matthew,⁴⁶⁰⁴ concluding that it is most likely a later, non-scriptural addition supplied by the hand of a Trinitarian editor or one with Trinitarian sympathies. Despite this, he is forced to admit that: 'Although it is true that

⁴⁶⁰² later ratified at the council of Chalcedon, in 451AD.

⁴⁶⁰³ Fakhoury, Gary, *The Journal*, paper entitled, 'History of the Trinity: Who Developed the Trinity Doctrine?' (with added comment and clarification in square brackets); the existence of officials of the formal Roman Catholic Church in that century is more than a touch anticipatory, q.v. sup.

⁴⁶⁰⁴ Mat 28:19

there is no similar evidence⁴⁶⁰⁵ that [the verse] was added at such a late date (the verse appears in all major texts), it is not impossible that it too was added by an editor of Matthew's gospel early enough to be included in the earliest texts we now have, dating back from approximately the third-century.

Some might be wondering, if [the text] is spurious, does this mean that Jesus gave no final commission to the Apostles to preach the gospel? No, because it is entirely possible that only the tripartite formula was added to the text.⁴⁶⁰⁶

This is a classic argument from silence, and, moreover, the entire of the earliest manuscript evidence is to the contrary, all major texts confirm the wording: *'Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.'*⁴⁶⁰⁷

Like many textual critics before him, Fakhoury makes much play on the wording found in Acts, the *'baptism of Jesus,'*⁴⁶⁰⁸ to cast doubt on the authenticity of the wording in Matthew. But no account is taken of the possibility that the baptism of Jesus could simply be a common, foreshortened, or idiomatic version of the full wording given by our Lord.

Throughout the book of Acts, whenever parties presented themselves for baptism they were baptised. In the case of Simon in chapter eight, however, an earlier baptism *'in the name of the Lord Jesus,'*⁴⁶⁰⁹ was not made good subsequently by Peter and John, for it was patent that Simon only wished to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit for the purposes of self-aggrandisement, power, and financial gain. The Lord is the One granting the gift of the Holy Spirit, therefore it is the Lord who remits sin. It is evident that the form of words, *'baptism in Jesus' name,'* is not the critical form. It failed with Simon Magus, for the reason given, and any attempt to erect a scaffold around *'Jesus' name'* while seeking to impugn the wording in Matthew, in circumstances where there is not a shred of supporting textual authority, is less than wise.

On the basis of the evidence to hand, the text, as it appears in the K.J.V.,⁴⁶¹⁰ must be regarded as authentic.

⁴⁶⁰⁵ referring to the case in I John 5:7

⁴⁶⁰⁶ Fakhoury, Gary, *The Journal*, paper entitled, 'History of the Trinity: Who Developed the Trinity Doctrine?' (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁴⁶⁰⁷ Mat 28:19,20

⁴⁶⁰⁸ Acts 2:38,8:16,10:48,19:5,22:16

⁴⁶⁰⁹ Acts 8:15,16

⁴⁶¹⁰ Mat 28:19,20

Questions for Romish Trinitarians

Hereunder are just a short selection of the many fundamental questions which must be put to Romish Trinitarians who believe in three hupostates, but with only one appearing at any time. If their contention be so, then how could it be possible for:

1. Jesus Christ to receive revelation from His Father?;⁴⁶¹¹
2. Jesus Christ to sit at the right hand of His Father?;⁴⁶¹²
3. Jesus Christ to sit with His Father?;⁴⁶¹³
4. The head of Christ to be God the Father?;⁴⁶¹⁴
5. Jesus Christ to be the Son of God?;⁴⁶¹⁵
6. Jesus Christ to call out to God the Father?;⁴⁶¹⁶
7. Jesus Christ to be raised from the dead?;⁴⁶¹⁷
8. Jesus Christ to ascend to God the Father?;⁴⁶¹⁸
9. A divine Being to beget Himself?;⁴⁶¹⁹
10. A divine Being to mediate between Himself and man?;⁴⁶²⁰
11. Jesus Christ to be an advocate with the Father?;⁴⁶²¹
12. The Word and God (the Father) to have existed eternally?;⁴⁶²²
13. Jesus Christ to receive a command from His Father?;⁴⁶²³
14. Jesus Christ to have been sent by the Father?;⁴⁶²⁴
15. Jesus Christ to differentiate Himself and the Father?;⁴⁶²⁵

⁴⁶¹¹ Rev 1:1

⁴⁶¹² Psa 110:1

⁴⁶¹³ Rev 3:21

⁴⁶¹⁴ I Cor 11:3

⁴⁶¹⁵ Mark 5:7; Col 1:3; I Thes 3:11

⁴⁶¹⁶ Mat 27:46; Mark 15:34

⁴⁶¹⁷ I Peter 1:19-21

⁴⁶¹⁸ John 20:17

⁴⁶¹⁹ John 3:16

⁴⁶²⁰ I Tim 2:5

⁴⁶²¹ I John 2:1

⁴⁶²² John 1:1-3

⁴⁶²³ John 10:18

⁴⁶²⁴ John 4:34, 7:16

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16. Jesus Christ to pray to the Father?;⁴⁶²⁶
 17. The Father to hear the prayer of Christ?;⁴⁶²⁷
 18. Jesus Christ to go to His Father?;⁴⁶²⁸
 19. Jesus Christ to come from His Father and to return?;⁴⁶²⁹
 20. Jesus Christ to have seen the Father?;⁴⁶³⁰
 21. Jesus Christ to be powerless without the Father?;⁴⁶³¹
 22. Jesus Christ to receive authority from the Father?;⁴⁶³²
 23. Jesus Christ to enter into His Father's kingdom?;⁴⁶³³
 24. The Father to bestow the kingdom upon Christ?;⁴⁶³⁴
 25. Jesus Christ to confess His own before the Father?;⁴⁶³⁵ and,
 26. Jesus Christ to deny His enemies before the Father?;⁴⁶³⁶

Hidden agenda?

An interesting undertone to Fakhoury's writing on the provenance of the doctrine of the Holy Trinity that is not too evident from the content is that he does, in fact, hold to Unitarian beliefs.⁴⁶³⁷ While this is, perhaps,

⁴⁶²⁵ Mat 12:50

⁴⁶²⁶ Mat 26:39; Mark 3:35

⁴⁶²⁷ John 11:41,42

⁴⁶²⁸ John 14:28

⁴⁶²⁹ John 16:28

⁴⁶³⁰ John 6:46

⁴⁶³¹ John 5:19

⁴⁶³² John 12:49,50

⁴⁶³³ Mat 26:29; Luke 12:32

⁴⁶³⁴ Luke 22:29,30

⁴⁶³⁵ Mat 10:32-33

⁴⁶³⁶ Mat 10:32-33

⁴⁶³⁷ Unitarianism: The belief in a single, monotheistic God, denying the divinity of the Word/Jesus Christ. Radical Unitarianism denies the preincarnate existence of Christ in any form.

Unitarianism will not accept any teaching simply because it comes from the Scriptures, for it maintains that its writers were subject to error. It denies that man is essentially sinful, denies that Jesus died for our sins, maintains that He only offered to do so, strongly denies that He was God and that He was infallible, either in thought or deed. In short, it maintains that He was one of the moral leaders of mankind; nothing more, nothing less.

Unitarians believe that religion is dynamic, changing with time, circumstance, and contemporary trends and ideas. In this it is a form of pragmatism known as instrumentalism (wherein the veracity of ideas is determined by their perceived utility, and actions by their practical consequences—concepts adopted by John Dewey, the putative ‘father of modern education’). Thus, it claims, it denies absolute, propositional truth in the Scriptures. It is stated to be, above all, a ‘practical’ religion, fundamentally concerned with mundane as opposed to ‘supra-mundane’ matters. Also, God is held to be imminent (in-dwelling in the individual, as opposed to being

beyond the scope of an investigation into the history of Trinitarianism, it is relevant nonetheless, for it shows the subtle way whereby one damnable heresy can be imported under cover of an attack on yet another damnable heresy.

Snow describes Fakhoury's belief in these terms: '[O]nce it is realised that Fakhoury's superstructure of arguments rests on questionable premises, it all comes tumbling down. The four basic premises are:

1. The Old Testament evidence almost uniformly reveals God to be one Person;
2. The Jews correctly interpreted the Old Testament as for God's nature, but not Jesus' statements concerning His Deity in the New Testament;
3. It's implicitly assumed that God's revelation of His nature in the Bible is fully developed and fundamentally uniform from Genesis to Revelation. Hence, any New Testament evidence that points to Jesus being God or for multiplicity in the Godhead is dismissed by using unusual translations or interpretations of the Greek, taking alternative readings of the textual evidence, or said to be an allegory since it supposedly contradicts the Old Testament; and,

transfused into all creation, which is pantheistic) but not transcendent (supremely excellent), although in its various expositions Unitarianism sees variance in specifics.

There are other '-isms' which bear some relation to this:

Relativism: truth is ever changing;

Subjectivism: truth is purely personal;

Empiricism: truth is only what we can see;

Existentialism: truth is encounter experiences;

Rationalism: truth is purely syllogistic (that is, what we can reason);

Platonic Idealism: truth is completely abstract;

Phenomenalism: truth is events;

Pantheism: truth is synonymous with creation; god is everywhere and in everything; all the universe or nature composes an all-encompassing immanent god;

Psycho-physical Monism: truth is a blend of the seen and unseen;

Instrumentalism: truth and veracity of ideas dependent on utility;

Pragmatism: truth is whatever works, or gives the appearance of being likely to work;

Positivism (empiricism): truth is sensory experience and logical derivatives, being the only source of knowledge;

Post-Positivism (post empiricism): truth as positivism, but influenced by the observer; and,

Observationalism: truth is based on observation; presumably a form of 'W.Y.S.I.W.Y.G.'

Arianism: One of the major reasons why Arius [260–336AD] denied that the Son had existed co-eternally with the Father as the Word was because he applied Plato's concept of the indivisible Monas to God the Father, as he interpreted Scripture. Plato also considered the attributes of the indivisible Monas, or First Cause, to be incommunicable, meaning they couldn't be shared with any other entity outside of itself. Following this 'logic,' Arius denied that the Son had the attributes of the Father, such as eternity and omniscience. He placed the Son, whom he labelled the 'Duas'—another Platonic term—between the created world and God as a kind of demigod, who was neither fully God nor only man. Arius' concept of Jesus Christ is similar to Plato's portrayal of the Demiurge in his dialogue the *Timæus*, as the semi-divine actual creator of the material universe, but his attributes were finite, not infinite.

4. When a text that calls Jesus "God" can't be evaded by any other means, then it's said the word "God" doesn't mean "God" (that is, the Supreme Being who is omniscient, omnipotent, the author of creation, and all-loving), but has some lesser meaning such as "divine hero" or "an angel." Doctrine ends up dictating to grammar, instead of grammar dictating doctrine....

[Fakhoury] makes a false "trilemma" when writing: 'Either Jesus was not eternal God made flesh, or the Hebrews did not believe there is only one God being, or their writings are not, in fact, entirely sound guides for faith and doctrine.'

A fourth option is ignored, namely that the Jews have misinterpreted their own Scriptures, especially because they rejected Jesus as the Messiah and the New Testament as the further revelation of God.⁴⁶³⁸

It is clear from the analyses of Jewish beliefs⁴⁶³⁹ that Judaism is chocked-full of accretions and borrowings from paganism, and that the Jews, as the Bible says, are blinded at the moment as to the truth.⁴⁶⁴⁰ A rebuttal to Fakhoury's second insinuation—'or [else] the Hebrews did not believe there is only one God being'—is found in: 'Jewish sages before the Christian era and until about one hundred years after the destruction of the Second Temple held that there is a plurality in the Godhead, founding this belief on their interpretation of Old Testament Scripture. In fact, until today students of Jewish mysticism are confronted with this teaching.'⁴⁶⁴¹

The thrust of this investigation, apart from identifying the true nature of the Godhead and exposing the fallacy of Trinitarianism, is in exposing Unitarianism for the damnable heresy that it is. Here, the Judæo-Christian scriptural belief in two Divine Beings in the Godhead is described as dyadic. While this is correct English usage, it should be noted that the etymology of the word, although coming from Latin, does have a Greek parallel.⁴⁶⁴² Of course, this does not imply, in any way, complicity or sympathy with Arian thought on and in the use of the Platonic term.⁴⁶⁴³ Some prefer to describe the dyadic belief as Binitarianism, while others term it Ditheism. Whatever the terminology—the latter two being a deal less precise philologically—the belief is clear and soundly based on Scripture, with the Godhead comprising the Father and the Son.

The dread penalty facing those who wittingly adopt aberrant beliefs in the Godhead, despite knowing the truth, is well disclosed in the Scriptures. Unitarians deny the deity of Jesus Christ. In turn, He will deny them before the Father.⁴⁶⁴⁴ Trinitarians, for their part, worship a false, pagan triune god, which seeks to limit the family of God to three beings, when, in reality, the ultimate family will comprise the two Divine Beings in the Godhead

⁴⁶³⁸ Snow, Eric V., *Further Proof that Jesus is God—A Reply Against Gary Fakhoury, Anthony Buzzard, and Wade Cox*, pp.3,4

⁴⁶³⁹ q.v. sup.

⁴⁶⁴⁰ Rom 11:25c

⁴⁶⁴¹ Nassi, Rabbi Tzvi, in publisher's preview to *The Great Mystery or How Can Three be One?*

⁴⁶⁴² Greek: duas.

⁴⁶⁴³ viz., duas.

⁴⁶⁴⁴ Mat 10:32-33

and all the angels, referred to as '*sons of God*,'⁴⁶⁴⁵ and those humans made immortal as '*sons of God*,' as confirmed in John: '*But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.*'⁴⁶⁴⁶ Unlike current angels, the 'elect' will have crowns,⁴⁶⁴⁷ for they are to rule, qualifying through having overcome the Devil through Christ, something the angels have never had to do. Since Trinitarians worship amiss, they do not know Christ, and so cannot know the Father. As a result, the Father and Son will not recognise them.

The reward of the 'elect' is given in Revelation, '*And I will give him the morning star.*'⁴⁶⁴⁸ The identity of He who holds the title of '*morning star*' is: '*I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.*'⁴⁶⁴⁹ The '*morning star*'—a title, rather than a name—is held by Christ, as one of His many titles. At one time, the '*morning star*' title was also held by Lucifer: '*How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning!*'⁴⁶⁵⁰ The Tanakh has the final phrase: '*O shining One [sic], son of Dawn.*' Moffatt translates it: '*O shining star of the dawn!*' The '*shining star of the dawn*' is, in fact, the '*morning star.*' Given that Lucifer was an '*anointed cherub that covereth*,'⁴⁶⁵¹ before his fall in sin, the conferred rank of '*morning star*,' to be given by Christ, is that of cherub,⁴⁶⁵² and it follows that the cherubim extant at the moment, together with the archangel, hold the conferred title of '*morning star.*' Christ's holding the title, and conferring it, links Him directly to the firstfruits in His exalted position of the Firstfruit of the firstfruits.⁴⁶⁵³ Those to whom the truth is revealed, and who wittingly turn aside from that truth unto fables, are denying themselves the most wonderful life eternal, ultimately in the perfected '*new heavens and new earth*' with God the Father and God the Son, choosing instead to cast aside their current standing in the election to die in the lake of fire. So sad.

Elohim—singular?

McElwain⁴⁶⁵⁴ claims that elohim has many forms, but that it is most often singular, rather than plural.⁴⁶⁵⁵ As so-called 'evidence,' he cites a series of biblical texts dealing with singular pagan gods and makes some preposterous claims, but where, upon critical investigation:

⁴⁶⁴⁵ Job 2:1, where the reference to the '*sons of God*' is to angels.

⁴⁶⁴⁶ John 1:12; '*Sons and daughters of God*,' II Cor 6:17-18 et al, has man's destiny as the sons and daughters as created spirit beings, i.e., angels.

⁴⁶⁴⁷ Rev 2:28; also cf. Rev 2:10,3:11

⁴⁶⁴⁸ '*give him the morning star*' against Moffatt's '*shew him the morning star*'; Moffatt is wrong on this point.

⁴⁶⁴⁹ Rev 22:16b

⁴⁶⁵⁰ Isa 14:12

⁴⁶⁵¹ Ezek 28:14-16

⁴⁶⁵² q.v. 'Ranking of Angels' in the Appendix for more complete details of the rankings of those in the kingdom of God; and cp. Job 38:7.

⁴⁶⁵³ I Cor 15:20,23

⁴⁶⁵⁴ McElwain, Thomas, *The Sabbath Recorder*

⁴⁶⁵⁵ another aspect is found in the Jews' contentions over El / Eloah and Elohim:

1. The plural is wholly acceptable / correct;⁴⁶⁵⁶
2. The text is plural;⁴⁶⁵⁷ or,
3. The reference is to a pagan god's many manifestations / idols / names.⁴⁶⁵⁸

Elohim, translated 'God' in the K.J.V., has the common Hebrew plural ending -im, and is taken to be the plural-ended form of El and Eloah. As to its actual plurality, there is considerable division. Orthodox Jews maintain that it is resolutely singular, representing an absolute and indivisible God, a singleton, whereas Judæo-Christians maintain that it is uniplural and, in fact, dyadic. Elohiym, is uniplural, and a family name used in the plural sense very frequently, q.v. inf. The LXX, when translating elohim into Greek, uses the word theos, singular, but that is unsurprising given that the Septuagint was composed beginning in the 3rd.-c BC and completed in 132BC. This extended period is entirely post-Babylonian exile and post-dates the time when the Jews had adopted worship of the Babylonian monolithic deity. As such, it can be discarded as evidence.

It is sometimes claimed by Orthodox Jews that the compound quality found in say, Gen 1:5, '*first day*' and Gen 2:24, '*one flesh*' is taken by the words '*day*' and '*flesh*,' and not by '*first*' / '*one*,' which remain singular, but this falls, patently, because the flesh is united in one, and that '*flesh*' was a compound of two beings, in this case, Adam and Eve. The word '*one*' qualifies '*flesh*,' so it must be composite. For it to be otherwise would need Adam, or Eve, to absorb the other, resulting in there being one person whereas beforehand there had been two. And if it were the first day of one, then there would be no others, it would be a singleton, but it was the first day of many, a compound. So this contrary Jewish contention is obviously ridiculous and a futile attempt at dissembling.

It is also contended that certain words in Hebrew, such as chayim, 'life,' panim, 'face' or 'countenance,' and the words for sky and sea have plural form but often take singular verbs, and that this is taken to prove or bolster the plural but singular meaning contention. The point here is that the sky, facial expressions, and the sea change constantly, so there are many forms that they take, so, in each case, what is in the purview is but one of many—a clear indication of the 'plurality at a remove' seen in connection with echad, q.v. sup. For its part, life extends beyond the individual; it is held in common by all living creatures, or those of them in the particular purview, so it is either many or one of many.

Elohim is also used of pagan gods, such as Dagon, Chemosh, Astarte, Milcom, the golden calf (or two calves, if Jeroboam's later two calves were a replication) of the Israelite fall the wilderness, and so on. These are references to the many idols to those gods, even possibly to their sub-sets, known to other peoples by other names—again, an example of plurality at a remove. In Ex 7:1, God makes Moses '*a god to Pharaoh*.' Again, this is plurality at a remove, for the pharaohs had many gods.

Adonai is used in a plural form too, where it refers to one of a number, such as the servant of both Abraham and Isaac (Gen 24:9,10); Joseph being a lord of the land of Egypt (there were others, most notably pharaoh) (Gen 42:30,33); and the king of Egypt, which we now know as being one of a number simultaneously-reigning over various parts of greater Egypt (Gen 40:1).

Gesenius' *Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament*, p.49 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

The plural is used in Hebrew in a singular sense, of one [uniplural] God, constructed with a verb and / or adjective in the singular, as in Gen 1:1,3; II Kings 19:4,16; Ps 7:10,57;3,78:56, but with a plural verb in certain phrases in which Elohiym may be taken in a plural sense [regarding the two Divine Beings in their individual sense], as in Gen 1:26,3:22-24,20:13,35:7; Ex 22:8,32:4,8; II Sam 7:23; I Kings 19:2; Ps 58:12. The Godhead is found stated in I John 2:24c:

'continue in the Son, and in the Father.'

⁴⁶⁵⁶ Ex 22:20; Deut 32:39; Judg 9:27; II Kings 6:16; Dan 11:36; Hos 13:4; Jonah 1:5

⁴⁶⁵⁷ Judg 6:31 ('groves' are idols of the goddess Asheroth); 8:32 (Hebrew: baalim is plural); I Sam 5:7; I Kings 18:27 (cp. v.24); II Chron 32:15,21; Dan 1:2,3:28,4:8; Amos 5:26,8:14; Micah 4:5 (cf. Tanakh); Hab 1:11

⁴⁶⁵⁸ Judg 11:24,16:23,24; I Kings 11:33; II Kings 1:2,19:37; Isa 37:38; Nisroch: feathered eagle gods, with each feather representing an Assyrian forefather.

Chapter 59

'Sola Scriptura'

'Scripture alone'⁴⁶⁵⁹ has been the claim of Protestantism since its inception. The jibe long adopted by Roman Catholics over this claim is that Protestantism relies on much that was brought in by the Roman church acting on its own authority; things which cannot be found in the Scriptures: obvious examples being Christmas, Easter, Lent, Sunday rather than the Sabbath, and so on. But is there something more being missed in this?

Christmas & Easter

By way of but two examples, it is merely necessary to turn to the major 'Christian' festivals: Christmas⁴⁶⁶⁰ and Easter. These are both pagan holidays;⁴⁶⁶¹ the former being the Brumelia / Saturnalia, more speci-

⁴⁶⁵⁹ Sola Scriptura.

⁴⁶⁶⁰ official birthday of Mithras (pagan false messiah) q.v. sup.; designated by the Roman emperor Aurelian in 275AD.

⁴⁶⁶¹ pagan sacrificial Sabbaths, viz. days on which human sacrificial rites are performed:

December 21	Yule
February 01	Imbolg (also called Briganta and the feast of St. Bridget)
March 21	Ostara (on this day occultists worship Gaia)
May 01	Beltaine
June 21	Litha
August 01	Lughnasadh
September 21	Mabon
October 29-31	Samhain

fically the 'Birthday of the Invincible Sun,'⁴⁶⁶² deriving from the Babylonian feast of Nimrod; the latter the feast of Astarte / Semiramis, deriving from the Babylonian feast of Semiramis, Nimrod's wife. These were both imported into the so-called 'Christian credo' by the Roman church, with little more than a name change to lightly disguise the affair. The obscene process which led apostate 'Christianity' to clothe herself in the garments of paganism began early in the history of the declension of what still held herself to be 'the true church.'

Passover was renamed 'Easter,' which derives from terms used by the Norsemen to refer to the season of the rising sun.⁴⁶⁶³ According to Bede,⁴⁶⁶⁴ the 'father of English history,' the English word Easter is derived from Eastre, an Anglo-Saxon spring goddess, to whom sacrifices were offered at the vernal equinox.⁴⁶⁶⁵

Other direct Astarte-originated derivatives apparent in our own time include the hot cross bun, deriving from boun,⁴⁶⁶⁶ further expounded by Hislop: 'The hot cross buns of Good Friday, and the dyed eggs of Pasch⁴⁶⁶⁷ or Easter Sunday, figured in the Chaldean rites just as they do now. The "buns" known too by that identical name, were used in the worship of the queen of heaven, the goddess Easter, as early as the days of Cecrops, the founder of Athens—that is, one thousand, five hundred years before the Christian era. "One species of sacred bread," said Bryant, "which used to be offered to the gods, was of great antiquity, and called Boun." Diogenes Laertius, speaking of this offering being made by Empedocles, describes the chief ingredients of which it was composed, saying, "He offered one of the sacred cakes called Boun, which was made of fine flour and honey." The prophet Jeremiah takes notice of this kind of offering when he says, "*The children gather wood, the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead their dough, to make cakes to the queen of heaven.*" Hot cross buns are not now offered, but eaten, on the festival of Astarte; but this leaves no doubt as to whence they have been derived.'⁴⁶⁶⁸

Likewise, with Easter eggs: 'The origin of the Pasch eggs is just as clear. The ancient druids bore an egg, as the sacred emblem of their order. In the Dionysiaca, or mysteries of Bacchus, as celebrated in Athens,

⁴⁶⁶² Latin: Natalis Solis Invicti.

⁴⁶⁶³ Eostre, Eastur, Ostara, Ostar; Eastre was also the name of an Anglo-Saxon Spring goddess.

⁴⁶⁶⁴ c.673–735AD

⁴⁶⁶⁵ Broadhurst, Arthur G., *The Possibility of Christian Humanism* (with added comment and clarification in square brackets), notes that:

'It is probable that Eostra / Ostara is the Anglo-Saxon version of Ishtar, the Sumerian goddess of love and war who in Canaan evolved into a moon goddess and wife of Baal [sic]. According to Summerian lore, Ishtar was the wife of the Summerian god, Tammuz. Both are spoken of in the Bible—Tammuz in Ezek 8:14, and Ishtar, called Ashteroth and Queen of Heaven in Judg 2:13, Jer 44:17, and elsewhere.

When Tammuz died, Ishtar followed him to the underworld, leaving the earth deprived of its fertility. She and Tammuz were rescued from death when the Queen of the Dead allowed a heavenly messenger to return to the light of the sun for six months of each year. For the other six they had to return to the land of death.

The worship of Ishtar as a nature goddess has spread throughout the ancient world. In Phœnicia and Syria her name has become Astarte. Her husband, earlier called Baal [also Bel], and known as Tammuz further east, became Adon and Adonai in Phœnicia and Syria. In Greece, Ishtar and Tammuz became Aphrodite and Adonis; in Asia Minor they became Cybele and Attis. Diana of the Ephesians (Acts 19:27) probably traces to Ishtar.'

⁴⁶⁶⁶ *Bryant's Mythology*, Vol. I, p.373

⁴⁶⁶⁷ the heavily paganized ceremony kept by the Celtic Church in Britain before the introduction of Roman Catholicism.

⁴⁶⁶⁸ Hislop, Alexander, *The Two Babylons*, pp.107,108

one part of the nocturnal ceremony consisted in the consecration of an egg. The Hindoo fables celebrate their mundane egg as of a golden colour. In China, at this hour, dyed or painted eggs are used on sacred festivals, even as in this country. In ancient times eggs were used in the religious rites of the Egyptians and the Greeks, and were hung up for mystic purposes in their temples. From Egypt these sacred eggs can be distinctly traced to the banks of the Euphrates. The classic poets are full of the fable of the mystic egg of the Babylonians...."An egg of wondrous size is said to have fallen from heaven into the river Euphrates. The fishes rolled it to the bank, where the doves having settled upon it, and hatched it, out came Venus, who afterwards was called the Syrian Goddess"—that is, Astarte. Hence the egg became one of the symbols of Astarte or Easter; and accordingly, in Cyprus, one of the chosen seats of the worship of Venus, or Astarte, the egg of wondrous size was represented on a grand scale.⁴⁶⁶⁹

Andreas develops this: 'Does the following sound familiar?—Spring is in the air! Flowers and bunnies decorate the home. Fathers help the children paint beautiful designs on eggs dyed in various colours. These eggs, which will later be hidden and searched for, are placed in lovely, seasonal baskets. The wonderful aroma of hot cross buns mother is baking in the oven wafts through the house. Forty days of abstaining from special foods will finally end the next day. The whole family picks out their Sunday best to wear to the next morning's sunrise worship service to celebrate the Saviour's resurrection and the renewal of life. Everyone looks forward to a succulent ham with all the trimmings. It will be a thrilling day. After all, it is one of the most important religious holidays of the year.

Easter, right? No! This is a description of an ancient Babylonian family—two thousand years before Christ—honouring the resurrection of their god, Tammuz, who was brought back from the underworld by his mother / wife, Ishtar (after whom the festival was named). As Ishtar was actually pronounced "Easter" in most Semitic dialects, it could be said that the event portrayed here is, in a sense, Easter. Of course, the occasion could easily have been a Phrygian family honouring Attis and Cybele, or perhaps a Phoenician family worshipping Adonis and Astarte. Or the description could just as easily be any number of other pagan fertility celebrations of death and resurrection—including the modern Easter celebration as it has come to us through the Anglo-Saxon fertility rites of the goddess Eostre or Ostara. These are all the same festivals, separated only by time and culture.

The ancient Saxons celebrated the return of spring with an uproarious festival commemorating their goddess of offspring and of springtime, Eastre....The fabled Easter Egg originally served as the emblem of the germinating life or early spring....predat[ing] the [so-called] Christian holiday of Easter. The exchange of eggs in the springtime is a custom that was centuries old when Easter was first celebrated by [pagans, masquerading as] Christians. From the earliest times, the egg was a symbol of rebirth in most cultures. Eggs were often wrap-

⁴⁶⁶⁹ Hislop, Alexander, *The Two Babylons*, pp.108,109

ped in gold leaf or, if you were a peasant, coloured brightly by boiling them with the leaves or petals of certain flowers.

The Easter Bunny is not new to our Easter trail either. This symbol too originated with the pagan festival of Eastre. The rabbit is a pagan symbol⁴⁶⁷⁰ and has always been an emblem of fertility.⁴⁶⁷¹ The goddess, Eastre, was worshipped by the Anglo-Saxons through her earthly symbol, the hare (which was the true Easter beast). He was sacred to the Spring-goddess, Eostre. The hare was an emblem of fertility, renewal, and return of spring. The egg, in modern American folklore, is the production of the rabbit or the hare. The story is that this hare was once a bird which Eostre changed into a four-footed creature. Dyed eggs also formed part of the rituals of the Babylonian mystery religions. Eggs were sacred to many ancient civilizations and formed an integral part of religious ceremonies in Egypt and the Orient. Dyed eggs were hung in Egyptian temples, and the egg was regarded as the emblem of regenerative life proceeding from the mouth of the great Egyptian god.

The Germans brought the symbol of the Easter rabbit to America. It was widely ignored by other [sic!] Christians until shortly after the Civil War. In fact, Easter itself was not widely celebrated in America until after that time.

Conveniently, the pagan festival of Eastre occurred at the same time of the year as the [equally pagan, so called] Christian [Easter] observance of the resurrection of Christ. It made sense, therefore, to alter the festival itself to make it a 'Christian' celebration, as converts were slowly won over. The early name, Eastre, was eventually changed to its modern spelling, Easter.

Early on, Easter was celebrated on different days of the week.⁴⁶⁷² In that year, the Council of Nicæa was convened by emperor Constantine [himself a pagan]. It issued the Easter Rule which states that Easter shall be celebrated on the first Sunday that occurs after the first full moon on or after the vernal equinox. However, a caveat must be included. The "full moon" in the rule is the ecclesiastical full moon, which is defined as the fourteenth day of a tabular lunation, where day one corresponds to the ecclesiastical New Moon. It does not always occur on the same date as the astronomical full moon. The ecclesiastical "vernal equinox" is always on March 21. Therefore, Easter must be celebrated on a Sunday between the dates of March 22 and April 25.

The tradition of the Easter Parade on Fifth Avenue in New York City began after the Civil War was over.⁴⁶⁷³ People would don their Easter finery and wear bonnets that they had designed.

There is some debate as to whether Mrs. Hayes or Mrs. Madison⁴⁶⁷⁴ began the tradition of the Easter Egg Roll for children, where tiny tots rolled Easter eggs with little sticks on the White House lawn. First Lady,

⁴⁶⁷⁰ the enlarged rabbit's head is an ancient symbol of Satan.

⁴⁶⁷¹ Simrock, *Mythologie*, p.551.

⁴⁶⁷² prior to 325AD; celebrated by pagans, while the actual death of Christ—but not His resurrection—was honoured by true Christians during the time of dusk on 14 Abib, Passover (Greek: Pascha, in the New Testament, meaning Passover, is wrongly translated 'Easter' in the one instance it appears in the K.J.V.: Acts 12;24b).

⁴⁶⁷³ in 1866AD

Eleanor Roosevelt made the Egg Roll a media event when she greeted visitors and listeners all over America on nation-wide radio.⁴⁶⁷⁵ After a decade of cancellations, the Egg Roll was reintroduced by the Eisenhowers and, in the years since, it has become quite elaborate with races, a circus, and a petting zoo included.

The custom of the Easter Sunrise Service can be traced back to the ancient Pagan custom of welcoming the sun-god at the vernal equinox, when daytime is about to exceed the length of the night-time. It was a time to celebrate the return of life and reproduction to animal and plant life as well.

In German mythology, the goddess Eastre or “radiant dawn” ruled during the spring festival with vegetation rites....singing, rejoicing, processions, flowers, and the ringing of bells. Pagan customs of lighting new fires at dawn (symbolic of new light) for crop protection and healing still exist today.⁴⁶⁷⁶

Yet another example of pagan influence in the Easter celebration is the service of light, which is still part of the Catholic Easter liturgy. For this service, the priest and his assistants come with a candle to a wood fire in front of the church. After a greeting and a short introduction, the priest blesses the fire which he uses to light a candle. He then leads a procession with the Easter candle to the church altar for the blessing and lighting of all the candles.

The service of light, according to some liturgists,⁴⁶⁷⁷ is of Frankish origin and seems intended from the beginning as a sacrament of the church that would replace the fires lit in spring by the pagans in honour of Wotan or some other heathen divinities to assure good crops. Watts⁴⁶⁷⁸ derives the lighting of the Easter candle from the great fire lighted by the devotees of Attis as they stood around his grave on the night of the spring festival celebrating his resurrection. Though there is disagreement over exactly which pagan practice influenced the origin of the Easter blessing of the fire and candles, there is consensus as to the pagan derivation of the practice.

In tracking these assimilations into the 'visible or mainstream Christian church organisations,' many expositors have concluded that the Antichrist, by dint of his end-time doings and influence, must be the last-in-line pope, but this is an aberrant view.⁴⁶⁷⁹ While there is no doubt that the Roman church has changed times and laws in the past, and done so in a wholesale manner, as seen in the calendar used to this day, based on the Gregorian modification⁴⁶⁸⁰ of the earlier Julian calendar instituted by Julius Caesar,⁴⁶⁸¹ but even here, the

⁴⁶⁷⁴ both Presidents' wives.

⁴⁶⁷⁵ in 1933AD

⁴⁶⁷⁶ Andreas, Judy, *Hippity Hoppity....He Has Risen* (edited, with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁴⁶⁷⁷ e.g. Adolf Adam.

⁴⁶⁷⁸ Alan W. Watts.

⁴⁶⁷⁹ q.v. inf.

⁴⁶⁸⁰ by Pope Gregory XIII in 1582AD.

⁴⁶⁸¹ in 46BC

formative calendar is the product of a Cæsar of the Roman Empire, which, in turn, is an adoption or adaptation of an earlier Egyptian one.⁴⁶⁸²

This is not to what Daniel refers,⁴⁶⁸³ however, for his is a prophecy of an event solely in the future and, accordingly, any attempt to bind the end-time pope to the title of the Beast / Antichrist by this means is simply a combination of wishful expediency and poor exegesis. The end-time thought of changes,⁴⁶⁸⁴ if and when put into effect, by definition will go beyond those changes already conceived or effected by the Roman church. And it even extends beyond Hitler, the forerunner of the Antichrist, in his introduction of the Reich calendar built around the eight annual occult human sacrifice high-feast days.

Another variety, the World Calendar, devised by a Roman Catholic priest,⁴⁶⁸⁵ has intercalary 'W' or 'world-day' holidays: on leap years at the end of June, and every year at the end of December. By failing to count these days, the recurring weekly cycle of seven days would be displaced and 'lost.'

Of course, neither the Antichrist nor the Roman church can actually *'change times and laws,'* for these are God's times and Laws, and are not subject to mutation by the evil tools of Satan. Satanic regimes may think to do so, but God's Word, of course, is immutable.⁴⁶⁸⁶ His calendar and His feasts stand. Despite this, the new Roman Catechism states: 'In respecting religious liberty and the common good of all, Christians should seek recognition of Sunday and the Church's Holy Days as legal holidays.'⁴⁶⁸⁷

Scripture & Tradition

The Roman church maintains that the word of God, the foundation of the gospel, and the supreme rule of the Roman Catholic faith, rests on two bases: Scripture and Tradition. The teaching authority of Rome, which it holds to be unique unto itself, is called the Magisterium. This says that only the bishops of the church have the right to judge the true meaning of doctrine, divine revelation, and matters of faith, and to teach these with authority. The church sees itself in the sole role of elucidating and explaining all matters contained in what is termed 'the deposit of faith,' even where these are deemed only obscure or implicit. This sort of dual claim is also found in Orthodox Judaism, where the Rabbis aspire to near-identical tenets:

⁴⁶⁸² Second Vatican Council, 1962AD, issued a 'Declaration of Calendar Reform'; possibly some modification appears to be included in the Roman Catholic agenda.

⁴⁶⁸³ Dan 7:25

⁴⁶⁸⁴ the root word translated *'think'* in Dan 7:25c also means to *'bear in mind'* or to *'hope.'* As such, it leaves open the possibility that despite the power of the Beast and the sway of the False Prophet, there will be sufficient general or regional opposition, or simply lack of time for implementation, effectively to frustrate these desires. But the root word also means *'to confide,'* in the sense of *'to have confidence in.'* In this sense, the changes are to be put in place without any doubt on the part of the instigator.

⁴⁶⁸⁵ in 1834AD

⁴⁶⁸⁶ Judaism holds that its false-messiah of long-held popular hope will change certain aspects of the Law, including modifying their calendar.

⁴⁶⁸⁷ new *Catechism of the Roman Catholic Church*, p.528

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1. A mix of Scripture and oral law;⁴⁶⁸⁸ and,
 2. An unique or sole teaching and interpretation.

The fundamental difference between Scripture and Tradition, in any of its guises, is that the former is divinely inspired, the latter is but an invention and manufacture of man. Tradition, irrespective of its taxonomy or terminology, is the same wanting evidenced in the scribes and Pharisees in Jesus' day. The Sanhedrin, a quasi-political organisation riven by factionalism, was worthless. Christ refused to submit to either the Sanhedrin, the scribes and Pharisees, or to Tradition. The scribes and Pharisees appeared devout in their zeal for the proper observance of their Tradition, but Christ knew that it was a pious deception. Their hearts were far from God. *'And the Pharisees, who were lovers of money, also heard these things, and they derided him.'*⁴⁶⁸⁹ Their worship was vain, worthless in God's sight. He accused them of *'teaching as doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandments of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do. And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.'*⁴⁶⁹⁰

They were putting men's vain words before God's Word, disobeying Scripture by substituting their own traditions, customs, and observances. The result of this perversion was *'Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye.'*⁴⁶⁹¹ Jesus Christ completely rejected the man-made authority structure operating at that time. But what He rejected, the Roman church has adopted, the elevation of Tradition to the same level and, despite denials, on occasion to greater than that of God's Law and commandments: 'this Magisterium is not superior to the Word of God, but is its servant. It teaches only what has been handed to it.'⁴⁶⁹² 'Through Luther, although Calvin seems to have been the first to announce Monobiblicalism clearly, the Bible became the arm of the Protestant revolt. A dumb and difficult book was substituted for the living voice of the church, in order that each one should be able to make for himself the religion which suited his feelings. And the Bible opened before every literate man and woman to interpret for themselves was the attractive bait used to win adherents.'⁴⁶⁹³

To the Roman church, the Bible is but a 'dumb and difficult book.' There is no room in the Roman purview for the precepting role of the Holy Spirit in their satanic denunciations of God's Word. But what of Protestantism? Certainly, 'Scripture Alone!' was the battle cry of the Reformation. Luther, one of the champions of the claim, said: 'My conscience is captive to the Word of God.' He rejected Tradition and the teaching

⁴⁶⁸⁸ Tradition.

⁴⁶⁸⁹ Luke 16:14

⁴⁶⁹⁰ Mark 7:7-9

⁴⁶⁹¹ Mark 7:13

⁴⁶⁹² Second Vatican Council, *Dogmatic Constitution of the Church*, #10; where the 'handed to it' comes from is clear!

⁴⁶⁹³ *Catholic Commentary*, p.11 (sublinear emphasis added)

authority of the popes and bishops as infallible guides to the Christian faith. He proclaimed Scripture alone as the rule or standard for the Christian faith. But did he do as he had spoken? Or was it just another case of pious but false lips?

Luther's intent was the reformation of the Roman church, and not the creation of a new organisation separated from Rome, but that is what happened. Were 'Scripture Alone' the ethos,⁴⁶⁹⁴ then Protestantism would be firmly founded in the Holy Scriptures. Sadly, it is anything of the sort, for it still retains much of the old Roman trappings.⁴⁶⁹⁵ Basically, all that resulted was a watered-down version of that from which it had sprung.

The Roman riposte to any attack on its wanting in this matter is that 'nowhere in the Bible does it teach 'Scripture alone.'" This is nothing short of bizarre, for none of the parties contend the fact that Scripture is the Word of God and that it speaks with divine authority. Christ said '*scripture cannot be broken*,'⁴⁶⁹⁶ The point of controversy is not Scripture, for we must heed and obey that. The controversy revolves around Tradition. Both Judaism and Romanism assert that Tradition is also the Word of God.

So the proper question is this: Where did Jesus, the prophets, or the apostles teach that Tradition is the Word of God? The burden of proof rests on those claiming that Tradition is the Word of God. And no proof has ever been forthcoming, for the simple reason that it does not exist. '*But he answered them and said, It is written, man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.*'⁴⁶⁹⁷ And that Word is recorded in Scripture.

⁴⁶⁹⁴ Greek: ethos, 'habit' or 'custom.'

⁴⁶⁹⁵ e.g., Easter, Christmas, Sunday worship.

⁴⁶⁹⁶ John 10:35b

⁴⁶⁹⁷ Mat 4:4

Chapter 60

Goddesses of Discernment

Nowadays, there is a major move to bring 'equality of the sexes' into religion and preaching. Many sects and denominations permit women pastors, preachers, ministers, priests, and even bishops, seeing nothing amiss in it. In fact, it is viewed as something positive, to be encouraged and promoted wherever and whenever possible. Many women and their supporters agitate and lobby for it. But is this in accordance with God's Will? And where is it leading? One thing is sure, if it is against God's Will, He will not support it, and if He does not support it, then it is worthless. And if, as in this case, the very substance of preaching relies on His exposition and revelation of His Will through His Holy Spirit, then mere human endeavour in spite of that Will is doomed. 'A woman taking the lead in divine things is very generally a sign of evil, and it is significant that women have been notorious for this. Take the case of Mrs. White, a neurotic, hysterical woman, who was the chief prophetess of Seventh-Day Adventism; of Mrs. Eddy, likewise neurotic, hysterical, and a spiritualistic medium, the founder of Christian Science; of Mrs. Blavatsky, a spiritualist medium, introducer of modern Theosophy; of Mrs. Besant, the erstwhile infidel, her successor; of Ann Lee, of Shaker fame, etc., etc.'⁴⁶⁹⁸

Theosophy

A measure of the pagan origins and the current exposition of modern Theosophy and the Theosophical Society, significantly female-dominated in key areas, is available: 'Theosophy, as its Greek derivatives signify,

⁴⁶⁹⁸ Pollock, Algernon J., *Things which must Shortly Come to Pass*, p.49

means Divine Wisdom. It is that general system of thought which has appeared in all ages, shaping itself in one form and another, and which has attempted to explain the nature of God, the universe, and man's relation thereto. Among the Orientals it is conspicuous in the philosophic systems of China, India, and Egypt. It is seen in the works of the Gnostics, the Neo-Platonists, and the Cabalists....It represents a body of tradition which has been preserved from earliest times and is not only found in philosophic and speculative writings of....many, but has been taught from time to time by sundry religious and mystical orders—in the Far East by the Gurus and Initiates, and in Greece by the various schools of the mysteries. During the Middle Ages traces of the teaching are to be found in masonry and medieval mysticism, and later in the Order of Rosicrucians, and it has at all times comprised the esoteric side of the great religions of the world.

The Theosophical Society was founded in New York⁴⁶⁹⁹ with....Madame Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, a Russian lady, as recording secretary. Modern theosophical thought owes its origins and propaganda to the writings and efforts of Madame Blavatsky and her colleagues. It is stated that in the foundation of the Theosophical Society and in the writing of her various works, Madame Blavatsky was directed and aided by certain Eastern adepts or sages, whose pupil she had been for many years, and that the purpose of the movement was to stem the tide of materialism and agnosticism, which then threatened to engulf the thought of the age, and to stimulate transcendental research. The objects of the society, as originally declared, were to collect a library and diffuse information concerning secret laws of nature. Later, these objects were amplified, and as now framed are:

1. To form a nucleus of the universal brotherhood of humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste, or colour;
2. To encourage the study of comparative religion, philosophy, and science; and,
3. To investigate the unexplained laws and the powers latent in man.

The Society has no dogmas or creed, is entirely non-sectarian, and includes in its membership adherents of all faiths and of none, exacting only from each member the tolerance for the beliefs of others that he would wish them to exhibit towards his own.

[Madame Blavatsky mentions three principles as being the fundamentals of Theosophy. They are:]

1. An omnipresent, eternal, boundless and immutable principle, which transcends the power of human conception, and is beyond the range and reach of thought—unthinkable and unspeakable;

⁴⁶⁹⁹ in 1875AD

2. The eternity of the universe in toto as a boundless plane; periodically "the playground of numberless universes incessantly manifesting and disappearing"; and,

3. The fundamental identity of all souls with the Universal Over-Soul, the latter being itself an aspect of the Unknown Root; and the obligatory pilgrimage for the soul—a spark of the former—through the cycle of incarnation, or necessity, in accordance with cyclic and Karmic law, during the whole term.⁴⁷⁰⁰

And from another source on the same subject:

1. God exists, and He is good. He is the great life-giver who dwells within us and without us, is undying and eternally beneficent. He is not heard, nor seen, nor touched; yet is perceived by the man who desires perception;

2. Man is immortal, and his future is one whose glory and splendour have no limit; and,

3. A divine law of absolute justice rules the world, so that each man is in truth his own judge, the dispenser of glory or gloom to himself, the decreer of his life, his reward, his punishment.

Arising from these, and as a corollary thereto, is seen the inevitability of human perfection....Some of the facts of which they claim to have knowledge in this matter...are the existence of perfected men. These are called Adepts or Masters. They do not belong to any one nation nor to any particular period, but exist today as also in the past. It is from a brotherhood of such perfected men that great teachers come from time to time. They founded world religions and became great world teachers, giving out the message needed by mankind at that particular time. The Ancient Wisdom (Theosophy) has also been entrusted to their care. It is at the instigation of some of these adepts that the theosophical teachings are being given to the world today, through the efforts of a number of their pupils.

Reincarnation, theosophists believe, is the method whereby the human soul climbs the ladder of spiritual evolution. Beginning as primitive man, he becomes the saint or the seer through the many experiences gained in the world of flesh. After the change called death, the man dwells for a time on the astral plane, and later on the mental plane, in a specially protected and blissful region known as "devachan"—the heavenly world. Upon the ending of this devachanic life there remains only the reincarnating ego, the lower bodies constituting the personality having disintegrated on their respective planes; but the principles of qualities animating them have meanwhile left their impression upon the ego. In sending forth his next personality, the action of the ego is coloured and limited by the stamp upon it of these characteristics developed by the previous personality, so that

⁴⁷⁰⁰ Algeo, John, *Getting Acquainted with the Secret Doctrine*

the new personality begins his life cycle at the highest stage of growth reached by the previous one. The ethical law which governs the conditions of our lives, physical and supra-physical, is called karma, and it is ineradicably operative in reincarnation. It may be defined as the law of action and reaction or of cause and effect. By virtue of the operation of this law effects which cannot be ascribed to any immediate cause may be traced to causes existing in other incarnations of the same ego, thus establishing one's ultimate, personal responsibility for whatever may befall. Furthermore, owing to this law, one may and does at each moment of the present life produce by one's own actions, feelings, and thoughts, definite effects in the subtler order of things resulting in conditions for the next earth life wholly of his own making. So that whatever a person may suffer or enjoy, attain or fail to attain, is brought about as the result of his own action, in obedience to this law of absolute justice. The alternate experiences of pleasure and pain which man encounters, develop within him wisdom; and the opportunities guaranteed to him for the accomplishment of this end through reincarnation and karma are well-nigh limitless.⁴⁷⁰¹

The 'observers of times,' belief in reincarnation, and the salvation of man through his own works—autosoterism, in that man has an innate ability to be good—are all linked by Riplinger: '[T]he earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved....[will] the elements....melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we according to his promise look for new heavens and a new earth.'⁴⁷⁰²

Genesis chapter one marked the beginning of earth's time. The hands of humanity sweep across the face of the earth hastening a halt to creation's clock. Mankind's sin has seeded the planet with land mines making its terrain a time bomb. Revelation⁴⁷⁰³ reveals earth's explosive end. A contrary scenario is revealed by the other religions of the world. They present a cyclical view of life in which reincarnation of the individual and evolution of the species provides the needed 'time' for their works-based salvation to bear fruit. Confucius confuses many, saying, "The process of change is cyclical." Buddhism teaches that time progresses in a series of cycles. Hinduism's god Vishnu commences each cycle and Shiva closes it. The Mayans [marked] the end of their recent "great cycle."⁴⁷⁰⁴ Tracing this twisted pattern, Luciferian Rudolph Steiner repeats: "[T]he earth goes through evolutionary cycles."

⁴⁷⁰¹ *Encyclopedia Americana*, article 'Theosophy'

⁴⁷⁰² II Peter 3:11-13

⁴⁷⁰³ Rev 20:11

⁴⁷⁰⁴ in pagan Mayan lore, the end of the fifth sun occurs at 21 December, 2012AD. The following 'sun era,' that of the sixth sun, held to be a regeneration or rebirth, starts on 22 December, 2012AD, although the Mayans believed that the world would come to an end at the conclusion of the fifth cycle, inf.

Kenner, T. A., *Symbols and their Hidden Meanings*, p.144 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets): 'Their highest god was Hunab Ku, who rebuilds the world after the Great Cycle destroys it (which [it is claimed] has so far happened three times, with the next cycle due to end in 2012AD).'

The destroying end of the so-called 'Great Cycle' could equate, in theory, to a world-wide financial and economic melt-down, now imminent (written in 2013AD), based upon the manipulated reduction and demise of the current world reserve currency, the US\$, amongst other matters, although the supposed date has passed.

'In turning to the cyclical theory of time, the New Age has also adopted the astrological idea of shorter ages which make up the longer cycles. Their imaginary astrological cycle is twenty-five thousand years long and is divided into ages of about two thousand years each....But mankind "*did not like to retain God in their knowledge,*" "*changed the truth of God into a lie*" and became "*vain in their imaginations.*"⁴⁷⁰⁵ So the Chaldeans, with their observatory in the tower of Babel, invented 'imaginary' zodiacal boundaries in the sky in relation to the equinox to make a celestial calendar for their system of ages and astrology.

These "*observers of times,*" anan, were condemned in the Bible.⁴⁷⁰⁶ The N.K.J.V., N.I.V., and N.A.B.S.A. have completely removed this warning. Most versions pretend anan is kashshaph and render it as '*sorcery.*' They translate both anan and kashshaph as '*sorcery,*' hiding the distinction God has made between these two Hebrew words. Anan literally means '*observing the heavens,*' which is a distinct form of enchantment.⁴⁷⁰⁷

Ancient Babylon adopted astrology from the Chaldeans. So MYSTERY BABYLON, the religious system of the end-times, which "*sitteth upon many waters,*" has carried astrology's ages around the world. The Aztecs believed they were living in the 'fifth age.' The Hindoos think we are now living in the 'kali-yuga,' or 'black age.' The Bahai's are waiting for their 'golden age.' New Agers, watching the zodiac move out of Pisces into Aquarius, anticipate the 'New Age.' Today, the AD1960's [musical] hit "Age of Aquarius" blares in the background while readers browse books like *The Aquarian Gospel of Jesus the Christ*, *The Aquarian Conspiracy*, *Finding Your Place in the Golden Age*, or *Disciples in the New Age*. Even cults like the Jehovah's Witnesses are waiting for their 'Kingdom Age.' Mary Baker Eddy's followers think she is the "voice of truth to this age."

Beyond the rim of 'religious' circles, secular thinkers scan the horizon for a new age. The Humanist Manifesto II says, "[W]e stand at the door of a new age." Former U.N. Assistant Secretary General Robert Muller translates New Age philosophy into Antichrist's politics: "We are now entering a new age....we must pass from the national age to the planetary age."

The real religion of America is astrology, if the study of Northern Illinois University is correct, indicating that 70% of Americans read their horoscope. The children are following, as Gallop's poll showed 60% of them also believed in astrology.⁴⁷⁰⁸

Many women are involved in astrology and the occult. Witchcraft is rapidly gaining in popularity, especially among women. It has been thus since the earliest of times. The pagan cult of Isis, a female deity,

Another interesting claim, yet to be authenticated, is that if the old Paris meridian, i.e., the pagan 'rose line,' is assumed rather than the current London meridian, then Mount Hermon in the Levant has a grid reference of 33.53°E, 33.53°N. This gives distances from the Paris meridian and the equator of 2012 nautical miles.

Were the Antichrist to appear at the rebirth of the sun in the last days of 2012AD, then the 'eighth of the seven,' in terms of a rebirth or regeneration, doubtless would be claimed to have occurred.

⁴⁷⁰⁵ Rom 1:19-28

⁴⁷⁰⁶ II Chron 33:6; Deut 18:10,11; II Kings 21:6; Lev 19:26

⁴⁷⁰⁷ Jer 27:9

⁴⁷⁰⁸ Riplinger, G. A., *New Age Bible Versions*, pp.280-282 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

was a huge female cult. Rowling,⁴⁷⁰⁹ the children's fiction writer, is a female occultist, and responsible for presenting before impressionable young children the seriously occult and debased tales of Harry Potter which involve pagan rites, magic spells, occult symbols and their meanings, demon traps, and devilish chants and potions. Such crass mind-conditioning for the young is dangerous in the extreme. Children are encouraged to look for and accept the demonically supernatural, while the natural and mundane is held up to ridicule and disdain.

Theosophy has now joined hands with a heavily-Gnostic form of so-called 'Christianity' to form what is termed Anthroposophy; the entire process under the guidance of demon spirits operating through occult channels.

Manipulation of 'feeling' world

Debased levels of thought have infiltrated all levels of the strange 'touchy-feely' 'soft-sentiment' world in which we live. Patently, it has a number of unique but completely worthless attributes. It is surely obvious to all, save the morally and spiritually blinded, that form should not take precedence over substance; that political correctness and emotional correctness are no more than extreme and widespread forms of public mind-control, censorship, and propaganda, and a means to cultural conformity; and that 'lifestyle,' 'material comfort,' and other forms of ephemeral self-gratification, do not comprise the ultimate goal of mankind. Unfortunately, feeling, generally a feminine trait, is now supplanting thinking, generally a male one.⁴⁷¹⁰ A whole new phraseology has blossomed, with 'emotional intellect' and 'democracy of emotion' as fundamental tenets. But the phrases are completely meaningless; the underlying concepts vacuous. A highly opportunistic, ratings-driven, spin-doctored, stage-managed, dumbed-down, phony empathy has emerged to replace God's love,⁴⁷¹¹ but in reality it is a false sentimentality, little more than a mindless repetition of effete mantras intertwined with wild, incomprehensible passions. All puff and nonsense, yet, apparently, fooling almost everybody.

But this should come as little surprise, for even the infamous author of *Mein Kampf* noted some salient points, with the help of a Jesuit priest: 'All propaganda should be popular and should adapt its intellectual level to the receptive ability of the least intellectual of those whom it is desired to address....'

The receptive ability of the masses is very limited, their understanding small; on the other hand, they have a great power of forgetting. This being so, all propaganda must be confined to very few points which must

⁴⁷⁰⁹ Rowling, J. K.

⁴⁷¹⁰ Mackay, Charles, *Extraordinary Popular Delusions and the Madness of Crowds*:

'Men, it has been well said, think in herds; it will be seen that they go mad in herds, while they only recover their senses one by one.'

⁴⁷¹¹ Barclay, William, *The Parables of Jesus*, p.83:

'Pity which issues in help is worth much. Pity which remains merely an emotion is not really pity at all.'

be brought out in the form of slogans....the slogan may have various lights thrown upon it, but any treatment applied to it should always finish with the slogan. Propaganda can work solidly and consistently no other way....

The example of every propaganda [should be] typical of this also. It confine[s] itself to a few points of view addressed solely to the masses, and [is] pursued with untiring perseverance.....At first it appear[s] lunatic from the impudence of its assertions—later on it [becomes] unpleasant and [is] finally believed.

This intellectual weapon can only be used successfully with the masses...[and it also needs deeds, however contrived or artificial].

Propaganda must rush on far in advance of organisation, and win over the human material on which organisation is to work.....

The work which propaganda has to do is to continue to win adherents to the idea, whilst the whole-hearted preoccupation of organisation must be to make the best of the adherents into active members of the Party. There is no need for propaganda to worry itself over the value of every single one of its scholars as regards efficiency, capacity, intellect or character, whereas it is the task of organisation to select carefully out of the mass any that may really conduce to the triumph of the movement.

The first task of propaganda is to win men for the coming organisation; that of organisation is to get men for carrying on propaganda. The second task of propaganda is to upset existing conditions by means of the new doctrine, that of organisation is to fight for power in order through it to secure final success for the doctrine.⁴⁷¹²

[And as for the effete:] 'An immense majority of the people are so feminine in nature and point of view, that their thoughts and actions are governed more by feeling and sentiment than by measured consideration.... the primitiveness of sentiment in the mass of the people [is all too evident].'⁴⁷¹³

The result of such naivety and decay in the masses can be seen daily as sociological problems abound, and in the surge in the ranks of the so-called 'underclass.' These people typically lack the ability to orient their behaviour towards the future, have low levels of self-control, low self-esteem, and are irresponsible, feckless, self-indulgent, preoccupied with immediate pleasure, and lacking in desire to self-educate. They find it all too easy to descend into the realms of seriously deviant and criminal behaviour. These traits spawn an inarticulate and self-feeding criminal culture that is hard to defeat, especially once critical mass is attained. The resulting cultural heritage of crime and social deprivation, thus ingrained, manifests itself in serious and costly social pathologies such as broken families, illegitimacy, child abuse, spouse abuse, rape, juvenile delinquency, alcohol abuse, drug addiction, robbery, assault, and murder. Others include high drop-out rates in education, very

⁴⁷¹² Hitler, Adolf, *Mein Kampf*, pp.81-84,232,233, written with the help of Bernhard Stämpfle, a Jesuit priest (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁴⁷¹³ Hitler, Adolf, *Mein Kampf*, p.83 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

antagonistic attitudes to authority whatever the flavour, sub-standard ghetto language, and weak labour force attachment.

To a surprising extent, many Western children in recent years, reared in front of television, and allowed to more or less go about their own business without close parental instruction, exhibit characteristics which in some respects are nearer to the childhood of primitive tribes than to the middle and upper class childhood of Western society. An eighteenth-century account of American Red Indian family life offers a frightening prescription: 'Everyone does what he pleases. A father and mother with their children, live like persons whom chance has brought together, and for whom no common bond unites. Their manner of educating their children is suitable to this principle. They never chastise or punish them, even during their infancy. As they advance in years, they allow them to be entirely masters of their own actions, and responsible to nobody.'⁴⁷¹⁴

This wholesale degradation of society is admirably described by Paul, *'For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith. For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of man, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools. And changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. For this cause God gave them up unto vile afflictions: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one towards another, men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet. And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do things which are not convenient; Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, Without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: Who knowing the judgment of God,*

⁴⁷¹⁴ Davidson, James Dale, and Rees-Mogg, William, *The Great Reckoning*

that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.⁴⁷¹⁵

Sadly, for the many social postulators who think that this trend can be reversed by the use of normal formal education, as if an application of more of the limited same were capable of righting the wrong, such trite palliatives cannot work. Modern education today does not even attempt to address matters of values, ethics and morals.⁴⁷¹⁶ By denying or ignoring this underpinning, education has an inevitable 'dumbing-down' effect. Without any formal framework or education, the student is expected, as if by magic, to make the right choices through his or her discovery and development of 'individual morality in day-to-day actions,' often called 'situation ethics,'⁴⁷¹⁷ a patently oxymoronic description of fixed ethical standards. The study of ethics, on the other hand, is portrayed as a 'highly-specialised' and complex undertaking, not a daily affair, best left to 'experts.' At once this bolsters ethical and moral passivity, discourages original thought, encourages rote memorisation of radical philosophies and mantras that are completely worthless, and leaves the student prey to the vagaries of an ethically and morally perverse educational system devoid of any absolute values.

For the uneducated, irrespective of whether actually in or excluded from the modern education system, the preoccupation for today, the absence of ethical values, the ready adoption of irrational beliefs and practices, and all the rest, merely result in a form of imprisonment in a self-made 'ghetto of the mind.' With this in place, no rational view of the outside world is possible, and delusional thinking runs untrammelled. Life becomes alarmingly robotic.

The oft-postulated but mythical recapturing of a bygone 'Golden Age' is simply that: a myth. For it is not so much in the modern standard educational input that the core deficiency lies, it is in the profound lack of ethical and moral values. Once education becomes divorced from teaching these values, the descent into the morass becomes inevitable. For when children are not taught proper Judæo-Christian values and when the intimate

⁴⁷¹⁵ Rom 1: 16-32 (sublinear emphasis added); referenced writing is Heb 2:4, '*The just shall live by faith.*'

⁴⁷¹⁶ morality is relative to the moral frame of reference, for morality is a human construction influenced by human cultures, human reasoning, and human mores.

⁴⁷¹⁷ Barclay, William, *Ethics in a Permissive Society*, p.69 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets): '[I]n 1966AD an American professor called Joseph Fletcher wrote a book called *Situation Ethics*, which has proved to be one of the most influential books [in a negative sense] written this century. Fletcher's basic principle is that there is nothing which is universally right or universally wrong; there is nothing which is intrinsically good or intrinsically bad [Satan's policy, exactly!]. Goodness and badness are not built in, essentially, unchangeable qualities of anything; they are only things which happen to actions in different situations; they are only descriptions of things in different circumstances; they are not properties, they are predicates. According to this theory of ethics, there is no such thing as a predefinition of goodness or badness. What we have to take to any situation is not a prefabricated decision, but an act of [personal, subjective] judgement.'

Rees, Laurence, *Auschwitz: The Nazis and the 'Final Solution'*, pp.21,22:

'It is not hard to agree with the verdict of Else Baker, sent to Auschwitz as an eight-year-old, that 'the level of human depravity is unfathomable....Human behaviour is fragile and unpredictable and often at the mercy of the situation. Every individual still, of course, has a choice of how to behave; it is just that for many people the situation is a key determinant in that choice.'

contact of the family, neighbourhood, or nation, with God is severed, then the most alarming and perverse consequences flow, as if automatically.

In order to re-inject some meaning and relevance into life, mankind has clung to any of a vast number of pseudo-gods which are then elevated to the position of supreme personal god. In this category fall such as money, power, influence, affiliations of all sorts, politics, political correctness, friends, family, and all kinds of material possessions. When the pseudo-god syndrome takes over, subservience is all, with everything held subsumed to that god; a worthless god that can do nothing other than fall.

Discernment, and its lack

The fundamental lack in the overall context is the age-old failing, and one particularly ascribed to woman: discernment. It was this wanting that resulted in Eve believing the serpent's 'beguiling' tale in the garden of Eden. It is the same that has resulted in women being commanded to keep silence before God in the churches, for, in lacking discernment, and having a heavy tendency towards pragmatism,⁴⁷¹⁸ in God's eyes women have nothing effective or meaningful to contribute in researching, discussing, or preaching doctrine. A prime example of female pragmatism, and lack of patience, is found in Sarah and her decision to build a family through her maidservant.⁴⁷¹⁹ Her unwillingness to wait for God's timing and way has resulted in centuries of conflict for God's people through the descendants of Hagar: the Ishmaelites or Arabs. Later on, the matter was compounded by Rebecca over her ruse to secure the birthright blessing for Jacob over Esau.⁴⁷²⁰ The same failing is seen in Leah's and Rachel's 'rationalising' over whether to obey God,⁴⁷²¹ and Tamar's playing the harlot.⁴⁷²²

⁴⁷¹⁸ Judæo-Christians are idealists—not pragmatists who subjectively and relatively think that the truth is ever-changing, based on whatever seems to work.

⁴⁷¹⁹ Gen 16: 1-16; *Bible Study Monthly*, Vol. 84, No. 3, May / June, 2007AD, p.88 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'Abram and Sarai, married for many years, had no children, and from the natural point of view it seemed their hopes would never be realised, for Sarai was past normal child-bearing age. God had promised Abram that from him would spring a great nation, and that in his descendants all the families of the earth would one day be blessed. How could the promise be fulfilled?

Abram and Sarai came from the Sumerian city of Ur [actually, from the lands of Ur], on the lower Euphrates. From there they had migrated to Haran, on the upper Euphrates. Both these lands maintained marriage laws aimed at dealing with this problem, laws the records of which are extant today in legal tablets of those times which have been discovered. It was provided that in such a situation the wife was permitted to give one of her own slave-girls to her husband as a second wife, standing in an inferior position to the first, but, if a child was born, automatically becoming a freewoman. Her status as a wife could not then be repudiated.

This was the law which Sarai invoked; perfectly proper, and quite customary at the time.' [But it was contrary to God's statement to Abram, q.v. Gen 15:4-6. Sarai sought to pre-empt God's way by taking matters into her own hands, choosing to rely on a pagan statute and custom rather than on God].

⁴⁷²⁰ Gen 27:1-42

⁴⁷²¹ Gen 31:14-16

⁴⁷²² Gen 38:1-30

'While the Gospel was being addressed to Palestinian Jews who had known something of Jesus during His lifetime, the preacher could pass lightly over the ministry and come directly to the heart of the Gospel.... "Jesus of Nazareth, a man commended to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs, which God did through him in your midst, as you yourselves know."⁴⁷²³ Among the Gentiles [and those of the Jews who knew little or nothing of Jesus], no such appeal to public knowledge could be made; rather, it became increasingly necessary....to have at....[their] disposal a fund of stories which illustrated the character and methods of this Jesus through whom salvation was proclaimed, and particularly those stories which explained the clash of beliefs that led Him to Calvary. The end of this process of amplification may be seen in Mark's Gospel where, though the pattern of the apostolic preaching is retained and the Crucifixion and Resurrection are still the heart of the Gospel, these events are shown to be the climax of a ministry in which the Gospel of the Kingdom, proclaimed by Jesus in word and deed, was rejected by the authorities and misunderstood by the disciples.'⁴⁷²⁴

To piece the necessary precursory Bible stories of Jesus life and works into the sketchy or near non-existent knowledge of an inquirer after Judæo-Christian truth was neither to teach nor preach the gospel. Accordingly, women were able to do this in the nascent church, and can do so today. The proscription is in teaching and preaching, both a reference to '*sitting in Moses' seat*.' No woman could ever sit in that seat in the synagogues. Neither could a woman participate in doctrinal discussions in the synagogue: women were spatially segregated.

Paul gives the proscription: '*Let your women keep silence in your churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the Law. And if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church.*' The phrase, '*They are commanded,*' does not appear in the original Greek, which reads: '*it is not permitted unto them to speak; but to be under obedience, as also saith the Law.*' It is perfectly clear that the Law, which covers all, could not be applied solely to the women of the Corinthian churches, in contradistinction and outright opposition to another Law for all or most other women in the church.⁴⁷²⁵ No woman was allowed to '*sit in Moses' seat*'⁴⁷²⁶ teaching the Law. The scribes and the Pharisees sat in Moses' seat in the synagogues.

Whilst the discernment / pragmatism weakness runs entirely contrary to the ever-popular feminist / liberal / politically / emotionally correct view, even the democratic view, it is God's command: '*Let your women*

⁴⁷²³ Acts 2:22,10:37

⁴⁷²⁴ Caird, G. B., *The Apostolic Age*, pp.106,107 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁴⁷²⁵ I Cor 14:34,35; Moffat translates v.34a,b (sublinear emphasis added): '*As is the rule in all churches of the saints, women must keep quiet at all gatherings of the church, they are not permitted to speak*'; also cf. I Tim 2:11,12, where the proscription is reiterated, in the Moffatt translation, I Cor 14:33-36 (sublinear emphasis added), '*As is the rule in all churches of the saints, women must keep quiet at gatherings of the church. They are not allowed to speak; they must take a subordinate place, as the Law enjoins. If they want any information, let them ask their husbands at home; it is disgraceful for a woman to speak in church. You challenge this rule? Pray, did God's word start from you? are you the only people it has reached?*'

⁴⁷²⁶ Mat 23:2

⁴⁷²⁷ *keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak.*⁴⁷²⁸ It is not vexatious, and it is securely founded.

In turn, this wanting highlights another serious trend in man: that of becoming ever more woman-like. Today, the effeminate is elevated, homosexuality is flaunted, with the effusive and the garrulous being highly regarded. Men behave more like women, and, for that matter, women behave more like men: men think more like women, and, similarly, women think more like men. This is not how God set the relative traits and characteristics of the sexes. And this wanting, in its turn, is almost the most serious failing in man: lack of leadership, allied to a lack of manliness, for such represents a complete abrogation of man's role. Man has been effectively neutered, but only because he has allowed himself to.

In the marriage covenant before God, the uniting of a man and a woman is an earthly, mortal type of the final uniting of Christ and His Bride, the church. As such, the man symbolically takes the place of Christ. By becoming ever more effeminate, the parallel imported or inferred would be that Christ is to become subservient to the whims of the church, and that is patently wrong. The order and cadence of things is given by Paul: *'But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God. For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man. Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man.'*⁴⁷²⁹ As for the position of the woman in relation to that of the man, it is a functional subordination, for both *'are heirs together of the grace of life.'*⁴⁷³⁰

Unfortunately, the whole thrust of modern society is against *'the head of the woman is the man,'* as God commands. The actual societal condition pertaining today is very accurately described in Isaiah, *'And I will give children to be their princes, and babes shall rule over them. And the people shall be oppressed, every one by another, and every one by his neighbour: the child shall behave himself proudly against the ancient, and the base against the honourable. As for my people, children are their oppressors, and women rule over them. O my people, they which lead them cause thee to err, and destroy the ways of thy paths.'*⁴⁷³¹ This is a dysfunctional, absurd society, where the worthless takes precedence over the wise, inevitably leading to error, decline, and eventual collapse. Despite the frequent feminist umbrage, women simply lack discernment, or judgement, or wisdom in religious and doctrinal matters, and that is why they are commanded to keep silent. It is not permitted by God that a woman take the place of a preacher or teacher of doctrine.

⁴⁷²⁷ i.e., *'wives,'* in contradistinction to their virgin daughters—almaoth—who were kept well away from public display and exposure—kept out of sight, veiled as it were, for they were virgins, in order to protect and honour their virginity, and, as a result, they would never have spoken or participated in doctrinal discussions.

⁴⁷²⁸ I Cor 14:34a

⁴⁷²⁹ I Cor 11:3,8,9

⁴⁷³⁰ I Peter 3:7

⁴⁷³¹ Isa 3:4,5,12

Women's place

'(For if a man know not how to rule⁴⁷³² his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?).'

⁴⁷³³ *'I will therefore the younger women marry, bear children, guide⁴⁷³⁴ the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully. For some are already turned aside after Satan.'*⁴⁷³⁵ 'Guide' is translated 'keep' in the N.A.S., although it is better as 'manage family affairs.' It is not the absolute rulership found in Orthodox Judaism and some female-dominated so-called 'Christian' sects. The husband is head of the family, and ruler of the family and the house, while his wife is the manager of domestic family affairs, charged with the smooth and peaceful day-to-day running of the house.

Peter gives further insight: *'As Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord.'*⁴⁷³⁶ The Greek translated 'lord,'⁴⁷³⁷ comes from a stem meaning 'sanctioner,' and is the direct equivalent of the Old Testament's 'adjudicator.'⁴⁷³⁸ That gives the true extent of a husband's authority in the family. Since the husband presides over the household, the wife's role is that of house manager, not that of ruler.⁴⁷³⁹

*'If a man therefore purge himself from these,'⁴⁷⁴⁰ he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work.'*⁴⁷⁴¹ The Greek here translated 'vessel,'⁴⁷⁴² means a vessel, an implement, and, tellingly, the tackle and armament of vessels, used specifically of sails and ropes. *'Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them⁴⁷⁴³ according to knowledge, giving honour⁴⁷⁴⁴ unto the wife, as unto the weaker⁴⁷⁴⁵ vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.'*⁴⁷⁴⁶ The nautical core of the meaning of the word 'vessel' is extremely appropriate here in understanding the true intent of the phrase 'weaker vessel' in the K.J.V., for weak or feeble sailing tackle⁴⁷⁴⁷ cannot propel the sailing vessel

⁴⁷³² Greek: proistemi, 'to preside over.'

⁴⁷³³ I Tim 3:5

⁴⁷³⁴ Greek: oikodespoteo; a compound of oikos, house, and despotes, ruler or absolute ruler.

⁴⁷³⁵ I Tim 5:14,15

⁴⁷³⁶ I Peter 3:6a

⁴⁷³⁷ Greek: kurios.

⁴⁷³⁸ Hebrew: adun or adon.

⁴⁷³⁹ the word 'women,' in I Tim 5:2, does not appear in the original; Greek: presbuteros, means 'elders.'

⁴⁷⁴⁰ viz., iniquities.

⁴⁷⁴¹ II Tim 2:21

⁴⁷⁴² Greek: skeuos.

⁴⁷⁴³ viz., their wives.

⁴⁷⁴⁴ as to the use of the word 'honour,' there are two closely-related words in Greek, based on timeo, which can mean 'time,' 'honour,' 'position,' 'place,' or even 'consideration.' Comparatively, the Greek: isotimos, 'equal in honour,' was used of foreigners who were granted equal citizenship with the natives in a Greek-speaking city. Josephus says that in Antioch, Jews were made isotimoi. The Greek prefix iso-, meaning 'equal,' is not used in this text, despite the husband and wife being 'heirs together.' This reflects their functional standing in a marriage, q.v. sup.

⁴⁷⁴⁵ Greek: asthenes, 'weak, sick, feeble, useless, impotent,' and 'without strength.'

⁴⁷⁴⁶ I Peter 3:7

⁴⁷⁴⁷ viz., sails, rigging, halyards, sheets, and other ropes; cp. I Thes 4:4, 'vessel,' Greek: skeuos, in relation to 'sanctification and honour.' While a common Greek metaphor for the body through being thought temporarily inhabited by the soul, the word 'possess,' Greek: kataomai, means something acquired or procured through endeavour or effort and therefore relates not to the body and physical strength, but to spiritual development and steadfastness.

anywhere with any confidence or certainty, or retain it moored at anchor, and will most certainly fail when adverse sea and weather conditions strike, with potentially disastrous consequences.

Wisdom refused

The sailing vessel, in context, is the church. This reinforces the prohibition on women taking the lead in the church, and on speaking from Moses' seat or taking part in theological discussions and the like. The great female failing of pragmatism is largely responsible for this, for pragmatism destroys faith and judgement.

In another sphere it has been said that data is not information, information is not knowledge, and knowledge is not wisdom. It is the latter, especially, after which mankind should seek, as all others are diminutive by comparison. *'Through wisdom is an house builded, and by understanding is it established; And by knowledge shall the chambers be filled with all precious and pleasant riches.'*⁴⁷⁴⁸ The young Jesus is described by Luke: *'And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him.'*⁴⁷⁴⁹ Hosea highlights the penalty for want of knowledge of God: *'Here the word of the Lord, ye children of Israel: for the Lord hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, because there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land. By swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing, and committing adultery, they break out, and blood toucheth blood. My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.'*⁴⁷⁵⁰

This lack of knowledge did not stem from a shortage of information, but rather from available information ignored, rejected, unused, and undeveloped. In a world filled with information, there is no real knowledge. In a world bent on rejecting God, there can be no real knowledge. Knowledge without God-given wisdom and prudence is extremely dangerous, in any event. The vast gulf that has always existed between the wisdom of man and that of God is brought out by Paul, *'yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought: But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory.'*⁴⁷⁵¹

In the end-time, misinformation and the near-effortless control over the simple and gullible that that imports will become paramount, and discernment and judgement will be rare prizes indeed. The matter is well summed in Proverbs: *'Wisdom crieth without; she uttereth her voice in the streets: She crieth in the chief place of concourse, in the openings of the gates: in the city she uttereth her words, saying, How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? And the scorers delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge? Turn you at my*

⁴⁷⁴⁸ Prov 24:3,4

⁴⁷⁴⁹ Luke 2:40

⁴⁷⁵⁰ Hosea 4:1,2,6 (sublinear emphasis added)

⁴⁷⁵¹ in I Cor 2:6b,7

*reproof: behold, I will pour out my Spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you. My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee; So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding; Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; Then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God. For the Lord giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding. He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous: he is a buckler to them that walk uprightly. He keepeth the paths of judgment, and preserveth the way of his saints. Then shalt thou understand righteousness, and judgment, and equity; yea, every good path. When wisdom entereth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul; Discretion shall preserve thee, and understanding shall keep thee.'*⁴⁷⁵²

The effective bar on this discernment, or an element of wisdom, in the case of women, other than that flowing from the indwelling of the Holy Spirit,⁴⁷⁵³ has been a major stumbling-block, and one that has led to Paul being vehemently accused by the feminist movement of misogyny; with some even calling for the writings of Paul to be expunged from the New Testament canon. Lack of discernment has ramifications, not least in why women are prohibited from teaching or discussing doctrine in church.⁴⁷⁵⁴ To teach doctrine needs great discernment.⁴⁷⁵⁵

Despite the feminist furore, God's character is more masculine, and His ways are more masculine. '*And God said, Let us make man after our own image, after our likeness.*'⁴⁷⁵⁶ When God the Son became incarnate, the form taken was that of man, not woman. Patently, it could not be of woman, for the divine purpose of God the Father would have been misplaced and frustrated, in that no marriage to the church could occur, and, also, the true character of God would have been subject to severe transmutation. Simply put, there is no 'god the daughter.' Those who contend that God and the Messiah are female, or that they possess female attributes, merely reveal the worthlessness of their debased and carnal minds.

The underlying reason for feminism's false accusation and demand is given by Paul, '*For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God,*'⁴⁷⁵⁷ and, '*But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.*'⁴⁷⁵⁸ The carnal mind is enmity to everything that is of God. Likewise, the carnal mind is enmity to everything concerning God's people.

⁴⁷⁵² Prov 1:20-23,2:1-11

⁴⁷⁵³ to be manifest in the end-times in divinely-inspired prophecy, cf. Joel 2:28,29

⁴⁷⁵⁴ I Cor 14:35

⁴⁷⁵⁵ antipole summed in Latin proverb: Qui bene distinguet, bene docet, 'He who discerns well, teaches well.'

⁴⁷⁵⁶ Gen 1:26 (sublinear emphasis added)

⁴⁷⁵⁷ Rom 8:5-8

⁴⁷⁵⁸ I Cor 2:14

The things of God have never commended themselves to base mankind, '*And the lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely: for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light.*'⁴⁷⁵⁹

Goddess worship

Quite how far this particular form of abomination has gone can be gleaned from the spread and permeation of modern goddess worship, and from the effort to create a female-focus for spiritual expression through the supposed rediscovery of feminine goddess energy. Goddess worship is readily apparent in such outwardly diverse⁴⁷⁶⁰ and seemingly unrelated areas as:

1. Radical feminism;
2. Extreme or radical environmentalism;
3. Gnosticism;
4. General Pantheism;
5. New Age mythology;
6. Pagan–Neo-pagan–Witchcraft–Wiccan mythology; and,
7. Jungian psychology.

Steichen notes: 'Gnosticism has a long history of venerating 'Mother Wisdom' as Sophia.⁴⁷⁶¹ To them she was the fallen creator of earth, wind, fire, air, and water and mother of the evil Demiurge who was the God of Israel.'⁴⁷⁶²

Kassian notes the close relationship of this goddess to the radical feminist movement: 'Radical feminists have been evoking the goddess Sophia for quite some time in their books.'⁴⁷⁶³ A prime example of this

⁴⁷⁵⁹ Luke 16:8; base man's ways are antipathetic to God's and His people; base man's 'wisdom' is wholly self-serving.

⁴⁷⁶⁰ but not inwardly.

⁴⁷⁶¹ identified by Blavatsky, Helena Petrovna, as 'The female Logos of the Gnostics; the Universal Mind; and the female Holy Ghost with others,' q.v. her *Theosophical Glossary*; Greek: sophia means 'esoteric / hidden knowledge.'

⁴⁷⁶² Steichen, Donna, *Ungodly Rage*, p.162

⁴⁷⁶³ Kassian, Mary, *The Feminist Gospel*, p.173

feminist goddess agenda is found in Stone's observation: 'In the beginning, people prayed to the Creatress of Life, the Mistress of Heaven. At the very dawn of religion, God was a woman.'⁴⁷⁶⁴

New Agers refer to the 'Sophia of Christ,' deriving from Gnostic texts mainly from the second-century AD, which places the goddess Sophia above Christ and being seen to speak through Him, 'Our Maker Sophia' being a frequent supplication. The very name of the cathedral erected to the Virgin Mary in Constantinople by the Byzantine Emperor Justinian I⁴⁷⁶⁵ shows the linkage between, and identification of the pagan goddess with Rome's Virgin. The veneration of the New Age modern-form goddess began in the sixties, coinciding with the woman's movement, the ecology movement, and the re-emergence or repackaging of the New Age movement. When these become melded, the scale of the resulting confusion is staggering, as is that of the abomination. Goddess worship⁴⁷⁶⁶ has no rules, no written testimony, no doctrine, no law, no ethic; just a free-and-easy, self-indulgent, wholly self-seeking, self-aggrandising emotionalism, sustained by much 'spiritual shopping' in the arcade of the weird and fanciful, where the only overarching criterion is that the ensemble be utterly undemanding of the individual and singularly mind-numbing.

Satin describes the underlying emotions in the transition to goddess worship, from a New Age perspective: 'Significantly, among those of us at self-development stages six and seven, religious worship has already begun to rely less on the tradition of the sky god and more on the tradition of the earth goddess. As sociologist Robert Bellah sees it, "The sky religions emphasize the paternal, hierarchical, legalistic and ascetic, whereas the earth tradition emphasizes the maternal, communal, expressive and joyful aspects of existence."⁴⁷⁶⁷

As a simple and abbreviated illustration of the 'reasoning' behind this, consider the following as examples of the development of the genre. Feminist writer Weber observes: 'What distinguishes Jesus from the rest of us is that he knew, was conscious of, who and what he was. He knew he was God's Word, that is not to say the rest of us are not. As women, we have a particular responsibility, for God incarnated in our being may add a dimension to cosmic consciousness, as well as to the Christ, that cannot be imagined in a creation expressed by a primary masculine spirit. We have a responsibility to descend into, become one with, and then unfold the womanness of God in creation. This is how we become Christ. WomanChrist.'⁴⁷⁶⁸ To this is tied spurious musings on imagined things of old: 'Perhaps ancient women had access to psychic and physical powers we have forgotten. Ancient people of both sexes, living under the Stone Age Great Mother, had 'magical' powers of

⁴⁷⁶⁴ Stone, Merlin, *When God was a Woman*, p.1

⁴⁷⁶⁵ Hagai Sophia.

⁴⁷⁶⁶ viz., liberal humanism mingled with totalitarianism in the worship of a world-wide spirituality.

⁴⁷⁶⁷ Satin, Mark, *New Age Politics*, p.114; the sky-god, Ba'al, was held to be the husband of the earth-mother; q.v., Smith, Robertson, *The Religion of the Semites*, p.86

⁴⁷⁶⁸ Weber, Christin Lore, *WomanChrist: A New Vision of Feminist Spirituality*, pp.43,44

telepathy, clairvoyance, precognition, teletransportation, fire-walking, and shape-changing....Perhaps the greatest harm patriarchy has done to us is to stifle, co-opt, and deform our powers of imagination.⁴⁷⁶⁹

Patriarchy and all it imports are seen to be prime targets by radical feminism. '[S]ince most of Western culture, in this view, has been a statement to "male power and transcendence," it is similarly evil and must be discarded. This includes not only patriarchal books like the Bible and sexist subjects like traditional history, with its emphasis on great men and great deeds, but also the natural sciences and even the very process of analytical thinking itself.'⁴⁷⁷⁰ Starhawk, a self-proclaimed witch, tries to underpin this view: 'The symbolism of the Goddess has taken on an electrifying power for modern women. It has exposed the falsehoods of patriarchal history, and given us models for female strength and authority.'⁴⁷⁷¹

This notion has long been in gestation. Gadon observed a link with Jungian psychology: 'Jung⁴⁷⁷² discovered that the Goddess was a potent force in the unconscious. Jung's theory of the feminine principle as a universal archetype, a primordial, instinctual pattern of behaviour deeply imprinted on the human psyche, brought the Goddess once more into popular imagination.'⁴⁷⁷³

The beginnings of the final synthesis, as it were, occurred when Lovelock, a British scientist who, while working 'on the problem of detecting extra-terrestrial life,' formulated the Gaia hypothesis. In his own words: 'Gaia is Mother Earth. Gaia is immortal. She is the eternal source of life. She is certainly the mother of us all, including Jesus....[She]....[the goddess Gaia,]....[is] a living, breathing being. [She] is a single, self-regulating, biological organism that acts intelligently and beneficently to maintain life.'⁴⁷⁷⁴ The notion that Gaia is 'a single, self-regulating biological organism that acts intelligently and beneficently to maintain life' is now being taught to school children in the United States of America under the general heading of 'science,' despite its replication of paganistic and Pantheistic goddess worship. An environmental science school textbook used widely in that

⁴⁷⁶⁹ Sjoo, Monica, and Mor, Barbara, *The Great Cosmic Mother: Rediscovering the Religion of the Earth*, pp.425-427

⁴⁷⁷⁰ Taylor, John, *Are You Politically Correct?*

⁴⁷⁷¹ Starhawk, *The Spiral Dance: A Rebirth of the Ancient Religion of the Great Goddess*, p.91; Baer, Randall N., *Inside the New Age Nightmare*, p.144:

'The "rise of the Goddess, the Universal Female Principle, and the Universal Mother" has become a particularly potent rallying call....The New Age claim that "this male-dominated planet must undergo a radical restructuring through the rise to power of the Goddess-principle in order for the New Age to dawn," has fuelled a furious fascination with goddess worship, female-dominated witchcraft, and New Age feminism.

The "power woman" ideal has deluged the New Age with all types of female-dominated shamanism, witchcraft, sorcery, idolatry, goddess-channelling, and male-emasculating practices. Within these ranks are some of the most bitter, anger-filled female activists who readily employ sorcery against others. Being perceived as patriarchally imbalanced and female-suppressive, Christianity in particular is commonly belittled and reviled in many of these circles.'

Scripture puts it pointedly in Jer 31:22c, 'A woman shall compass a man,' with Hebrew: neqebah actually meaning 'female,' used rather than ishshah, 'woman,' possibly highlighting and presaging the feminist strain at the time of the end. The phrase is also seen as a Messianic prophecy (human incarnation) by certain Jewish sages and Christian commentators, and by others, more realistically, in context, as instead of shunning and despising her husband, Israel, Jehovah's bride, in due course, and with eager affection, will press around her Divine husband.

⁴⁷⁷² Jung, Carl G.

⁴⁷⁷³ Gadon, Elinor W., *The Once and Future Goddess*, p.228

⁴⁷⁷⁴ Lovelock, James, *The Gaia Hypothesis* (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

country presents the matter in the following terms: 'The perception of Earth as a living being is a view held by people in many cultures. However, in modern industrial society, humans are often seen as apart from nature. Nature is something to be controlled and consumed. Many people view Earth as existing for human use. People are removed from the systems that govern the rest of the biosphere. The modern industrial view does not match the portrait of Earth. Like any other population of organisms, humans are part of Earth's systems. The principles that govern lynx and hare populations in the ecosystem govern the human population as well. Scientists are now beginning to study these connections among systems. British scientist James Lovelock proposed [an] hypothesis called the Gaia hypothesis.⁴⁷⁷⁵ The Gaia hypothesis states that Earth is a single, living organism that regulates itself to maintain life. Lovelock's hypothesis reflected a view of Earth that many cultures have held for thousands of years,⁴⁷⁷⁶ all of them pagan and related to Pantheism and goddess worship. The notion has been developed even further: 'Far from being masters of nature, we as humans are an integral part of Gaia. It's fundamental to our new vision of the three interwoven strands of the Gaian approach: ecology, health, and spirit.'

⁴⁷⁷⁷

Such an abominable misrepresentation will lead inevitably to aberrant behaviour and beliefs in the now maturing youth. In the works cited, humans are reduced to a status equal to that of dumb animals, ideally taking their interactive part in a complex world ecology without any trace of mastery or ascendancy. The statements run completely contrary to God's command to man to subdue the earth, and to have dominion over the creatures therein.⁴⁷⁷⁸ Lovelock's views have been held by many ancient cultures, all of them pagan and related to Pantheism and goddess worship.

An inkling of what lies ahead is shown by Bonheim: 'The earth is not dead matter. She is alive. Now begin to speak to the earth as you walk. You can speak out loud, or just talk to her in your mind. Send your love into her with your exultation. Feel your heart touching upon the heart of the planet. Say to her whatever words come to you: Mother Earth, I love you. Mother Earth, I bless you. May you be healed. May all your creatures be happy. Peace to you Mother Earth. On behalf of the human race, I ask forgiveness for having injured you. Forgive us, Mother Earth.'⁴⁷⁷⁹ The ultimate end of this delusion?: 'You are merging with those on and off the Earth who are guiding your energy because you accept a different future for humanity....So when you feel let down.... talk to Nature. Nature is all around you no matter where on the Earth you live. Nature is all about merger, because it functions as one entire interwoven system. You, like Nature, are becoming more and more connected with other light-workers in physical and non-physical reality.'⁴⁷⁸⁰

⁴⁷⁷⁵ in 1972AD

⁴⁷⁷⁶ *Ecology and Human Impact*, pp.188,189; an environmental science school textbook used widely in the U.S.A.

⁴⁷⁷⁷ *Yoga Journal*, March / April 1992AD, p.31

⁴⁷⁷⁸ Gen 1:27,28

⁴⁷⁷⁹ *New Age Source Book*, p.45; quoting Bonheim, Jalaja, *Walking Prayer for the Earth*

⁴⁷⁸⁰ Young-Sowers, Meredith L., *Angelic Messenger Cards*, p.178

Here, a merger with nature becomes the basis for spirit possession, rationalised under the guise of uniting with nature's divine energies. This is precisely where lack of discernment leads: wild and obscene occult speculation and delusion, vacuous emotionalism, overt goddess worship, demon possession, and the complete and fatal surrender to Satan. It has no place in schools, no place in God's church, and certainly no place in discussing, teaching, and preaching doctrine.

Chapter 61

'God' of Pleiades

Jehovah's Witnesses claim that their god resides in the constellation Pleiades, a cluster of stars. The only mention in the Bible of Pleiades is in Job,⁴⁷⁸¹ which neither ascribes nor infers any residency criterion to Pleiades, merely mentioning Pleiades along with other constellations such as Orion and Acturus. In Astrology, Pleiades is located at the shoulder of Taurus, the bull. In mythology, the stars in Pleiades represent the seven daughters of Atlas by Pleione, daughter of Oceanus.⁴⁷⁸² Stories of their origin vary, but all agree that they were transformed into stars, one of a cluster known as 'The Pleiades in Taurus,' hardly visible to the naked eye.

Many New Age authors, channellers, mystics, theosophists, walk-ins, Satanists, and the like,⁴⁷⁸³ state that their channelled 'guiding spirits' claim to come from Sirius and / or Pleiades. Sirius, the Dog-star, represents Satan, the 'hound of heaven' and also Anubis, the dog-god guarding Tartarus and the gates of hell, while Pleiades has become synonymous with the headquarters of the Masters of the Logos, or just simply Paradise. This is what the Jehovah's Witnesses' hierarchy has been demonically influenced to adopt as part of their religious belief and doctrine. Their single god, as opposed to the biblical eternal two Jehovahs,⁴⁷⁸⁴ has also been channelled, and refers to the false god Satan.

All of the channelled demon beings interacting with the New Agers mentioned above are preparing for the satanic world to come, for what is, in reality, the world of the Antichrist and the False Prophet. According to

⁴⁷⁸¹ Job 9:9,38:31

⁴⁷⁸² viz., Electra, Maia, Taygete, Alcyone, Celæno, Merope, Sterope.

⁴⁷⁸³ e.g., Alice Bailey, Barbara Mariciniak, Sue Keiffer, Aleister Crowley.

⁴⁷⁸⁴ q.v. sup.

these demons, it will involve preparing and conditioning humanity variously through 'heightened consciousness,' 'meditation,' and 'planetary initiation,' for the coming of so-called 'elder gods' from Sirius and Pleiades. Cooper states that at the appearance of 'The Christ' of the New World Order,⁴⁷⁸⁵ 'angels,'⁴⁷⁸⁶ U.F.O.s and aliens⁴⁷⁸⁷ are to appear all over the world, in a whole range of guises.⁴⁷⁸⁸ This will be in an effort to convince the people of the world, and their leaders, to accept and later worship the satanic regime of the Antichrist and the False Prophet.

The 'god of Pleiades' is none other than Satan.

⁴⁷⁸⁵ i.e., the Antichrist.

⁴⁷⁸⁶ viz., demons.

⁴⁷⁸⁷ i.e., demons masquerading as extra-terrestrials.

⁴⁷⁸⁸ Cooper, Bill, *Behold a Pale Horse*; q.v. sup. for similar predictions.

Chapter 62

Forty-two?

Adams has the answer given after an extremely lengthy rumination by the megacomputer Thor to the complex question of "The meaning of life, the universe, and everything?"⁴⁷⁸⁹ in what appears to many to be a rather enigmatic "Forty-two!" But this is not as it seems, for it contains considerable occult and other significance.

Occult significance

'The Egyptians say, that the grand enemy of their god [Osiris] overcame him, not by open violence but that, having entered into a conspiracy with seventy-two of the leading men of Egypt, he got him into his power, put him to death, and then cut his dead body into pieces, and sent the different parts to so many different cities throughout the country.⁴⁷⁹⁰ The real meaning of this statement will appear, if we glance at the judicial institutions of Egypt. Seventy-two was just the number of the judges, both civil and sacred, who, according to Egyptian law, were required to determine what was to be the punishment of one guilty of so high an offence as that of Osiris, supposing this to have become a matter of judicial inquiry. In determining such a case, there were necessarily two tribunals concerned. First, there were the ordinary judges, who had power of life and death, and who amounted to thirty⁴⁷⁹¹ then there were, over and above, a tribunal consisting of forty-two judges, who, if Osiris

⁴⁷⁸⁹ Adams, Douglas, *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*

⁴⁷⁹⁰ Wilkinson, Richard H., *The Complete Temples of Ancient Egypt*, Vol. iv. pp.330-332

⁴⁷⁹¹ Siculu, Diodorus, *Library of History*, Vol. 1, p.48

was condemned to die, had to determine whether his body should be buried or no, for, before burial, everyone after death had to pass the ordeal of this tribunal.⁴⁷⁹² As burial was refused him, both tribunals would necessarily have been concerned; and thus there would be exactly seventy-two persons, under Typho the president, to condemn Osiris to die and to be cut in pieces.

The words of Diodorus, as printed in the ordinary editions, make the number of the judges simply "more than forty," without specifying how many more. In the Codex Coislianus, the number is stated to be "two more than forty." The earthly judges, who tried the question of burial, are admitted both by Wilkinson⁴⁷⁹³ and Bunsen,⁴⁷⁹⁴ to have corresponded in number to the judges of the infernal regions. Now, these judges, over and above their president, are proved from the monuments to have been just forty-two. The earthly judges at funerals, therefore, must equally have been forty-two. In reference to this number as applying equally to the judges of this world and the world of spirits, Bunsen, speaking of the judgement on a deceased person in the world unseen, uses these words in the passage above referred to: "Forty-two gods (the number composing the earthly tribunal of the dead) occupy the judgement seat." Diodorus himself, whether he actually wrote "two more than forty" or simply "more than forty," gives reason to believe that forty-two was the number he had present to his mind; for he says, that "the whole of the fable of the shades below," as brought by Orpheus from Egypt, was "copied from the ceremonies of the Egyptian funerals," which he had witnessed at the judgement before the burial of the dead.⁴⁷⁹⁵ If, therefore, there were just forty-two judges in "the shades below," that even, on the showing of Diodorus, whatever reading of his words be preferred, proves that the number of the judges in the earthly judgement must have been the same.⁴⁷⁹⁶

Here there is mention of forty-two,⁴⁷⁹⁷ the number of judges in the higher tribunal, and also of thirty, the number of judges in the ordinary or lower tribunal, with the entire assembly under one president, the god Typho,

⁴⁷⁹² Siculu, Diodorus, *Library of History*, Vol. 1, p.58

⁴⁷⁹³ Wilkinson, Richard H., *The Complete Temples of Ancient Egypt*, Vol. v. p.70

⁴⁷⁹⁴ Bunsen, Charles Waddington, *Memoirs of Baron Bunsen*, Vol. i. p.27

⁴⁷⁹⁵ Siculu, Diodorus, *Library of History*, Vol. 1, p.58

⁴⁷⁹⁶ Hislop, Alexander, *The Two Babylons*, p.65

⁴⁷⁹⁷ a strange, but, according to some, originally occult-derived occurrence of 'forty-two' is found in the international oil industry, where the standard unit of measurement of crude oil supplies and many bulk oil products is the 'blue barrel' [bbl.] of 42 US gallons [c.168 litres]. Despite the ready availability of 50-gallon drums, this rather unusual unit was selected by the then preponderant conglomerate, John D. Rockefeller's Standard Oil, as the industry standard, with the 'blue' in 'blue barrel' being the company colour. Standard Oil's market strategy, it appears, was structured to gain and retain a stranglehold on the world's hydrocarbon energy supplies which it knew would become, over time, fundamental to all economic growth. This anti-competitive trait, however, led to an antitrust-propelled compulsory massive divestment with the company being split into a number of autonomous organisations which formed what would later be called the 'Seven Sisters.' There is more than a hint of family connection here, and recent industry mega-mergers are beginning to rebuild much of the original parent. In doing so, many concerns over supply control and price-setting have resurfaced. Unfortunately, this time it is going to be in the fascist-dominated environment of the New World Order and Antichrist, where 'suitable,' financially-beneficial, anti-competitive activities will be encouraged. Perhaps the latest manifestation of 'forty-two' lies in the form of William Jefferson Clinton, the 42nd President of the United States of America, a man whose sorry record exhibits that he is very much in opposition to the will of God. He has well-documented, serious occult leanings, and, together with his wife, Hillary Rodham—both 'Luciferian Illuminists,'

meaning, according to Hislop, 'The Evil One.' 'The Egyptians did all that they could to identify Typho with Seth, the [putative] slayer of Nimrod,⁴⁷⁹⁸ and hence an enemy of the pagans, and whom they called Osiris,'⁴⁷⁹⁹ but, in reality, 'The Evil One' is clearly Satan. And so Satan's inversion of reality can be seen for what it is. He has placed himself as the president—the head, the Supreme Being—and, under him, his higher court of forty-two, being the number of man's rebellion against God. Under that, there is the ordinary, lower, or minor court of thirty, and thirty has already been seen to be the number of God's throne in heaven.

Satan does all that he can to pervert and invert, twist and deceive, but in doing so he has merely succeeded in signalling his perversity. He is not the president, the Supreme Being, no matter how he wishes it were so, or how he schemes to bring it to pass. His desire is summed thus: *'How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation in the sides of the north. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.'*⁴⁸⁰⁰ Satan may wish to sit as the Supreme Being on Zion, but he cannot. But this much can be said: forty-two is certainly a number close to his wicked 'heart.'

Hislop exposes a further satanic application of the number 'forty-two': '[This can] cast a very singular light on a well-known superstition among ourselves. Everybody has heard of St. Swithan's⁴⁸⁰¹ day, on which, if it rain, the current belief is that it will rain in uninterrupted succession for six weeks⁴⁸⁰²....But, as in Egypt, and Rome, and Greece, and almost everywhere else, long before the Christian era, Tammuz had come to be recognised as an incarnation of the Devil, we need not be surprised to find that St. Swithan is no other than St. Satan....One of the current forms of the grand adversary's name among the Pagans was just Sytan or

the highest order of Satanism—has brought the basest and most foul to the highest echelons of US governance. Probably, there is more to be heard of Mr. and Mrs. Clinton, especially the latter, in the future.

The seven-point plan of Luciferian Illuminists works for the abolition of:

1. Ordered government;
2. Private property;
3. Inheritance;
4. Patriotism;
5. Religion;
6. Family; and, finally, the creation of:
7. The New World Order.

The head of the Illuminati (as of 2005AD) is: Lord James de Rothschild, in Scotland.

⁴⁷⁹⁸ slayer of Nimrod identified as Esau in Jasher 27:7, but the details of his reputedly violent death are actually shrouded in mystery.

⁴⁷⁹⁹ Hislop, Alexander, *The Two Babylons*, pp.63,64, and footnote (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁴⁸⁰⁰ Isa 14:12-14

⁴⁸⁰¹ Roman Catholic so-called saints' names include: St. Swithan (some say, Satan); St. Vermin (Rat); St. Pollinard (Apollo, the sun-god), and St. Longinus, named for the Roman soldier who thrust a spear into the side of Our Lord on the cross! The day allocated in the Roman Catholic calendar to this 'saint,' 15 March, was the very day on which Hitler took the spear of Longinus (or spear of Destiny) from the Hapsburg Imperial Treasury in Vienna, two days after the Nazi Anschluss—German: 'connection' or 'union'—invasion which lead directly to the annexation of Austria.

⁴⁸⁰² forty-two days; now usually restricted to forty.

Sythan....The Anglo-Saxons, when they received that name, in the very same way as they made Odin into Wodin, would naturally change Sythan into Swythan....If anyone thinks it incredible that Satan should thus be canonised by the Papacy in the Dark Ages, let me call attention to the pregnant fact that, even in comparatively recent times, the Dragon—the Devil's universally recognised symbol—was worshipped by the Romanists of Poitiers under the name of "the good St. Vermine."^{4803 4804}

The same 'forty-two' can be seen in Lent: 'The words of Socrates, writing on this very subject,⁴⁸⁰⁵ are these: "Those who inhabit the princely city of Rome fast together before Easter three weeks, excepting the Saturday and the Lord's Day [sic]." But at last, when the worship of Astarte was rising into the ascendant, steps were taken to get the whole Chaldean Lent of six weeks, or forty days, made imperative on all within the Roman empire of the West.'⁴⁸⁰⁶

'Lent, (from Anglo-Saxon lencten, spring), the spring or vernal festival....[is] observed, in preparation for Easter, by members of the Greek, Roman, and Anglican churches. The original fast of spring which preceded Easter was of forty hours duration, this being the number of hours that intervened between the death and resurrection of Christ [sic]. Additional days were added, their number varying in different churches....The historian Sozomen⁴⁸⁰⁷ writes of the fast "The Quadragesimal fast before Easter some observe six weeks, as the Illyrians and Western churches; others seven, as [do] the Constantinopolitans and neighbouring churches.'⁴⁸⁰⁸

The same number crops up in mystical Judaism, in an incantation uttered by Jewish mystics in order to control and redirect demons: "By virtue of the Great Name of forty-two letters, I adjure you, even against your will, to have not the power to fly or so anything or make any further accusation against the Israelite nation than you have done until now. I bind you and adjure you that you will have no more power to accuse Israel for all time. Rather from this day forward you will defend the Israelite nation."⁴⁸⁰⁹ Here mystic Jews are seeking, through demonic incantation, to turn demons to the protection of their nation, all done in the name of the Great Name bound in the occult number forty-two!

⁴⁸⁰³ Salverte, Eusebe, *The Occult Sciences*, cited in *Notes of the Society of the Antiquaries of France*, Vol. 1, pp.464,475

⁴⁸⁰⁴ Hislop, Alexander, *The Two Babylons*, pp.280,281 and footnote (paraphrased and modified; with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁴⁸⁰⁵ c.450AD

⁴⁸⁰⁶ Hislop, Alexander, *The Two Babylons*, pp.106,107

⁴⁸⁰⁷ in 440AD

⁴⁸⁰⁸ *Encyclopedia Americana*, article, 'Lent' (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁴⁸⁰⁹ Silberman, Neil Asher, *Heavenly Powers, Unraveling the Secret History of the Kabbalah*, p.114.

Seventy-two

Seventy-two,⁴⁸¹⁰ is, of course, sixty-six plus six, thus giving three sixes, the number of the Beast. Separately, sixty-six is the number of man's government, and six of a man, compounding in the uniquely evil individual who will control the end-time world government: the Antichrist.⁴⁸¹¹ Also, seventy-two, the sum of forty-two and thirty, is found in masonic symbolism. Wiccan paganism / Witchcraft has this to say on its occurrence: 'In Freemasonry, Man as Microprosopus was and is associated with the five-pointed Pentalpha [Pentagram]. The symbol was used, interlaced and upright, for the sitting Master of the Lodge. The geometric properties and structure of the Endless Knot were appreciated and symbolically incorporated into the seventy-two degree angle of the compasses [found in the Masonic emblem of the square and compasses]—the masonic emblem of virtue and duty.'⁴⁸¹²

A five pointed star with a single point downmost is termed the Devil's Pentagram. The upper four points are held to represent the elements of 'fire,' 'water,' 'earth,' and 'air,' and the bottom fifth point the 'spirit of Lucifer.' This pentagram is also a symbol of what is called the 'Goathead of Mendes,'⁴⁸¹³ an occult graphical representation of Satan,⁴⁸¹⁴ also found in the blazing star of Freemasons' lodges, said by Albert Pike to represent the Dog-star, Sirius, that is, Satan. In coalescing these notions, there is found in five times seventy-two degrees—giving three hundred and sixty degrees—a full circle, the pagan symbol of the sun, also depicted in the form of an equilateral triangle—the 'Trinity'—contained within a circle in the masonic 'Ra Stand,' named after the Egyptian sun-god, Ra. The occult circle also depicts the infinite and boundless universe, and the idea of being 'born again' through one's own endeavours: autosoterism. In occult lore the number five means 'spiritual light.' The five pointed star, this time with the single point uppermost, is the occult star of Venus, the pagan

⁴⁸¹⁰ 'Seventy-two' also turns up in the detail of the Universal Product Code [UPC] Version 'A'—the well-known '666-barcode' consumer product control system. The code's designers say it was formulated as a 'code' and a 'symbology.' While configured primarily on the satanic number 666, by being encoded as two bars and two spaces within seven modules, it is also called '7,2' code. In astrological charts, 1° in the precession of the equinox through a zodiac sign takes seventy-two years.

⁴⁸¹¹ similarly to Hebrew, New Testament Greek depicted numerals by the use of letters, in the latter case identified by a superlinear line, with the highest letter placed first. The letter or symbol for 'six' was an archaic representation called stigma (originally digamma), plural stigmata—written ϛ [s] and ϙ [ss] respectively—which fell out of use soon after the Bible was completed. It also means 'a mark, puncture, piercing, or brand,' something with strong resonance through stigma [verb stizo] to charagma and the 'mark of the Beast' (q.v. *The Expanded Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*), and is not to be confused with the current sixth letter of the later Greek alphabet, sigma: σ. Stigma, in the form of writing of the time, looked rather like the ligature (or writing together) of the Greek letters sigma and tau.

⁴⁸¹² Wiccan Witchcraft, *History of Pentagrams* (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁴⁸¹³ the five-pointed Goathead of Mendes: four upper points represent earth, fire, air, and water, with the fifth, downward pointing, the spirit of Lucifer.

⁴⁸¹⁴ Mendes is the Egyptian goat-god, known to the Hittites as Ashima, and to the Greeks as Pan, where he dwells as the god of Nature, presiding over the earthly paradise of Arcadia, though one where death is to be found, cf. Collins, Andrew, *Twenty-First Century Grail—The Quest for a Legend*, pp.28,60.

Virgin goddess, found in the European Union⁴⁸¹⁵ flag. Despite currently having fifteen member countries,⁴⁸¹⁶ it has but twelve Venus stars in an obscene, satanic parody of the woman, representing the true church: '*And there appeared a great wonder in heaven, a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars.*'⁴⁸¹⁷ The blue background or field is the Virgin Mary's colour, the flag being a representation of the E.U.'s dedication to the Roman Catholic Virgin. It is also the flag of the New Holy Roman Empire.

Freeman notes that, at the very heart of pagan belief, seventy-two is found forming the time of preparation for the afterlife: 'Diodorus Siculus, who was in Egypt circa forty years before the time of Christ.... says that on the death of a king the Egyptians put on mourning apparel and closed all temples for seventy-two days, during which embalming process proceeded.'⁴⁸¹⁸

Scriptural significance

The scriptural significance of the number 'forty-two,' here being the length of the Beast's 'unfettered' reign in months and equating with three-and-a-half years, is very considerable. Forty-two is the biblical number of 'man's opposition to God.' Just as the Beast empire will have world domination with the Gentiles treading Jerusalem under foot for forty-two months;⁴⁸¹⁹ the children of Israel had forty-two camps before they entered the Promised Land;⁴⁸²⁰ forty-two thousand Ephraimites were slain by Jephthah for failing to join in the battle with Ammon;⁴⁸²¹ forty-two youths⁴⁸²² were killed by two she bears for being disrespectful to Elisha;⁴⁸²³ and, of course, Jesus Christ was the forty-second generation from Abraham⁴⁸²⁴ and suffered extreme opposition, violence and, finally, crucifixion: the very consummation of man's violent opposition to God.⁴⁸²⁵

⁴⁸¹⁵ E.U.

⁴⁸¹⁶ with many more European nations to become caught up in its political and economic web; Booker, Christopher, & Richard North, Richard, *The Great Deception: the Secret History of the European Union*, p.32 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'In 1947AD, at the Albert Hall in London, [Churchill] conjured up his vision of a 'Temple to World Peace,' which would have 'four pillars': The U.S.A.; the Soviet Union; an 'United States of Europe,' and, quite separately, the British Empire and Commonwealth.'

⁴⁸¹⁷ Rev 12:1

⁴⁸¹⁸ Freeman, James M., *Manners & Customs of the Bible*, p.58

⁴⁸¹⁹ Dan 7:23-25,12:7; Rev 11:2,13:5

⁴⁸²⁰ Num 33:1-49

⁴⁸²¹ Judg 12:6

⁴⁸²² not '*children*' as K.J.V.

⁴⁸²³ II Kings 2:24

⁴⁸²⁴ Mat 1:1-17

⁴⁸²⁵ Matthew's genealogy omits three kings of Judah between Joram and Ozias, namely, Ahaziah, Joash, and Amaziah. These have been written out, in all probability, by dint of being the immediate prodigy of the cursed, usurping Athaliah, daughter of Jezebel and wife of Joram (truncated form of Jehoram), who, herself, later ruled Israel for six years, cf. II Kings 8:26,11:1-20; II Chron 22:2-23:21. Also Salathiel is said to have begat Zorobabel, whereas he begat Pedaiah who in turn begat Zorobabel. In this instance it is probable that Pedaiah died in his father's lifetime, leaving Zorobabel the next surviving descendant. Finally, '*Jechonias*' in Mat 1:11 refers to Jehoiakim, while in Mat 1:12 it must refer to

Chapter 63

Ancient Babylon's Demise

“The character of [the Babylonian] empire is indicated by the nature of the material composing that portion of the image by which it was symbolized—the head of gold. Babylon, its metropolis, towered to a height never reached by any of its later rivals. Situated in the garden of the East; laid out in a perfect square sixty miles in circumference,⁴⁸²⁶ fifteen miles on each side;⁴⁸²⁷ surrounded by a wall three hundred and fifty feet high⁴⁸²⁸ and eighty-seven feet thick,⁴⁸²⁹ with a moat, or ditch, around this of equal cubic capacity with the wall itself; divided into six hundred and seventy-six squares, each two-and-a-quarter miles in circumference,⁴⁸³⁰ by its fifty streets, each one hundred and fifty feet in width,⁴⁸³¹ crossing each other at right angles, twenty-five running each way, every one of them straight and level and fifteen miles in length;⁴⁸³² its two hundred and twenty-five square miles of enclosed surface,⁴⁸³³ divided as just described, laid out in luxuriant pleasure grounds and gardens, interspersed with magnificent dwellings—....this city, containing in itself many things which were themselves wonders of the world, was itself another and still mightier wonder. Never before saw the earth a city like that; never since has it seen its equal. And there, with the whole earth prostrate at her feet, a queen in peerless

Jechoiachin—the Greek differing only by a single letter. As a result, this gives fourteen inclusive generations from Abraham to David, fourteen from Solomon to Jehoiachim, and fourteen from Jechoiachin to Christ—totalling forty-two.

⁴⁸²⁶ 96.5+ kilometres

⁴⁸²⁷ 24.125 kilometres

⁴⁸²⁸ 106.68 metres

⁴⁸²⁹ 26.51+ metres

⁴⁸³⁰ 3.6+ kilometres

⁴⁸³¹ 15.24 metres

⁴⁸³² 24.125 kilometres

⁴⁸³³ 362.1+ square kilometres

grandeur, drawing from the pen of Inspiration itself its glowing title, 'The glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency,' sat this city, fit capital of that kingdom which constituted the golden head of this great historic image. Such was Babylon, with Nebuchadnezzar, youthful, bold, vigorous, and accomplished, seated upon its throne."⁴⁸³⁴

The absorbing history of ancient Babylon, especially in respect of its total demise in accordance with divine prophecy, is summarised by Keith: 'Herodotus, Xenophon, Strabo, Pliny, Diodorus Siculus, and Quintus Curtius, who are all celebrated Greek or Roman writers, describe the ancient greatness of Babylon. Their descriptions of it vary considerably, as referring to its state at different periods. But all concur in relating to its wonderful magnificence, which is manifest to this day in the immense masses of its ruins. The testimony of Herodotus, the earliest of these writers, who lived about two hundred and fifty years after Isaiah, is particularly valuable, as he visited Babylon, and wrote from what he saw and examined on the spot. The walls of Babylon, before their height was reduced to 75 feet⁴⁸³⁵ by Darius Hystaspes, were above 300 feet⁴⁸³⁶ high; they were 87 feet⁴⁸³⁷ broad, and 48 miles⁴⁸³⁸ in compass. The temple of Belus, 600 feet⁴⁸³⁹ in height—the artificial hanging gardens, which, piled in successive terraces, towered as high as the walls—the embankments which restrained the Euphrates—the one hundred brazen gates—the palace built by Nebuchadnezzar, surrounded by three walls eight miles⁴⁸⁴⁰ in compass—and the adjoining artificial lake, the circumference of which was far more than one hundred miles,⁴⁸⁴¹ and its depth, by the lowest account, 35 feet⁴⁸⁴²—all displayed many of the mightiest works of mortals concentrated in a single spot. The great Babylon was the glory of kingdoms, and the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, the golden city, the lady of kingdoms, and the praise of the whole earth. The scriptures, which thus describe it, mark minutely every stage of its fall, till it should become what now it is—a complete desolation. And every feature of its present aspect is delineated in the prophecies with all the precision with which they could now be drawn by the traveller who looks on fallen Babylon itself.

⁴⁸³⁴ Smith, Uriah, *Thoughts on Daniel and the Revelation*, pp.45,46, cited in *Bible Readings for the Home Circle*, p.20 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁴⁸³⁵ 23 metres

⁴⁸³⁶ 91 metres

⁴⁸³⁷ 26.5 metres

⁴⁸³⁸ 77 kilometres

⁴⁸³⁹ 183 metres

⁴⁸⁴⁰ 14 kilometres

⁴⁸⁴¹ 171 kilometres

⁴⁸⁴² 11 metres

Not with a bang, but a whimper

Concerning the siege of Babylon, Herodotus and Xenophon relate, in exact accordance with what Isaiah and Jeremiah had foretold, that the Medes and Persians, united under Cyrus⁴⁸⁴³ (who was prophesied of by Isaiah, above one hundred years before he was born, as raised up by God to subdue nations before him, and to be his instrument in punishing his enemies, and delivering his own people), came up upon Babylon and besieged it—that the Babylonians, enclosed within their impregnable walls, could not by any means be provoked to a combat in open field, but remained in their holds and forebore to fight—that the device was adopted by Cyrus of turning the waters of the Euphrates, which flowed through the city, into the lake, whereby a snare was laid for Babylon—that the waters of the river thus being dried up, so as to allow men to go over dry-shod, the enemy entered by its channel—that, from the negligence of the guards, the gates, leading from the river to the city, were not shut—that the Median and Persian army thus entering into the midst of the city by stratagem, and as if by stealth, designedly during the night of an annual Babylonish festival, Babylon was taken when it was not aware—that its princes, captains, and mighty men, when reposing after their feasts, and after they were drunken, were suddenly slaughtered, and slept the sleep of death—and that Babylon, which had never been conquered before, was thus taken without resistance, in a moment, and in a manner which, till accomplished, was unknown to the king and to the inhabitants, who were not aware of their danger (the city being so very extensive) till one post ran to meet another, and one messenger to meet another, with the tidings that the enemy were within it, and that Babylon was taken.⁴⁸⁴⁴

Plundered, wasted, & dead

The gradual decline of Babylon throughout succeeding ages is also traced in the prophecies, *'Sit on the dust, there is no throne, O daughter of the Chaldeans.'*⁴⁸⁴⁵ Babylon ceased to be the seat of government, and was reduced from an imperial to a tributary city. *'All the graven images of her gods shall be broken unto the ground—I will punish Bel⁴⁸⁴⁶ in Babylon, and I will bring forth out of his mouth that which he hath swallowed up.'*⁴⁸⁴⁷ 'Xerxes⁴⁸⁴⁸ seized the sacred treasures, and plundered or destroyed the temples and idols of Babylon'—*'Take balm for her pain, if so be she may be healed. We would have healed Babylon, but she is not healed.'*⁴⁸⁴⁹

⁴⁸⁴³ Keller, Werner, *The Bible as History*, p.294:

'The Medes—who since the fall of Ninevah in 612BC had shared the stricken Assyrian empire with the Babylonians—were unexpectedly overcome by their neighbours and vassals, the Persians. Astyages, king of the Medes, was beaten by his own grandson, Cyrus.'

⁴⁸⁴⁴ Isa 21:2,44:27,45:1; Jer 50:38,51:11,27,30,36,57

⁴⁸⁴⁵ Isa 47:1

⁴⁸⁴⁶ in the form of the temple of Belus.

⁴⁸⁴⁷ Jer 51:44,47,52

⁴⁸⁴⁸ a successor of Cyrus on the throne of Persia.

⁴⁸⁴⁹ Jer 51:8,9

Alexander the Great attempted to restore Babylon to its former glory, and designed to make it the metropolis of a universal empire. Ten thousand men were employed in repairing the embankments of the Euphrates and the temple of Belus. But the death of Alexander, when in the prime of life, put an end to the work—*'she was not healed.'* *'They shall remove, they shall depart, both man and beast.'*⁴⁸⁵⁰ About one hundred and thirty years before the Christian era, a Parthian conqueror destroyed the fairest parts of Babylon; and many of the inhabitants, together with their effects, were removed into Media. The neighbouring city of Seleucia also drained it of a great part of its population.

After the commencement of the Christian era, Babylon was only partially inhabited; and a wide space within the walls was cultivated. It diminished as Seleucia increased, and the latter, which was very populous, became the greater city. Babylon gradually became more and more desolate, till, in the fourth-century, its walls formed an enclosure for wild beasts, and the place where the golden city had stood, which reigned over the nations, was converted into a field for the chase—a hunting place for the pastime of the Persian monarchs. The name of Babylon was cut off from the history of the world. And a long interval succeeded without any record concerning it. And the progress of ages has brought it at last to that utter desolation which the prophets testified that it would finally come....

[T]he greatness of the desolation is visible to all, and admits neither of denial nor dispute. For, from being the 'glory of kingdoms,' Babylon is now the greatest of ruins; and after the lapse of two thousand, four hundred years it exhibits to the view of every traveller the precise scene defined in prophecy; and it could not now be described in more appropriate and graphic terms than the following, though such words have never been known to be its *'burden.'*

*'The name and remnant are cut off from Babylon. There the Arabian pitches not his tent; there the shepherds make not their folds; but wild beasts of the desert lie there, and their houses are full of doleful creatures, etc. It is a possession for the bittern, and a dwelling place for dragons—a wilderness, a dry land, and a desert—a burnt mountain—empty—wholly desolate—pools of water—heaps—and utterly destroyed—a land where no man dwelleth—every one that goeth by it is astonished,' etc.'*⁴⁸⁵¹

On the one side of the Euphrates, the canals being dry, and the crumbled bricks on an elevated surface exposed to the scorching sun, these 'sun-burnt ruins' cover an 'arid plain,' and Babylon is a wilderness, a dry land, and a desert. On the other, the embankments of the river, and with them the vestiges of ruins over a large space, have been swept away; the plain is in general 'marshy and in many places inaccessible,' especially after the annual overflowing of the Euphrates....At that season also 'large deposits of the waters,' as Porter, in his

⁴⁸⁵⁰ Jer 50:3

⁴⁸⁵¹ Isa 13:19,20,14:22,23; Jer 50:13,23,39f.,51:13,26f.; Jer 50:23, "old" Babylon is described as *'the hammer of the whole earth,'* so it is meet that she be broken as she has broken others.

vivid description of the ruins of Babylon, remarks, 'are left stagnant between the ruins, again verifying the threat denounced against it—I will make thee a possession of the bittern, and pools of water.'⁴⁸⁵²

Vitrified

Fallen Babylon bears another mark of judgement which has not been effected by the overflowings of the Euphrates, by the ravages of wild beasts, by the devastations of time, nor by the rapacity of man. There are, on the ruins of Birs Nimrod, or temple of Belus, which was standing after the beginning of the Christian era, large fragments of brickwork that have been 'completely molten,' and that ring like glass, which must not only have been subjected to a heat 'equal to that of the strongest furnace,' but which, being vitrified all around, bear evident proof of the operation of fire having been continued on them, as well after they were broken down as before,' and bear as evident proof that the ruin resembles, to use, in justice, the words of Major Keppel, 'what the Scriptures prophesy it should become: *'a burnt mountain.'*⁴⁸⁵³ It is still worthy, from its mere immensity, of being a relic of Babylon the great, for, though a mass of ruins, it is still 235 feet⁴⁸⁵⁴ high. 'From the summit we had a distinct view,' says Major Keppel, 'of the heaps which constitute all that now remains of ancient Babylon; a more complete picture of desolation could not well be imagined. The eye wandered over a barren desert, in which the ruins were nearly the only indication that it had ever been inhabited. It was impossible to behold this scene, and not to be reminded how exactly the predictions of Isaiah and Jeremiah have been fulfilled, even in the appearance Babylon was doomed to present: that she should never be inhabited; that the Arabian should not pitch his tent there; that she should become heaps; that her cities should be a desolation, a dry land, and a wilderness.'

'The broad walls of Babylon shall be utterly broken.' They were so broad, that, as ancient historians relate, six chariots could be driven on them abreast. They existed for more than one thousand years after the prophecy was delivered. They were numbered among 'the seven wonders of the world.' And what can be more wonderful now, or what could have been more inconceivable by man when Babylon was in its strength and glory, that the broad walls of Babylon should be so utterly broken that it can scarcely be determined with certainty that even a vestige of them remains. The trench out of which they were formed must now, in a great measure, be filled with them again; for both have alike disappeared. Captain Frederick could discover no appearance of the wall, after an active search of six days. One of the chapters, sixty pages in length, of Mr. Buckingham's travels,⁴⁸⁵⁵ is entitled, 'Search after the walls of Babylon.' Major Keppel,⁴⁸⁵⁶ after stating that he

⁴⁸⁵² Porter, Sir Robert K.

⁴⁸⁵³ Jer 51:25,26

⁴⁸⁵⁴ 72 metres

⁴⁸⁵⁵ Buckingham, James Silk, *Travels in Assyria, Media, and Persia*.

⁴⁸⁵⁶ Sir George Olaf Roos-Keppel, later Lt. Col.

and those who accompanied him having, in common with other travellers, totally failed in discovering any trace of the city walls, adds, that 'the divine predictions against Babylon having been so literally fulfilled in the appearance of the ruins, that I am disposed to give the fullest signification to the words of Jeremiah: *'The broad walls of Babylon shall be utterly broken.'*⁴⁸⁵⁷

'Who hath declared this from ancient time? Who hath told it from that time? Have not I the Lord, and there is no God beside me? Has not the day of the Lord come against Babylon as a destruction from the Almighty?' and when we see the proudest works of man thus brought to the dust, where is the human strength, or wisdom, or beauty, or greatness, in which any ought to glory, and whose name alone is it that ought ever to be feared, and that shall be exalted forever, but that of the Lord who hath performed his every purpose against Babylon? And, seeing that the glory of kingdoms is thus fallen, what earthly possession or privilege deserves to be prized like the citizenship of that kingdom which alone can never be moved? and how worthless in comparison shall they all at last prove, even as the dust of fallen Babylon! And what other stay should the true Christian seek, or what human fear need he dread, while he puts his trust in that God according to whose word the broad walls of Babylon have been utterly broken? And if the life on their lips, and the breath in their nostrils, and the graves of their brethren and forefathers, cannot teach the worldly, the careless, and the nominal Christian, that pride was not made for man, let them go and look for the walls of Babylon, and stand on the blasted ruins of the temple of Belus. There they may learn, visibly illustrated, that truth of that word of God—*'All that is in the world, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but of the world. And the world passeth away, and the fashion thereof.'* O that all such would remember, *'He that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.'*

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⁴⁸⁵⁷ Jer 51:58

⁴⁸⁵⁸ Keith, Alexander, *The Evidence of Prophecy*, pp.118-128 (sub-headings added).

Chapter 64

Baptismal Regeneration

The route to salvation is described in Mark: *'He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.'*⁴⁸⁵⁹ The Great Commission, as it is sometimes known, is given in the same chapter, *'And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe; in my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover,'*⁴⁸⁶⁰ and in Matthew, *'And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit: Teaching'*⁴⁸⁶¹ *them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world Amen.'*⁴⁸⁶² The commission given to the church is

⁴⁸⁵⁹ Mark 16:16

⁴⁸⁶⁰ Mark 16:15-18

⁴⁸⁶¹ Greek: kerusate.

⁴⁸⁶² Mat 28:18-20; Mat 28:19,20 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets0, *'Go ye therefore and teach* [Greek: matheteusate, *'teach' or 'proclaim publically [to]'*] *all nations.....teaching* [Greek: didaskontes] *them to observe all things even as I have commanded you'*;

This differentiates the work of the two witnesses, an end-time work of witness. God never punishes a nation or the world until He has witnessed their sins against them and they have had an opportunity to accept or reject that witness. Compounding this, of course, are the centuries of sin and suffering that have run their weary course throughout history, a mute testament to and indictment against unreconstructed man.

to proclaim publically to all nations, the whole world. Paul, for example, went and preached to the Gentiles. His method of preaching to the Gentiles was to take something they were familiar with and enlighten them from that—such as in the episode on Mars Hill.⁴⁸⁶³ The commandment of Jesus is to make disciples⁴⁸⁶⁴ of or from the nations, then to nurture those followers, akin to His instruction to Peter to *'feed my lambs / sheep.'*⁴⁸⁶⁵

While the commission is to proclaim publically the word of God to all nations, make disciples from them, baptise them, and teach and nurture them in the Word of God, the whole operation of the calling and association of new converts is God's responsibility, ultimately. It is He who calls people; it is His 'elect.' There is no wholesale, indiscriminate, 'in-your-face' proselytising in Judæo-Christianity.⁴⁸⁶⁶

'There was no limit to what [Christ's] love would give or where it would go. No demand that could be made upon it was too much. If love meant the Cross, Jesus was prepared to go there. Sometimes we make the mistake of thinking that love is meant to give us happiness. So in the end it does, but love may well bring pain and demand a cross.'⁴⁸⁶⁷ There is a vast difference between Jesus Christ's love of mankind in dying vicariously for all⁴⁸⁶⁸ while yet sinners—in many cases unrepentant ones—and the modern nonsensical, unbiblical palia-
tive: "God loves you just as you are."

Pagan influences & appropriations

Hislop identifies the origin and spoor of baptismal regeneration: 'In the secret Mysteries that were then set up,⁴⁸⁶⁹ while in the first instance, no doubt, professing the greatest antipathy to the prescribed worship of fire, they sought to regain their influence and power by scenic representations of the awful scenes of the Flood, in which Noah was introduced under the name of Dagon,⁴⁸⁷⁰ or the Fish-god⁴⁸⁷¹—scenes in which the whole family of man, both from the nature of the event and their common connection with the second father of the human race, could not fail to feel a deep interest. The concocters of these Mysteries saw that if they could only bring men back again to idolatry in any shape, they could soon work that idolatry so as substantially to re-

The person in the normal state is described by Paul in Rom 8:7, *'For the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.'* For unreconstructed and incorrigible man, natural death is the vestibule of the second death, which is death eternal.

⁴⁸⁶³ Acts 17:22; Aeropagus, i.e., Mars Hill.

⁴⁸⁶⁴ i.e., followers.

⁴⁸⁶⁵ John 21:16

⁴⁸⁶⁶ I Peter 3:2 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets), *'While they behold your chaste conversation [Greek: anastrophe, 'conduct'] coupled with fear'*; the conduct of the 'elect' women, e.g., (chaste conduct coupled with fear, i.e., respect), serves as an example and a form of witness against the ways of the world, such that the worldly, if God so wills, will be convicted in their hearts and turn to God. God draws the sinner to repentance.

⁴⁸⁶⁷ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of John*, Vol.2, p.150 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁴⁸⁶⁸ Rom 5:8; Isa 11:9,41:27,52:7,61:1

⁴⁸⁶⁹ i.e., after the death of Nimrod.

⁴⁸⁷⁰ representation of Nimrod, q.v. sup.

⁴⁸⁷¹ representing the *'beast from the sea,'* q.v. sup.

establish the very system that had been put down. Thus it was, that, as soon as the way was prepared for it, Tammuz was introduced as one who had allowed himself to be slain for the good of mankind. A distinction was made between good serpents and bad serpents, one kind being represented as the serpent of Agathodæmon, or the good divinity, another as the serpent Cacodæmon, or the evil one.⁴⁸⁷² It was easy, then, to lead men on by degrees to believe that, in spite of all appearances to the contrary, Tammuz, instead of being the patron of serpent-worship in any evil sense, was in reality the grand enemy of Apophis, or great malignant serpent that envied the happiness of mankind, and that in fact he was the very seed of the woman who was destined to bruise the serpent's head. By means of the metempsychosis, it was just as easy to identify Nimrod and Noah, and to make it appear that the great patriarch, in the person of this his favoured descendant, had graciously condescended to become incarnate anew, as Dagon, that he might bring mankind back again to the blessings they had lost when Nimrod was slain. Certain it is that Dagon was worshipped in the Chaldean Mysteries, wherever they were established, in a character that represented both the one and the other.

In the previous system, the grand mode of purification had been by fire. Now it was by water that men were to be purified. Then began the doctrine of baptismal regeneration, connected, as we have seen, with the passing of Noah through the waters of the Flood. Then began the reverence for holy wells, holy lakes, holy rivers, etc., which is to be found wherever these exist on the earth; which is not only to be traced among the Parsees, who, along with the worship of fire, worship also the Zereparankard, or Caspian Sea, and among the Hindoos, who worship the purifying waters of the Ganges, and who count it the grand passport to heaven, to leave their dying relatives to be smothered in its stream; but which is seen in full force at this day in Popish Ireland, in the universal reverence for holy wells, and the annual pilgrimages to Loch Dergh, to wash away sin in its blessed waters; and which manifestly lingers also among ourselves, in the popular superstition about witches which shines out in the well-known line of Burns—"A running stream they daurna cross."^{4873 4874}

In contrast to pagan diversions, the 'normal' modus described in the New Testament is for a sinner to repent, be baptised for the remission of sins, and receive the gift of the Holy Spirit,⁴⁸⁷⁵ in and under the Judæo-Christian dispensation. Sadly, this did not remain unassailed for long by the forces of evil. 'The influence of the Greek Mysteries in corrupting Christian baptism is more plainly seen than that of any other specific department

⁴⁸⁷² Footnote: In Egypt, the Uræus, or the Cerastes, was the good serpent; the Apophis the evil one.

⁴⁸⁷³ excerpted from the poem; Burns, Robert, *Tam O'Shanter*

⁴⁸⁷⁴ Hislop, Alexander, *The Two Babylons*, pp.244,245

⁴⁸⁷⁵ there are other gifts; Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol. 1, pp.67,68 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'God has given each man a gift, and every man can ask one of two questions. He can ask, "What can I make for myself out of this gift?" or, "What can I do for others with this gift?" This kind of temptation can come out in the simplest thing. A person may possess, for instance, a voice which is good to hear; he may therefore 'cash in on it,' and refuse to use it unless he is paid. There is no reason why he should not use it for pay, but there is every reason why he should not use it only for pay. There is no man who will not be tempted to use selfishly the gift which God has given to him..... [Christ] called men to a life of giving, not of getting.'

of the pagan cult. Confession was followed by a kind of baptism. The candidates for initiation bathed in the pure waters of the sea. The manner of bathing, and the number of immersions varied with the degree of guilt which they had confessed. They came from the bath new men. It was a catharsis.

Certain forms of abstinence were imposed; they had to fast; and when they ate they had to abstain from certain food. After this purification came a soteria, "a great public sacrifice of salvation"; also personal sacrificesThe effect of these pagan mysteries upon Christian baptism....will be more clearly seen when we remember how simple a ceremony New Testament baptism was. It followed immediately upon confession of faith in Christ. There was no preparatory ceremony, no ritual, only the simple formula.

When the current of history emerges at, and after the middle of the second century, marked changes appear which are so identical with Gnosticism and the Greek mysteries that there can be no question as to their source.^{'4876}

Anointing oil

The use of anointing oil in baptism was borrowed directly from paganism. 'The general inference of the large influence of Gnostics on baptism is confirmed by the fact that another element, which certainly came through them, though its source is not certain, and is more likely to have been Oriental than Greek, has maintained a permanent place in most rituals—the element of anointing. There were two customs in this matter, one more characteristic of the East, the other of the West—the anointing with:

[1.] The oil of exorcism before baptism and after the renunciation of the Devil; and,

[2.] The oil of thanksgiving, which was used immediately after the baptism, first by the presbyter, and then by the bishop, who then sealed the candidate on the forehead. The very variety of the custom shows how deep and yet natural the action of the Gnostic systems, with their mystical and magical customs of the Gnostic societies or associations, had been on the practices and ceremonies of the church.^{'4877}

'Holy water'

The pagan doctrine of exorcism was carried still further, and baptism was corrupted yet more by adding the use of human saliva as a 'charm.' This arose from the general use of spittle by the pagans as a talisman against harm and evil influences. Seymour notes: 'In its preparation—amid many exorcisms of devils and evil spirits, and forms of prayer—the following ceremonies are observed: The priest divides the water in the font with

⁴⁸⁷⁶ q.v. sup.

⁴⁸⁷⁷ Hatch, Edwin, *Influence of Greek Ideas and Usages upon the Christian Church* (with added comment and clarification in square bracket)

his hand, in the shape of a cross. In exorcising the water he touches it with his hand. In blessing it, he thrice makes over it the sign of the cross. In dividing it, he pours it towards the four quarters of heaven. He breathes thrice into it in the form of a cross. He lets down the great [Easter] candle a little into it, and says, 'This might of the Holy Ghost descend into this fountain—plentitude.'⁴⁸⁷⁸ Then he takes the candle from the water and again merges it more deeply, saying the same words as before, but in a higher tone. The third time he plunges it to the bottom, again repeating the formula with a still louder voice. Then blowing—sufflans—thrice into the water in the form of the Greek letter Psi, he says: 'Impregnate with regenerating efficacy the whole substance of this water' and so takes the candle out of the font. Besides these doings, various oils are poured into the water and mixed with the hand; and still more strange, spittle mingled with it, as I have once seen with my own eyes in the grand baptistry at Saint John Lateran in Rome.'⁴⁸⁷⁹

Middleton attests to the pagan origin of 'holy water': 'The next thing that will of course strike one's imagination is their use of holy water; for nobody ever goes in or out of a church but is either sprinkled by the priest, who attends for that purpose on solemn days, or else serves himself with it from a vessel, usually of marble, placed just at the door, not unlike to one of our baptismal fonts [indeed!]. Now, this ceremony is so notoriously and directly transmitted to them from paganism, that their own writers make not the least scruple to own it....The magical virtues which [so-called] Christians came to ascribe to holy water are essentially identical with those which the Pagans attributed to it.'⁴⁸⁸⁰

Tertullian wrote a special treatise on the question of baptism, which represented the pagano-Christian creed in fullness and in detail.

Pagan worship

In summary, therefore, there is the following:

1. The worship of water as a divine element or agent, and hence its use as a protection against evil, and, in baptism, as a means of producing spiritual purity, forms a prominent feature of pagan religions;
2. Pagan water-worship was associated with the higher forms of sun-worship in various ways, and notably with that lower phase, Phallicism, with the obscene rights of which it is yet closely connected in India. In Mexico, the cross was the special symbol of the water-worship cult;

⁴⁸⁷⁸ Latin: in hanc plentitudinem fontis.

⁴⁸⁷⁹ Seymour, Michael Hobart, *A Pilgrimage to Rome*, p.535 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁴⁸⁸⁰ Middleton, Conyers, *The Miscellaneous Works* (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

3. In pagan water-worship the sacred fluid was applied in many ways—by immersion, by bathing, by sprinkling; in the latter use the water was sprinkled upon the candidate from a sacred sprinkling-brush, or from the bough of some sacred tree; it was sometimes poured upon the candidate from a cup made from the bark of a sacred tree; three-fold immersion appears in some instances. Inspiration was sought from sacred water, by drinking, by bathing, by sitting over it, and by inhaling its vapours; and,

4. Water for religious purposes was taken from sacred streams, fountains, and wells; or it was made holy by exorcisms and by the use of salt; it was carried to remote points and preserved for a long time. The ancient Druids caught rainwater in receptacles on the hilltops and carried it to their altars through necessary aqueducts.

'The fundamental errors of the pagan water-worship cult appeared in Western Christianity as early as the middle of the second-century.....As baptism was the door to church membership, the visible church was soon filled with "baptised pagans," who were Christians in name only; by this means New Testament Christianity was rapidly perverted.

Whoever will seek the ultimate facts must confess that the Christianity of the third and the succeeding centuries [AD] was far removed from the New Testament standard....

It is scarcely necessary to add that every form of baptism except submersion was borrowed from paganism; that faith in baptism as producing spiritual purity, and hence as a "saving ordinance," was borrowed from paganism: the notion that only the baptised can be saved was borrowed from paganism; the use of oil, of spittle, of the sign of the cross, of lights, of white robes, is a remnant of paganism; baptising for the dead, and delaying baptism until near death, are a part of the pagan residuum; faith in water from the Jordan or elsewhere is paganism. The naming of children at baptism was a direct importation from paganism. Insofar as any of these elements are retained by [the established churches, thus far does paganism dominate].'⁴⁸⁸¹

The geographically widespread nature of pagan baptismal rituals can be appreciated from de Landa, who offers a description of a 'baptism' in one of the temples of the Maya:⁴⁸⁸² 'Baptism is not found in any part of the Indias except in Yucatan, and even with a word which means 'to be born anew' or 'to be born again,' which is the same as the Latin 'to be reborn'; for in the language of Yucatan zihil means 'to be born anew' or 'to be born again,' and it is not used except in compound words, and thus caputzihil means 'to be born again.'

We have not been able to know its origin, except that it is a thing which they have always used and toward which they have so much devotion that nobody failed to receive it and reverence that those who had sins, if they are known to have been committed, had to reveal them to the priests; and such faith in it that they never repeated the sin in any manner.'⁴⁸⁸³

⁴⁸⁸¹ Lewis, Abraham Herbert, *Paganism Surviving in Christianity*, heading 'Influence of the Greek Mysteries,' p.31

⁴⁸⁸² in 1566AD

⁴⁸⁸³ Landa, Diego de, *Relacion de las Cosas de Yucatan*, p.44

An insidious embracing of pagan rites and beliefs in relation to baptism in the then rapidly apostatising Christianity is identified by Lewis: 'Various forms of baptism, and the doctrine of baptismal regeneration, were common characteristics of pagan religion before the birth of Christ.

The pagan water-worship cult is secondary only to sun-worship, in age and extent. Its native home was in the East, but it appears in all periods and on both hemispheres. It has two phases: water as an object of worship and as a means of inspiration, and water used in religious ceremonies to produce spiritual purity. These phases often mingle with each other.

This reverence for water, and faith in its cleansing efficacy, arose from the idea that it was permeated by the divine essence, from which it had supernatural power to enlighten and purify the soul, without regard to the spiritual state of the candidate. This doctrine of baptismal regeneration was transferred to Christianity before the close of the second century [AD], and through it, the church was filled rapidly with baptised but unconverted pagans.

Sun-worship and water-worship were closely united in the pagan cultus, as they were in the corrupted Christian baptism....Pagan water-worship everywhere was closely associated with sacred rivers⁴⁸⁸⁴....The fundamental errors of the pagan water-worship cult appeared in western Christianity as early as the middle of the second century [AD]; this resulted in the baptism of the sick, baptism of infants, baptism for the dead, the delaying of baptism until the approach of death in order to make the most of both worlds, and the doctrine of penance to atone for sins committed after baptism; all these followed as a legitimate result.'⁴⁸⁸⁵

Much the same faith in the regenerative power of water, especially 'living' or flowing water, is seen and alluded to, and even evidenced to an extent, in Martyr's work, written about the middle of the second-century: 'As many as are persuaded and believe to be true these things that are taught and spoken by us, and give assurance that they are able to live accordingly, are taught to pray and fast to implore from God the forgiveness of sins previously committed, we ourselves praying and fasting with them. Then they are led to where there is water and are regenerated in the same manner in which we ourselves were so.'⁴⁸⁸⁶

The pagan view that water baptism possesses magical efficacy is expressed in so-called Christian doctrines, beginning towards the end of the second-century AD. Tertullian eulogised water: 'Is it not wonderful too, that death should be washed away with bathing?....How foolish and impossible it is to be formed anew by waterthe first thing....which you have to venerate is the age of the waters, the second, their dignity, in that they were the seat of the Divine Spirit, more pleasing, no doubt, than all the other then existing elements.'

In stark opposition to all of this pagan mumbo-jumbo, consideration that the individual's 'life to date' has not been in accordance with the will of God, followed by conviction, contrition, resolution, repentance, redemp-

⁴⁸⁸⁴ Nile, Ganges, Jumna, Sarasvati, and Naboda, for example.

⁴⁸⁸⁵ Lewis, Abraham Herbert, *Paganism Surviving in Christianity*, heading 'Influence of the Greek Mysteries,' pp.31,36,61

⁴⁸⁸⁶ Martyr, Justin, *First Apology*, chpt. 61

tion through faith and baptism for the remission of sins, and receipt of the gift of the Holy Spirit, is the Judæo-Christian cadence and *modus*.⁴⁸⁸⁷ The notion that a mendicant can give assurance of ability to live according to the will of God prior to receiving the Holy Spirit is completely alien, and utter nonsense, for, patently, man lacks the power and the will to do so. To attribute magical powers to water, to venerate it, and sell it for profit, is to scurry down the same broad highway to hell that pagans have been tramping since their very beginnings.

'Born again'⁴⁸⁸⁸

The veneration of water, and thus holy water, is based on the supposed age and dignity of the substance. It is not based on any biblical principle or biblically-based doctrine. Despite this, the strange wanderings of Tertullian's mind, and many like him, quickly became the accepted doctrine of the visible, apostate church. Much of the root of the claimed magical virtues and properties of water and baptism can be traced to ancient Babylonian beliefs via Gnosticism. A Gnostic writing contains the following exchange, put into the mouths of Mary and Christ: 'Then came forth Mary and said: Lord, under what form do baptisms remit sins?....[Christ replied] Now, therefore, if anyone hath received the mysteries of baptism, those mysteries become a great fire, exceeding strong and wise, so as to burn up all the sins: and the fire entereth into the soul secretly, so that it may consume within it all the sins which the counterfeit of the spirit hath printed there. Likewise it entereth into the body secretly, that it may pursue all its pursuers and divide them into parts....The fire separates the counterfeit of the spirit, fate, and the body into one portion, and the soul and the power into another portion. The mystery of baptism remaineth in the middle of them, so that it may perpetually separate them, so that it may purge and cleanse them in order that they may not be polluted by matter.'⁴⁸⁸⁹ Such a thing could never have been uttered by Christ.⁴⁸⁹⁰

The introduction of pagan infant baptism came about by the reasoning that the original sin attaching to all new borns had to be washed away in early baptism. Infant lustrations, so prominent in pagan rites, were simply borrowed, the only brake, apparently, being the pagan belief that mortal sins committed after such baptism are irremissible.

This view was later relaxed in the middle of the third-century AD in the form of provision for the restoration of the lapsed, with the result that the earlier decision between the benefits of an early infant baptism and a later adult baptism gave way to one where both infant and adult baptisms for the individual was considered the norm. In fact, baptism became everything it possibly could in the minds of the deluded, and resulted in even the perception of the need of baptism for the already righteous—in other words, multiple baptisms, despite the fact

⁴⁸⁸⁷ Hebrew: *teshuvah*, means not merely 'regret' and 'repentance,' but also the resolve to endeavour not to sin again.

⁴⁸⁸⁸ largely reproduced from 'Infant baptism, adult baptism, & 'pre-Limbo' doctrine' sup.

⁴⁸⁸⁹ Gnostic writing *Pistis Sophia* (Faith-Wisdom) (with added comment and clarification)

⁴⁸⁹⁰ cp. 'Baptism of Fire,' inf.

that such a righteous status which patently equates with repentance, remission and the grace of God does not appear to have been mentioned.

Clementine has Peter as stating: 'When you are regenerated and born again of water and of God, the frailty of your former birth which you have through men is cut off, and so at length you shall be able to attain salvation, but otherwise it is impossible.'⁴⁸⁹¹ Both water and God appear to have a part in Clementine's baptismal regeneration, although the wording is a little ambiguous.

The K.J.V. does little to clarify the current status of the 'elect,' on occasion. Two tracts in Corinthians, for example, appear to state that the 'elect' are saved while still alive on earth: '*For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God,*' and, '*For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish. To the one we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life. And who is sufficient for these things? For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ.*'⁴⁸⁹² Green's Literal Translation, however, supplies a more accurate form of both: '*For the word of the cross is foolishness to those being lost, but to us being saved, it is the power of God,*' and, '*For we are a sweet smell to God because of Christ in the ones being saved, and in the ones being lost; to the one, an odour of death unto death, and to the other, an odour of life unto life. And who is sufficient for these things? For we are not as the many, hawking the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God. We speak in Christ, in the sight of God.*' Of course, the K.J.V. translation finds itself in its own internal conflict with: '*But he that endureth unto the end, the same shall be saved.*'⁴⁸⁹³ Salvation is the gracious award at the end of the race, not something handed out on the starting line. The continuous progressive tense adopted in the literal translation's '*being saved,*' indicating a continuing and ongoing process, is far superior. Salvation is linear, not punctiliar.⁴⁸⁹⁴

The cadence is seen again in John: '*Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.*'⁴⁸⁹⁵ There are two separate events here: first, water baptism signifying the remission of sins by Christ through the symbolic dying of the old sinning mortal man and the birth of the new cleansed mortal man, that is, the 'elect,' and, later, the transformation of the 'elect' to immortal spirit at the Second Coming.

The pagan view of the magical efficacy of water has been reviewed already, but there is even more by way of obscenity and confusion from that quarter, intent on reducing water baptism to the act of procreation. As stated, Odeberg suggests that: 'The word water is used in John chapter three in the sense of what the Jews

⁴⁸⁹¹ Clementine, *Recognitions*, VI, 8&9

⁴⁸⁹² I Cor 1:18; II Cor 2:15-17

⁴⁸⁹³ Mat 24:13; also cf. Mat 10:22; Mark 13:13; Heb 3:14; Rev 2:26

⁴⁸⁹⁴ viz., of or relating to a point of time.

⁴⁸⁹⁵ John 3:5

taught: a divine efflux of creative energy.⁴⁸⁹⁶ Morris writes, 'Terms like "water," "dew," "rain," and "drop" are often used of male sperm in many ancient writings including Rabbinic writings. The celestial [sic] waters of Genesis⁴⁸⁹⁷ came to represent a source of spiritual creation to the Jews. So, in some metaphorical way, this "born of the water," which may also be translated as "begotten [sic] of the water," possibly has reference to the male semen (water, rain, dew, and drop are often used of semen in various Rabbinic and other writings), as well as to Christian baptism.'⁴⁸⁹⁸

The linkage this has to the pagan idea of the mystical regenerative properties of water is all too apparent. They termed their baptism an 'illumination,' as did the early Roman church. Much the same treatment is meted out on the word 'seed,' which is developed to tie all aspects of this pagan myth together. Strachan claims, 'It is quite consistent with the Johannine thought that to be born of water and the Spirit should mean to be born of a spiritual seed, in contrast with the seed of semen of physical generation⁴⁸⁹⁹....[They] are begotten by a spiritual 'seed,'⁴⁹⁰⁰ begotten of God into a new kind of life. They become 'children of God.'⁴⁹⁰¹

In untangling the web spun by Strachan it is necessary to correct his errant view of *'Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin because he is born of God.'*⁴⁹⁰² The impossibility of sinning after being born of God attests to the spiritual nature of the birth: this is a reference to being born of the Spirit into the eternal kingdom of God; not a so-called *'born again'* human experience on the part of one who can, does, and will sin again and again. The text simply cannot refer to a sinning human being.

Despite this, the notion that the water of baptism is somehow bound in with some mystical impregnation by the Holy Spirit leading to some form of spiritual birth continued to be developed. Grenier opines: 'The interpretation which most commends itself to me is one which understands water as having reference to the issue of maternal fluid which accompanies childbirth. This would help to clarify the contrast which Jesus makes in his rather cryptic statement in the following verse,⁴⁹⁰³ *'What is born of flesh is flesh, and what is born of spirit is spirit.'*⁴⁹⁰⁴

⁴⁸⁹⁶ Odeberg, Dr. Hugo, *The Fourth Gospel*, p.48

⁴⁸⁹⁷ Gen 1:7

⁴⁸⁹⁸ Morris, Leon, *The Gospel According to John*, p.216

⁴⁸⁹⁹ cf. I Peter 1:23

⁴⁹⁰⁰ cf. I John 3:9

⁴⁹⁰¹ Strachan, R. H., *The Fourth Gospel*, p.135

⁴⁹⁰² I John 3:9

⁴⁹⁰³ John 3:6

⁴⁹⁰⁴ Grenier, Brian, *St. John's Gospel*, p.85; I Cor 15:50, 'Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.' The first use of the word 'inherit,' Greek: dunamai, literally means 'to be able by virtue of one's power.' A better translation, therefore (with added comment and clarification in square brackets) would be: 'Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood is unable of its own power to [attain] the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.'

Even though erroneous, the conviction of being 'begotten of the Holy Spirit' at the point of baptism is held widely. The danger inherent in the word 'begotten' is that it is frequently and insidiously taken to mean immortal, even in small part. By this means, the false 'doctrine of the immortal soul' is able to mutate and ensnare many of the unsuspecting.⁴⁹⁰⁵

Barrett compares the water of baptism with spiritual semen which itself is perhaps equated with the primal heavenly water, or so he opines.⁴⁹⁰⁶ The fertility cults of the Near- and Middle East would be well at home with such a doctrine. Anat and Baal, ancient pagan deities, had intercourse through rain acting as semen. In mythology, water in the form of rain and male semen were held to be manifestations of the divine means of causing seeds to grow and mature into plants, and fetuses to grow and be born as babies. This absurdity is even taken further by Matthews and Benjamin: '[And causing], interestingly enough, the bodies of the dead to rise from their graves. The dead, like seeds, are buried in the soil. And just as the rain moistens seeds which germinate and sprout, the world of the Bible expects the rain to bring the dead back to life as well.'⁴⁹⁰⁷

The use of analogies concerning seeds in the New Testament parables is specific. In the parable of the sower, the seed represents the gospel, *'But he that receiveth seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it.'*⁴⁹⁰⁸ In Mark it is the kingdom of God: *'It is like a grain of mustard seed, which, when it is sown in the earth, is less than all the seeds that be in the earth. But when it is sown, it groweth up, and becometh greater than all herbs, and shooteth out great branches; so that the fowls of the air may lodge under the shadow of it.'*⁴⁹⁰⁹ In the parable of the tares, the seed are the children of the kingdom of God at the end-time harvest, *'He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one; The enemy that soweth them is the devil; and the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels.'*⁴⁹¹⁰ There is nothing here of male or spiritual semen, human impregnation, embryos, fetuses, or primal heavenly / holy water. So ingrained is the belief in and blind acceptance of pagan symbolism and metaphor that

⁴⁹⁰⁵ e.g., the idea of an embryonic kingdom of God in the form of the Worldwide Church of God was promoted vigorously by Herbert Armstrong, relying heavily on human impregnation, embryonic, foetal, and birthing analogies.

⁴⁹⁰⁶ Barrett, C. K., *The Gospel According to St. John*, p.209

⁴⁹⁰⁷ Matthews, V. H., and Benjamin, D. C., *Social World of Ancient Israel 1250–587BCE*, pp.76,77 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁴⁹⁰⁸ Mat 13:23

⁴⁹⁰⁹ Mark 4:31,32

⁴⁹¹⁰ Mat 13:37-39; Isa 5:2,4 contain the only two references in the Bible to *'wild grapes'*. The husbandman (God) planted the vineyard (the earth) with a view to bring forth *'grapes'* or, depending on the translation used, *'good grapes'* (actually, full-bodied clusters of grapes, in correct translation), but it brought forth *'wild grapes'* instead. So what are *'wild grapes'*?

Delving into the root meanings of the Hebrew: b'ushiym, the first level of meaning to be extracted is *'bad, sour, and unripe grapes,'* but that misses much. It derives as a plural from the Hebrew: be'oshe, which means *'poison berries,'* which in turn which comes from bor or bore meaning *'stench' or 'stink.'* So the full meaning of *'wild grapes'* is actually *'stinking, poisonous berries.'*

When the husbandman came looking for full-bodied clusters of grapes, all he found was stinking, poisonous fruit.

many cannot escape its fatal embrace. The pressing of 'ill-conceived' analogies too far in their details leads to compounding error, and this device is a frequent companion of those who twist the truth to their destruction in expounding pagan 'born again' doctrines.

The heavily occult concept of 'Mother Earth,' or 'Gaia,' is often linked to the 'born again' or 'born from above' notion and a skew on the creation story. Phraseology frequently includes the likes of: 'It is from the female earth that humanity was produced. We came from this earth—it is a mother to us all. The 'born again' Christian's new life on earth, once sprouted or produced, may be said to have been 'born from above,' from God Almighty, just as He sends the rain and mists upon this planet. He is progenitor of all life: the Earth's 'husband' in a sense. In parallel, He has impregnated the church with His holy life-generating substance, the Holy Spirit, born or begotten of water, and [which] comprises growing seeds or foetuses.'⁴⁹¹¹

The Gnostics believed their 'begettal for above' to be indicative of the pre-existent origin of the 'spiritual ones.' Gnostic-like 'rebirth' terminology has inhabited many pagan beliefs: Attis was reborn, as was Isis, and Semiramis, for example. The rite of rebirth was the principal contest of the Mithraic mysteries. In Hellenism, immortality was conferred by sacramental regeneration—the belief that a magical renewal of man's physical nature was secured through various mystical rites.

'Born again' problem

There is one, most fundamental problem with the idea of the 'born again' Christian: if the 'birth' refers to receipt on conversion of the Holy Spirit by the individual, and his regeneration into something new and better here on earth, then all the holy men of the Old Testament, right up to John the Baptist in the New Testament, would have been 'born' before Christ, for they all had the Holy Spirit. Such precedence is impossible, however, for Christ is the First-fruit, or the First-born, confirmed in, *'In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the pre-eminence,'*⁴⁹¹² and in, *'Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him.'*⁴⁹¹³ Jesus Christ was the first who rose from the dead to die no more: the First-born and the First-fruit. It is obvious, therefore, that the 'birth' spoken of

⁴⁹¹¹ unattributed, probably Gnostic.

⁴⁹¹² Col 1:14-18 (sublinear emphasis added)

⁴⁹¹³ Rom 6:9

by Christ in John,⁴⁹¹⁴ resulting in a spirit being, is a future miraculous event, and not a confused creation in the mind of a mortal who calls him- or herself 'born again.'

A second problem arises out of its provenance: 'It is scarcely necessary to add that....faith in baptism as producing spiritual purity, and hence as a "saving ordinance," was borrowed from paganism: the notion that only the baptised can be saved was borrowed from paganism.'⁴⁹¹⁵

Marker

Baptism is both an outward marker and an action, signifying Christ's remission of the individual's sins. Being 'born of water' is symbolic of the death of the old man, the sinner, and the rising of the new man⁴⁹¹⁶ whose sins have been remitted and who is free from the penalty of death. Baptism does not, of itself, possess any magical powers; neither does the medium, water. It is Christ Who remits sins. The condition of the church, cleansed by the Word, is described by Paul, '*That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word.*' The '*washing of water*' is the same as '*the washing of regeneration*'⁴⁹¹⁷ mentioned in Titus. This refers to regeneration by the Holy Spirit, and brings forth the cadence: '*And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.*'⁴⁹¹⁸ Only Christ can remit sins, for He paid the penalty in full, and it is through Christ that Christians are granted the gift of the Holy Spirit, instilling the very Power of God the Father.

*'Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained,'*⁴⁹¹⁹ is often cited as proof of a priest's power to give general absolution, as found in the Roman church. But this is based on a poor translation: '*they are retained*' should read, '*they have been retained,*' implying the existence and confirmation of a former decision made in heaven. John gives the context, '*as my Father hath sent me, even so I send you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Spirit.*'⁴⁹²⁰ The discernment soon to be conferred through the Holy Spirit would enable the apostles to perceive true obedience to God as distinct from the feigned, such as in the case of Ananias and Sapphira.⁴⁹²¹ And they did not have their sin remitted: they died.

⁴⁹¹⁴ John 3:3-8

⁴⁹¹⁵ Lewis, Abraham Herbert, *Paganism Surviving in Christianity*, heading 'Influence of the Greek Mysteries,' p.31

⁴⁹¹⁶ beware false emotion masquerading as true belief: Col 3:9,10; the '*new man is renewed in knowledge,*' v.10b (subscripted emphasis added), not in emotion.

⁴⁹¹⁷ Titus 3:5

⁴⁹¹⁸ I Cor 6:11

⁴⁹¹⁹ John 20:23

⁴⁹²⁰ John 20:21b,22

⁴⁹²¹ Acts 5:1-11

Spirit withheld

Some do not receive this gift, however. A deficiency, and an obvious one, can be seen in the actions of Simon the sorcerer, *'But there was a certain man, called Simon, which before time in the same city used sorcery, and bewitched the people of Samaria, giving out that himself was some great one: To whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, This man is the great power of God. And to him they had regard, because that of long time he had bewitched them with sorceries. But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptised, both men and women. Then Simon himself believed also: and when he was baptised, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done. Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Spirit: (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus.) Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit. And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Spirit was given, he offered them money, Saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Spirit. But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God. Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee. For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity. Then answered Simon, and said, Pray ye to the Lord for me, that none of these things which ye have spoken come upon me.'*⁴⁹²²

Simon tried to buy the Holy Spirit, and obviously feigned contrition and repentance prior to his baptism. In this he was an hypocrite, excoriated by Christ in His words for the Pharisees of the day, where He referred to them as *'vipers,'* and *'hypocrites.'* When Christ accused the scribes and Pharisees of being *'hypocrites'*—*'Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees! Hypocrites'*⁴⁹²³—the word used in Greek means a dissembler, an actor, or a stage-player.⁴⁹²⁴ What was being said was that they were performing a staged and insincere religion; an outward show, trite and superficial, yet signifying nothing: a mere froth. Likewise, the lack of sincere contrition and repentance—in essence, an outward show but lacking the innermost conviction—results in defective baptism, and resulting lack of the gift of the Holy Spirit.

In Scripture, hypocrisy is linked to iniquity: *'Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.'*⁴⁹²⁵ Hypocrisy is a grave sin, and, when practised in religion by so-called *'leaders,'* or *'apostles,'* has the greatest condemnation pronounced by Christ Himself. It is wilful, and done

⁴⁹²² Acts 8:9-24 (sublinear emphasis added)

⁴⁹²³ Luke 11:44

⁴⁹²⁴ Greek: hupokrites.

⁴⁹²⁵ Mat 23:28

in the full knowledge of what it is, and what it imports. This sin cannot be practised without the practitioner ending in *'the lake of fire.'* The Holy Spirit, the Power of God,⁴⁹²⁶ cannot be duped, bought, or secured on the basis of a deficient baptism or some manufactured ruse. It is clear that all wantings in claimants to that power are the product of unreconstructed man, allied with Satan, and import no criticism of the gift of the Holy Spirit.

⁴⁹²⁶ q.v. sup.

Chapter 65

Adam & Eve

If Eve was the one who first accepted Satan's lie in the garden of Eden, then why does the Bible talk of Adam's fall? Surely it should have been Eve's?

The events surrounding the eating of the forbidden fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil are recorded in Genesis: *'Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.'*⁴⁹²⁷

'Choosing in his subtlety the weaker and more dependent of the two human beings, the tempter addresses to her the first suggestion of evil....[that by eating of that forbidden, her] subject position [would] be instantly raised into independence, [and she would] *'be as gods, knowing good and evil.'*"⁴⁹²⁸

⁴⁹²⁷ Gen 3:1-7

⁴⁹²⁸ Vaughan, C. J., *Christ the Light of the World*, p.116 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

In her eyes Eve saw no special harm in the tree and its fruit.⁴⁹²⁹ Human nature desires that which is forbidden, and Eve was vulnerable. '[Satan] now ventures upon challenging the prohibition;...."God knows that this act which you call sin would make you happier, more manly perhaps, more knowing, more independent of foolish scruples and unnecessary restraints."⁴⁹³⁰

Does not everyone wish to be made wise? And here was a serpent that could speak, perverting God's word, first by casting doubt on what God had said by implying that He had permitted the eating of the fruit of all of the trees in the garden, and then by urging her to partake of the forbidden fruit, while promising wisdom, and eternal life, and saying that God had only forbidden them the fruit of that particular tree to preserve His own interests. Eve had never seen a serpent speak before. Perhaps God really was withholding these wonderful things? It seemed just too good an opportunity to miss. Why not indulge? What harm? And at that moment, the declension had begun:

1. She saw: she looked with pleasure on the forbidden fruit, and lusted after it;
2. She took: for she reached out with her own hand and plucked the fruit. She wasn't given it—she took it;
3. She ate: when she looked, she perhaps did not intend to take; when she took, she perhaps did not intend to eat; but when she had looked, and taken, there was a dreadful inevitability: she ate; and,
4. She gave to Adam: doubtless using the same arguments as the serpent, and adding her own personal experience—a testimonial, as it were, from a satisfied customer. A product to be shared; the benefits enjoyed. And so Adam ate too.

'And then how does sin spread itself! It cannot rest until it has drawn others in. The woman must make her husband eat; the friend corrupts his friend, the brother entices his brother; and so a deluge of misery enters the world in one drop of sin.'⁴⁹³¹

Eve first ate of the forbidden fruit, but Adam fell. Why was this so? The events following the forbidden act give an introduction: *'And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself. And he said, Who told thee that thou wast*

⁴⁹²⁹ nowhere in Scripture does it mention an apple as the forbidden fruit. Strangely, Latin: malum means both 'apple' and 'evil.'

⁴⁹³⁰ Vaughan, C. J., *Christ the Light of the World*, p.125 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁴⁹³¹ Vaughan, C. J. *Christ the Light of the World*, p.126

*naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldst not eat? And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.'*⁴⁹³²

Shame and fear seized them, and they ran and hid, for they knew that they were convicted of their sin. But God called them out, and examined them in what they had done. And therein lies the singular difference, and it is this: Eve was deceived by the serpent, but Adam, with no serpent present, had a clear-minded choice between obeying God and following his wife. Fatefully, he chose the latter.

'If we would see what sin is, we must not read treatises on morals, not poems of sentiment, not speeches of philanthropists, but another book altogether—the book of God: the Old Testament, to show us what sin has cost in judgement; the New Testament, to show us what sin has cost in expiation....let us open the oracles of truth....to learn what God has said, and what God has done; what He has judged necessary in the way of retribution, and what He has declared Himself to be in His estimate of the sinfulness of sin.

It may be that the time will yet come⁴⁹³³ for the church, if not for the world, when it shall be felt that the Old Testament Scriptures, instead of being obsolete and superseded, are of paramount and predominant use. It is they which contain those first lessons of the Divine displeasure against sin, and also those records of the human heart in its deepest agonies of repentance for sin.

When sin reaches a certain point, it demands the interposition of God. It is so in the individual life. "God is provoked every day." He is long-suffering and of great pity. He gives a thousand chances. He calls and calls again. He reproves gently. He rebukes sternly. He chastens tenderly. He smites severely. Every single career is marked by such gradations of disciplines. At last the cup is full. Long trifled with, "God is not mocked"; and he who would not have Him for his Father must at last know Him as his Judge.⁴⁹³⁴

Now again concerning the unavailability of forgiveness for unrepented wilful sin after baptism, the Old Testament sacrificial law mirrors this: '*And if any body sin through ignorance, then he shall bring a she goat of the first year for a sin offering*⁴⁹³⁵—that is, unintentional sin—compared with, '*But the person that doeth ought presumptuously, whether he be born in the land or a stranger, the same reproacheth the Lord; and that person shall be cut off from among the people*⁴⁹³⁶—that is, intentional or wilful sin, if not immediately repented. In the New Testament there is no reversionary mechanism for those committing wilful, unrepented sin after baptism, for all are given but one chance, '*For it is impossible for those who were once*⁴⁹³⁷ *enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Spirit, And have tasted the good word of God, and the*

⁴⁹³² Gen 3:8-13

⁴⁹³³ written 1872AD

⁴⁹³⁴ Vaughan, C. J., *Christ the Light of the World*, pp.139-142 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁴⁹³⁵ Num 15:27

⁴⁹³⁶ Num 15:30

⁴⁹³⁷ Greek: hapax, 'once-for-all.'

*powers of the world to come, If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.*⁴⁹³⁸

Adam's sin was wilful. Eve's was wilful, but only to a certain extent, and done under the influence of a deception of Satan; essentially she was deceived. Adam's was out-and-out wilful sin.

Eve was female, obviously, and the great female failing in biblical terms is not vanity, as often thought, but, rather, lack of discernment, allied with rather extreme forms of pragmatism: the primacy of limited experience and unbridled emotion over reason. It was a relatively simple task for Satan to deceive Eve. It would have been a deal more difficult to execute the same gambit had it been Adam. Satan always takes the easy course, and, in this instance, it was Eve first, then to leave her to inveigle Adam.

But with what was Adam presented? Some goddess? Was Eve divine? Immortal? Transformed into spirit? No, obviously not, for Adam could see that she was still flesh-and-blood. There was no change at all—the knowledge of good and evil only came after both had eaten, confirmed in: *'And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.*⁴⁹³⁹ Eve was not dead, obviously, but Adam need not have taken that as being of any significance, as God's words were: *'lest ye die.*⁴⁹⁴⁰ There was no indication or suggestion that death would then be immediate.

Adam blindly but wittingly followed his wife into sin, and therein lies the core of the difference: Eve was deceived, but Adam took the forbidden fruit wholly wittingly. It was a wilful act, and wilful sin brings down a dreadful penalty: death. Adam knew he was committing sin; he knew it was wrong. He was not deceived as had been his wife, but was overcome by his wife's importunity, his own weakness, and his own strongheadedness.

And as to the dire consequences? The Lord God first addressed the woman, Eve: *'Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire*⁴⁹⁴¹ *shall be [against]*⁴⁹⁴² *thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.*⁴⁹⁴³ The pain of childbirth is the result of Eve's taking and eating of the forbidden fruit.

⁴⁹³⁸ Heb 6:4-6

⁴⁹³⁹ Gen 3:7

⁴⁹⁴⁰ Gen 3:3

⁴⁹⁴¹ Hebrew: *teshugah*, 'urge,' 'evil urge,' or 'burning desire,' as can be seen by comparison with Gen 4:7,8, where the same word combination is used to describe the sin seeking to enter Cain to bring about the death of his brother Abel. Female subordination is not a judgement arising out of Eve's sin. The woman was made for man to be his helper, and is twice named by him (q.v. Gen 2:23,3:20), which indicates his authority from the beginning. Susan Foh (Foh, Susan, *Westminster Theological Journal* 37, 1974–1975, pp.376-383) argues that a woman's 'urge' is not a craving for her man whatever he demands, but an urge for independence, indeed a desire to dominate her husband. (cp. Jer 31:22b, 'for the Lord hath created a new thing in the earth, A woman shall compass a man,' a reference with special relevance to end-time conditions). Such an urge is necessarily understood in the very close parallel passage in Gen 4:7, where the urge for Cain is to have him sin, but he must master it. In Gen 3:16, then, the meaning would be between her desire for independence and domination contrasted with an injunction for her husband to master her. Waltke also arrives at the same conclusion (Waltke, Bruce K., *Genesis*, p.96), and Wenham mulls the point and does not disagree with the interpretation (Wenham, Gordon J., *Genesis 1-15*, Vol.1, pp.81,82). Jer 31:2c, 'A woman shall compass a man' is seen as a Messianic prophecy (human incarnation) by certain Jewish sages and

Eve was the first in fault, *'For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression. Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing,*⁴⁹⁴⁴ *if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety,*⁴⁹⁴⁵ but there is a redemptory path, albeit difficult or, rather, impossible for debased human nature, as was to become abundantly clear in the time of Christ's sacrifice.

Then the penalty for Adam's fall was announced by God: *'And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it; cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.'*⁴⁹⁴⁶

Through Adam, death passed on all mankind: we shall all die. In addition, the ground or earth would not give up of its bounty easily. Sweat and toil would be the lot of man.⁴⁹⁴⁷ The redemptory path lay through the sacrifice and resurrection of Christ, *'But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.'*⁴⁹⁴⁸

To any of a feminist persuasion who would jibe at the penalty on Eve, and the implication deriving from her lack of discernment—that woman be silent in church⁴⁹⁴⁹—there is this: the greater penalty was brought down on humankind by Adam, because Adam fell, and fell wittingly, and wilfully, into sin; sin that imported the death penalty on himself, his wife, and all their progeny.

What many seem to miss, in addition to this, is the effect that Eve's sin was to have on marriage. The tendency is clear: the wife's desire would be against her husband, not towards him.⁴⁹⁵⁰ A wife would resent her

Christian commentators, and by others, more realistically, in context, as instead of shunning and despising her husband, Israel, Jehovah's bride, in due course, and with eager affection, will press around her Divine husband.

⁴⁹⁴² given the common 'el' and 'al' confusion, it would have been wholly unhelpful had 'I' been in the original Hebrew.

⁴⁹⁴³ Gen 3:16

⁴⁹⁴⁴ literally, *'kept safe through the childbearing.'*

⁴⁹⁴⁵ I Tim 2:13-15

⁴⁹⁴⁶ Gen 3:17-19

⁴⁹⁴⁷ subsequently revoked, cf. Gen 8:21 after Noah had emerged from the ark.

⁴⁹⁴⁸ I Cor 15:20-23

⁴⁹⁴⁹ I Cor 14:34

⁴⁹⁵⁰ also seen as the result of disobedience by the children of Israel: Deut 28:56 (sublinear emphasis added), *'The tender and delicate woman among you, which would not adventure to set the sole of her foot upon the ground for delicateness and tenderness, her eye shall be evil toward the husband of her bosom, and toward her son, and toward her daughter, And toward her young one that cometh out from between her feet, and toward her children which she shall bear: for she shall eat them for want of all things secretly in the siege and straitness, wherewith thine enemy shall distress thee in all thy gates.'* Hebrew: *yara*, 'evil.'

husband's headship and act accordingly, despite the statement, *'Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow shalt thou bring forth children; and thy desire shall be against thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.'*⁴⁹⁵¹ ⁴⁹⁵²

And the result of this is very much in evidence today, in households ruled by the wife, and in broken marriages—where the 'modern' view is that it is merely a feeble 'social contract,' capable of being broken and dissolved at will or on a whim, whenever it become tiresome, or inconvenient, or irksome, or whenever the balance of benefit tilts to the negative, or a better 'opportunity' for self-advancement or self-gratification happens to presents itself. Most marriages nowadays in the western world are dissolved, in man's legal terms, but not in God's Law, at the insistence of the woman. The wife's desire is against her husband indeed; and against God.

A possible explanation of the meaning and import of, *'And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them. That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose'*⁴⁹⁵³ is given by Vaughan: 'We read of "sons of God" taking to themselves wives of the "daughters of men." As though, perhaps, there was a nobler and a less nobel race even among the fallen; the race of Seth, with men "calling upon the name of the Lord;" numbering among its descendants the saintly Enoch and the righteous Noah: and on the other hand, the race of Cain, ⁴⁹⁵⁴ "gone out from the presence of the Lord" eastward from Eden, to dwell in a city of his own building, apart from the repentant Adam and his worshipping household; and counting among his offspring an Enoch and a Lamech of his own; a Lamech marked by a Cain-like bloodshed, even as the other Lamech rejoices with a resigned and pious joy in his son Noah as given to comfort them, "concerning their work and toil of their hands, because of the ground which the Lord had cursed." It may be so: we know not. It may be that the riddles of the sixth chapter of the Bible may be read by this key; that the race of Seth began to intermarry with the race of Cain; and that, as is usual in such "unequal yokings," the worst rises not to the better, but the better sinks down to the worst.'⁴⁹⁵⁵

⁴⁹⁵¹ Gen 3:16

⁴⁹⁵² 'against' is the correct translation, rather than the K.J.V.'s 'to' or other translations' 'toward.' It appears virtually certain that the translators of the LXX attempted to clarify their understanding of the Hebrew by translating it with the Greek: apostrophē (from apostrephein) in Gen 3:16,4:7, but with the Greek: epistrophē in Cant 7:10. The preposition apo-, when attached to the verb strephein, suggests 'to turn away,' while epi- suggests 'to turn toward' (as well as 'upon,' 'above,' and 'in addition,' depending on context). 'Turning away' in Gen 3:16 and 4:7 refer, respectively, to the wife's independence and desire for dominance over her husband, and to Satan's desire on Cain, through sin, to turn him away from God.

⁴⁹⁵³ Gen 6:1,2

⁴⁹⁵⁴ meaning 'Possession.'

⁴⁹⁵⁵ Vaughan, C. J., *Christ the Light of the World*, pp.137,138

No discernment

In today's world, discernment, especially spiritual discernment, is not a luxury, it is an absolute necessity, and women are especially likely to fall prey to its want. Peter prescribes it thus: *'Likewise, ye⁴⁹⁵⁶ husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour⁴⁹⁵⁷ unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel,⁴⁹⁵⁸ and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.'*⁴⁹⁵⁹ The use of the word 'implement' invokes the idea of a tool in the hand of God; the woman being that of one of lesser utility, but still of value—assuming, of course, that she can become divested of her inherent pragmatism.⁴⁹⁶⁰ And the only way that that may be done is through the receipt and operation of the Holy Spirit.

⁴⁹⁵⁶ viz., Christian.

⁴⁹⁵⁷ Greek: *timen*, 'value.'

⁴⁹⁵⁸ Greek: *asthenestero*, 'strengthless implement'; cp. II Tim 2:21

⁴⁹⁵⁹ I Peter 3:7

⁴⁹⁶⁰ pragmatism, at its core, is a form of religious belief that actually destroys true faith, because everything is subject to review, especially in terms of apparent, personal gain or benefit.

It is defined as: 'A doctrine that tests truth by its practical consequences. Truth is therefore held to be relative and not attainable by metaphysical speculation' (or, for that matter, and more relevantly, by divine, propositional revelation).

But this common definition is deficient, even within the limited terms it sets itself. While it manages at least some attempted implication of pragmatism's retrospective, and potentially redactive, activity, it lacks an adequate explanation of its prime-mover. Truth, in this view, must await a future outcome and its attendant evaluation: there can never be immutable, *a priori* truth.

Taking the analysis a little further, pragmatism—or its sub-set, instrumentalism—holds that truth is not only what works, on subjective analysis, but that it is also to be found in what appears to work, or appears likely to work. Indeed, it expands almost effortlessly to encompass the personally convenient and comfortable. All this is commonly obfuscated under cover of 'realism.' As such, pragmatism is chronically subjective, desultory, relative, expedient, situation-driven, opportunistic, impulsive, emotional, and subject to fad and fashion. It leads ineluctably to (heavily oxymoronic) situation-ethics and a boutique-style of morality completely lacking in any immutable standard. What is right in absolute terms exhibits no resonance to the pragmatist for whom either it does not exist or is simply and dismissively disregarded. There is no such thing as the absolute, propositional truth revealed in the Bible. To the pragmatist, truth has declined to the ultra-mundane level of perceived personal benefit, advantage, and comfort. As such, it is self-centred, self-indulgent, self-serving, and worthless.

Secular systemised knowledge is the arrangement under laws and conventions or other taxonomies of experiences which we have already had. While furnishing valuable aid in guiding experiments in and explorations of life, it is at a loss to presage the future, to estimate it with any exactitude, or to form a reasonable frame of reference outside its own experience. It is also subject to periodic revision, and significant elements may need, on occasion, to be discarded in their entirety, or suffer redundancy in the face of newer knowledge or supplanting pragmatic assumption.

Idealism is only the starting point of 'what out to be,' and in the prosecution of that campaign 'what ought to be' must be believed in with passionate intensity. Pragmatism destroys this. As a result, even though it presents as the easy and painless way forward, no lasting gain or worth can come from vacillating pragmatic thought.

In a world so full of chance and change that we know not what a day may bring, we need much more than base pragmatism to guide and aid us.

Faith needs not only courage to achieve, but patience to endure and wait. The most difficult thing in the world is waiting. There are times in every life when action, however laborious and sacrificial, would be an unspeakable relief; but to sit still because God constrains us to do so, endeavouring to live out the admonition of the psalmist, *'Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for him,'* is prodigiously difficult. No one can achieve it without faith and the gift of the Holy Spirit.

The Judæo-Christian lives in a world in thrall of Satan; a world that is in the throes of an occult revival,⁴⁹⁶¹ where evil and malignant spirits masquerade as angels of light, and teachers of pagan rites and doctrines deport themselves as God's pious servants, duping the masses with consummate ease. Discernment is more important now than ever before. Unfortunately, the sorry record of the human race to date leaves no place for any complacency or comfort. Very few exhibit any form of discernment whatsoever. Very, very few have spiritual discernment.

⁴⁹⁶¹ The occult revival of the 20th-century can be directly attributed to Freemasonry and its peripheral entourage of acolytes: Theosophy, the New Age Movement, Satanism, Caballistic Black magic, Enochian Magic, Gerardian Wicca, Alexandrian Wicca, and sex magic.

Chapter 66

Creation or Evolution?

Evolution is not really a science, it is a philosophy or an attitude of mind. Evolutionists admit that no one has ever seen any real evolution from one kind of creature to a more complex kind of creature ever take place. Evolution must be believed, not observed. It is a matter of faith, not science. Indeed, most would regard evolution as doing away with the need of a creator or a creation, leaving all to 'natural processes' and 'natural selection.' Some, however, attempt to combine the two, having an initial creator, a deity of some sort,⁴⁹⁶² but one usually wholly uninterested in the creation's development and outcome, leaving it to degenerate over time, through entropy, to a monolithic state, the eventual heat-death of the universe.

'The Second Law of Thermodynamics does not allow for the Theory of Evolution over time-frames as expressed by Evolutionists. No spontaneous processes are possible in an isolated system and require external interference or inputs.'⁴⁹⁶³

Entropy of isolated systems is subject to absolutes. An isolated system process can occur only if it increases the total entropy of the system.

Thus the system can either stay the same, or undergo some physical process that increases entropy. Processes that decrease total entropy of an isolated system do not occur. If a system is at equilibrium, by defin-

⁴⁹⁶² Deism, in any of its manifestations; Judaism also attempts to combine the two, but in this case the deity essentially has but one special interest, one race, the Jews, to the exclusion or virtual exclusion (depending on flavour) of all others.

⁴⁹⁶³ this has led to the risible claim in some evolutionary circles that the universe is but one of an infinite number of interconnected universes. No evidence for this has ever been produced.

ition no spontaneous processes occur, and therefore the system is at maximum entropy. Evolution is in point of fact a spontaneous process. This process has not been formally observed but is a hypothetical process assumed to have been the origin of species. The geological record is blatantly discontinuous and the hypothesis is unproven. The fact that we share life systems with chimpanzees and earthworms and mice does not logically mean we came from any of them.’⁴⁹⁶⁴

‘Most evolutionary biochemists think that living organisms first evolved out of nonliving chemicals in the primeval “soup” perhaps three billion years ago, although there is another school of thought that believes life evolved from clay minerals in the primeval lands. Then, perhaps a billion years ago, multi-celled invertebrate marine animals somehow evolved from one-celled organisms in the ocean. Eventually marine vertebrates (fish) developed, then amphibians, reptiles, mammals, and birds, in order. Finally, perhaps two million years ago, man (at the stage of the genus *Homo*) evolved from some as-yet-uncertain “hominid” ancestor. This account is essentially the current evolutionary scenario advocated by most evolutionary biologists and palæontologists today.’⁴⁹⁶⁵

‘When scientists talk about the fine-tuning of the universe, they’re generally referring to the extraordinary balancing of the fundamental laws and parameters of physics and the initial conditions of the universe. Our minds can’t comprehend the precision of some of them. The result is a universe that has just the right

⁴⁹⁶⁴ Cox, Wade, paper b9, *Creation versus Evolution* (with added comment and clarification in square brackets).

⁴⁹⁶⁵ Morris, Henry, *Science and the Bible*:

‘The so-called “day-age theory” attempts to equate the geological ages with the creation week of Genesis, but there are too many flagrant contradictions between the two for any such device to be acceptable to one who has not already placed an unyielding faith in these geological ages. Although the Hebrew word for “day” (yom) can occasionally mean a time of indefinite length if the context requires, such usage is rare, and the word almost always does mean a literal day (i.e., either a twenty-four-hour period or the daylight portion of that period). In Genesis, the context actually precludes any sort of indefinite meaning. The use of a numeral with day (“*first day*,” and so on) or the use of boundary terms (“*evening and morning*”) are usages that elsewhere in the Pentateuch invariably require the literal meaning of “day.” Conclusive proof that the “days” of Genesis are to be understood as literal days is found in the Ten Commandments.

The fourth commandment says: “*Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work.... For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day.*” (Ex 20:8-11).

It is clear from the strong wording that God used in this commandment (written with His own finger on a table of stone, according to Ex 31:18) that the “days” of God’s week are exactly equivalent to the days of man’s week. Furthermore, the word twice translated “days” in this passage (Hebrew: yamim) occurs more than seven hundred times elsewhere in the Old Testament and always means literal days. It is well to note also that there is at least one good word (Hebrew: olam) that means “age” or “long, indefinite time,” and this word should have been used in Genesis 1 and Exodus 20 if that were the writer’s intended meaning. The fact that He used the words “day” and “days” without any hint in the context of a non-literal meaning, makes it evident that He intended the literal meaning. If the creation days were literal days, of course, then evolution would be completely out of the question.

There is still another important biblical emphasis that completely precludes any real evolution. The phrase “after its kind(s)” is used no less than ten times in the first chapter of Genesis. Every created “kind” (Heb., min) was to reproduce after its own kind and not to generate some new kind. This does not preclude “horizontal” variation within limits (e.g., the different varieties of dogs or cats or people), but it does prohibit “vertical” variation from one kind to some higher kind (e.g., monkeys to men). This truth is also stressed again in the New Testament (e.g., I Cor 15:38,39).’

conditions to sustain life. The coincidences are simply too amazing to have been the result of happenstance —as Paul Davies said, ‘the impression of design is overwhelming.’⁴⁹⁶⁶

Over the past thirty years or so, scientists have discovered that just about everything about the basic structure of the universe is balanced on a razor’s edge for life to exist. The coincidences are far too fantastic to attribute this to mere chance or to claim that it needs no explanation. The dials are set too precisely to have been a random accident.”^{4967 4968}

The biblical account of the Creation in the first chapter of Genesis, when taken with the rest of the Bible, reveals a dyadic Godhead as Creator of all things with specific and lasting interest in the outcome, and with an overarching plan manifest throughout. ‘A person therefore is compelled to make a choice, either to believe the Bible or to believe in evolution. It is impossible really to believe in both, because each fully contradicts the other.’⁴⁹⁶⁹

Condensed

The Genesis account is condensed, with the result that many miss the scope and subtleties bound up in it. For example, the Hebrew word translated ‘*created*’⁴⁹⁷⁰ in chapter one is used but thrice,⁴⁹⁷¹ in relation to:

1. The creation in the beginning;
2. The creation of whales, fish, and winged fowls; and,
3. Man.

The second verse has a poor translation in the K.J.V., better reading: ‘*But [in the sense of ‘as were’] the earth [‘became’]⁴⁹⁷² without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.*’ This is often known, incorrectly, as Satan’s flood, or the destruction of the first world, in tandem with Satan’s futile attempt through war to usurp the place and authority of God.⁴⁹⁷³ Then, in vv.3f., God starts on a recreation.

⁴⁹⁶⁶ Craig, William Lane, *Reasonable Faith*, p.92

⁴⁹⁶⁷ Craig, William Lane, and Smith, Quentin, *Theism, Atheism, and Big Bang Cosmology*, p.135

⁴⁹⁶⁸ Strobel, Lee, *The Case for a Creator*, pp.130,131; excerpted from an interview with Robin Collins, Ph.D.

⁴⁹⁶⁹ Morris, Henry, *Science and the Bible*.

⁴⁹⁷⁰ Hebrew: bara.

⁴⁹⁷¹ in Gen 1:1,21,27

⁴⁹⁷² Hebrew: hayah, ‘to be,’ ‘to become,’ ‘to come to pass,’ ‘to happen.’

⁴⁹⁷³ cf. Ezek 28;1-10; Rev 12:3-9

Given that there was an extant creation which then decayed, to become '*without form and void*,'⁴⁹⁷⁴ then the basic building blocks of some of the recreated earth and universe were available, and would not need creating. That is why God's restructuring of the firmament,⁴⁹⁷⁵ dividing the waters between the sky (not '*Heaven*' as the K.J.V.) and the planet,⁴⁹⁷⁶ has a particular phraseology, with the word used, translated '*made*,'⁴⁹⁷⁷ meaning to produce, fashion, or accomplish. It does not mean '*create*,' as that would have been '*bara*.' The same word, '*made*,' appears in relation to the sun and the moon, the two great lights, but this is expanded in the following verse by the phrase, '*And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth*,' where '*set*' means '*to put*,' '*bestow*,' '*deliver*,' '*assign*,' or '*designate*.'⁴⁹⁷⁸ Again, there was no creation of the sun and moon at that time, just the setting and designating of their purpose, '*for signs, and appointed times, and for days, and years*.'⁴⁹⁷⁹

So there were two phases to the creation: an initial one, and, much later,⁴⁹⁸⁰ a recreation.

In the New Testament, whenever God's work of creating the universe and all its creatures is mentioned, it is always referred to in the past tense.⁴⁹⁸¹ This biblical revelation is, of course, in accord with the basic laws of science.⁴⁹⁸² By the conservation principle, nothing is now being created, just as Genesis says. By the entropy principle, there must have been a creation in the past, just as Genesis says. There is no such process going on today, just as Genesis says.

Although this is the most basic point of conflict between Evolution and the Bible, there are numerous others.

A beginning

'Everything in time and space had a beginning....nothing could be more obvious. Because we are surrounded by things and by people that obviously had a beginning, we are tempted to jump to the conclusion that everything had a beginning. Such a conclusion, however, would be a fatal leap into the abyss of absurdity. It would be fatal to religion. It would also be fatal to science and to reason....[because] if everything that exists once had a beginning, then there had to be a time when nothing existed....Yet, if there ever were such a time

⁴⁹⁷⁴ Gen 1:2a; Hebrew: '*tohu*' and '*bohu*.'

⁴⁹⁷⁵ Gen 1:6

⁴⁹⁷⁶ Gen 1:6-8; 'K.J.V.'s '*Heaven*', from Hebrew: *shamayim*, plural, in context logically meaning, the '*heavens*' (in the form of the celestial universe) and the '*sky*,' there being no earth-bound water in God's Heaven.

⁴⁹⁷⁷ Hebrew: *asah*.

⁴⁹⁷⁸ Gen 1:14-18

⁴⁹⁷⁹ Gen 1:14b

⁴⁹⁸⁰ q.v. inf. for an indication of the likely time gap; the date of *recreation*, extracted from Scripture, is given in '7,000-year Chronology.'

⁴⁹⁸¹ q.v. Col 1:16a (with added comment and clarification in square brackets), '*For by Him were all things created, that are in heaven*, [Greek: *ouranos*, the sky, the celestial heavens] *and that are in earth*,' and, Heb 4:3c, '*His works were finished from the foundation of the world*.'

⁴⁹⁸² q.v. inf.

when absolutely nothing existed, what would there be now? Nothing! If ever there were nothing, then by resist-less logic, there would always be nothing. There is not even an 'always' during which there could be nothing.

Why can we be so sure, indeed, absolutely certain, that if ever there was nothing then there would be nothing now? The answer is astonishingly simple, despite the fact that extremely intelligent people often stumble over the obvious. The answer is simply that you can't get something from nothing. An absolute law of science and logic is: 'Out of nothing, nothing comes.'⁴⁹⁸³ Nothing cannot produce anything....For something to come out of nothing it would have the power of self-creation. It would have to be able to create itself or bring itself into existence. But that is a manifest absurdity: for something to create or produce itself it would have to be before it is. But if something already is, it doesn't need to be created. To create itself, something would have to be and not be, exist and not exist, at the same time and in the same respect. It violates the most fundamental of all rational and scientific laws, the law of non-contradiction.

If we know anything, we know that if anything exists now, then somehow, somewhere, something did not have a beginning....Bertrand Russell....argued that the present universe is the result of an "infinite series of finite causes." It poses an endless series, working backwards into eternity, of one caused thing causing another forever. This idea merely compounds the problem of self-creation infinitely.⁴⁹⁸⁴....[T]his concept is logically impossible.

We know, with logical certitude, that if anything exists now, then there must be something that did not have a beginning. Now the question becomes *what* or *who*.

Carl Sagan [held] that there is no need to go above and beyond the universe to find something that had no beginning from which everything else comes. That is, we need not assume something like "God" who is transcendent to the universe. The universe, or something in it, can do the job quite well itself.

There is a subtle error lurking in the above scenario. It has to do with the meaning of the word transcendent. In philosophy and theology the idea of transcendence means that God is "above and beyond" the universe in the sense that He is a higher order of being than other beings. We commonly refer to God as the Supreme Being....He is called the Supreme Being because He has no beginning. He is the supreme because other beings owe their existence to Him, and He owes His existence to none other than Himself. He is the eternal Creator. Everything else is the work of His creation.

When Carl Sagan and others say that in the universe, and not above it or beyond it, there is something that is not created, he is merely quibbling about the Creator's address. But he still requires a Supreme Being. His mysterious part of the universe from which all created things come is still beyond and above everything else in the creation in terms of being. In other words, there still must be a transcendent Being.

⁴⁹⁸³ Latin: *ex nihilo, nihil fit*.

⁴⁹⁸⁴ cp. Aldous Huxley's 'Steady-state Theory,' which exhibiting the same fundamental logical paradox.

The more we probe this “within-the-universe Creator,” the more it or He begins to sound like God. He is uncreated. He creates everything else. He, or it, has the power in [Him- /] itself of being.

What is crystal clear is that if something exists now, then there must be a Supreme Being from which all other beings come. The first assertion of the Bible is “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” This text is foundational to all Christian thought. It is not only a religious statement, it is a rationally necessary concept.⁴⁹⁸⁵

How old?

‘The Bible does not logically demand that the Earth be only six thousand years old. The Earth in Genesis is described as *‘becoming without form and void,’* or *‘Tohu and Bohu.’* The description in Genesis⁴⁹⁸⁶ does not require the Earth to have been created six thousand years ago, and indeed the description might be argued to reflect the opposite.⁴⁹⁸⁷

Uranium

‘The argument [from the uranium record shows] that Uranium 238, with a half-life of 4.46 billion years, has commenced to break down to Uranium 234. Uranium 235 is also found in the sample and is not part of the decay process to Uranium 234.

Uranium 235 has a half-life of 704 million years; its even presence in the uranium deposits indicates that the age of the Earth can be no more than 704 million years old. However, its quantity of the deposit is 0.711 and the amount of its neutrons is 143 versus 142 in Uranium 234. Only Uranium 235 can sustain a chain reaction. Its condition in nature is fairly stable and is early in its half-life decay process, and thus the Earth can be assumed to be less than 704 million years old. There are, however, ample deposits of its lead residue, which poses another problem.

The argument that the Earth evolved from the atomic structure then necessitates an age of at least 4.47 billion years, as we have stable lead on the planet that is the by-product of the decay of Uranium 238.

The obvious objection is that we also have stable Uranium 235, which is the most prone to chain reaction, and therefore the uranium deposits have to be the result of combination. Thus the Creationists argue for a Divine Creation combining these elements and particles.

⁴⁹⁸⁵ Sproul, R. C., *Essential Truths of the Christian Faith*, pp.57-59 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁴⁹⁸⁶ Genesis chapter 1.

⁴⁹⁸⁷ Cox, Wade, paper b9, *Creation versus Evolution*.

The Evolutionist argument would be that the Big Bang created the initial uranium and over 4.47 billion years (4.55 BY, see below) we have been moving and decaying. The obvious objection to the issue is U235 and the Evolutionist might counter with the argument that it had to come from another celestial body that crashed into the Earth. The logic is still flawed as the production of the U235 must have occurred less than 704 million years ago and it is evenly distributed.

The argument cannot be made that the collision with the Earth occurred longer than 704 million years ago or it would all be half-life expired and it is early in its half-life. Thus the infusion of U235 must have been universal and within the last few million years. The even and low distribution of U235 in uranium deposits indicates a natural infusion and an order or age of a couple of hundred million years ago at most.

The existence of lead alongside uranium also creates a problem for Evolutionists that cannot be answered within systems of logic.

U238 could not have created a chain reaction unless it was reacted by Plutonium 239, which is virtually non-existent in nature. Thus we have an argument that supports Creation much more than Evolution.

The objection is that you cannot have a harmonious evolved uranium deposit of U238, U235 and U234 and stable lead. The time-frames don't allow for the decomposition of all items into their end products, while still retaining the other items such as U235 in relatively un-decayed form, in our current scientific understanding.⁴⁹⁸⁸

Polonium Halos

'One of the major problems facing Evolutionists⁴⁹⁸⁹ is the existence of Polonium Halos in granite.

We have seen the delay in the decay of the Uranium system from U238 down through the sequence to U234 and on to Polonium in the final sequences before it stabilises to Lead 206, which is stable. Scientists have known for decades that the Earth's metamorphic granite has Polonium Halos at Polonium 218 which theoretically only lasts in its free state for 3.11 minutes before it immediately decays to Lead 214. In that state it lasts for 26.8 minutes and decays immediately to Bismuth 214 when it lasts for 19.9 minutes. It then decays to Polonium 214 which has a half-life of 163 microseconds before passing into Lead 210, which lasts 22.3 years before turning into Bismuth 210 with a half-life of 5.01 days before turning into Polonium 210 with a half life of 138 days before it turns into Lead 206.

You do not have to be a Mathematics professor to work out that this process has a combined half-life of less than 23 years and, so, these structures indicate that the Creation event that resulted in metamorphic granites was all over in less than a jubilee, and to trap and confine Polonium Halos at 3.11 minutes had to be an immediate event of creation lasting less than three minutes. The Polonium Halos that were the result of the eve-

⁴⁹⁸⁸ Cox, Wade, paper b9, *Creation versus Evolution* (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)
⁴⁹⁸⁹ and Young Earth Creationists.

nt are evenly distributed throughout the Earth's granites on all continents. The Halos effect was trapped within the granites immediately and left a tell-tale signature of the event. The Creation event thus had to be over in three minutes and, from the presence of U235 and its half-life products above, we see that the Creation event took place no further back than 700-odd million years ago.⁴⁹⁹⁰

There are myriad problems for the evolutionist to explain away. Following are but a few of them:

Darwin's Tree of Life

'One of the most recognizable icons is the drawing Darwin sketched for *The Origin of Species* to illustrate his theory that all living creatures had a common ancestor and that natural selection drove the eventual development of the countless organisms we see in the world today.

"We now have more than a century of fossil discoveries since Darwin drew his picture....has this evolutionary tree held up?"

"Absolutely not....as an illustration of the fossil record, the Tree of Life is a dismal failure. But it is a good representation of Darwin's theory....A key aspect of his theory was that natural selection would act, in his own words, 'slowly by accumulating slight, successive, favourable variations' and that 'no great or sudden modifications' were possible."

...."You're saying that....his theory is not supported by the physical evidence scientists have found in fossils?"

"That's right....in fact, Darwin knew the fossil record failed to support his tree. He acknowledged that major groups of animals—he called them divisions, now they're called phyla—appear suddenly in the fossil record.⁴⁹⁹¹ That's not what his theory predicts.

His theory predicts a long history of gradual divergence from a common ancestor, with the differences slowly becoming bigger and bigger until you get the major differences we have now. The fossil evidence, even in his day, showed the opposite: the rapid appearance of phylum-level differences in what's called the 'Cambrian explosion.'⁴⁹⁹²

⁴⁹⁹⁰ Cox, Wade, paper b9, *Creation versus Evolution* (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁴⁹⁹¹ the biological classifications in ascending order are: species, genus, family, order, class, phylum, and kingdom; e.g., for human beings, the classifications would be: species (*sapiens*); genus (*homo*); family (*hominids*); order (*primates*); class (*mammals*); phylum (*chordates*); and kingdom (*animals*).

⁴⁹⁹² Strobel, Lee, *The Case for a Creator*, p.43, quoting Wells, Jonathan, Ph.D.:

"The Cambrian was a geological period that we think began a little more than 540 million years ago. The Cambrian explosion has been called the 'Biological Big Bang' because it gave rise to the sudden appearance of most of the major animal phyla that are still alive today, as well as some that are now extinct. Here's what the record shows: there were some jellyfish, sponges, and worms prior to the Cambrian, although there's no evidence to support Darwin's theory of a long history of gradual divergence.

Then at the beginning of the Cambrian—*boom!*—all of a sudden, we see representatives of the arthropods, modern representatives of which are insects, crabs, and the like; echinoderms, which include modern starfish and sea urchins;

This is absolutely contrary to Darwin's Tree of Life. These animals, which are so fundamentally different in their body plans, appear fully developed, all of a sudden, in what palaeontologists have called the single most spectacular phenomenon of the fossil record.

Darwin believed that future fossil discoveries would vindicate his theory—but that hasn't happened. Actually, fossil discoveries over the last hundred and fifty years have turned his tree upside down by showing the Cambrian explosion was even more abrupt and extensive than scientists once thought.

[M]illions of fossils have been dug up. There are certainly enough good sedimentary rocks from before the Cambrian era to have preserved ancestors if there were any. I have to agree with two experts in the field who said that the Cambrian explosion is 'too big to be masked in the fossil record.'⁴⁹⁹³

The Cambrian explosion has uprooted Darwin's tree."⁴⁹⁹⁴

Miller[-Urey] experiment

'Miller chose a hydrogen-rich mixture of methane, ammonia, and water vapour, which was consistent with what many scientists thought back then [constituted the primordial atmosphere / environment]. But scientists don't believe that any more. As a geophysicist with the Carnegie Institution said in the 1960s, "What is the evidence for a primitive methane-ammonia atmosphere on earth? The answer there is *no* evidence for it, but much against it."⁴⁹⁹⁵

By the mid-1970s, Belgian bio-chemist Marcel Florkin was declaring that the concept behind Miller's theory of the early atmosphere "*has been abandoned*."⁴⁹⁹⁶ Two of the leading origin-of-life researchers, Klaus Dose and Sidney Fox, confirmed that Miller had used the wrong gas mixture.⁴⁹⁹⁷ And *Science* magazine said in 1995 that experts now dismiss Miller's experiment because "the early atmosphere looked nothing like the Miller-Urey simulation."⁴⁹⁹⁸

I asked, "What's the current thinking of scientists concerning the gas content of the early earth?"

"The best hypothesis now is that there was very little hydrogen in the atmosphere because it would have escaped into space. Instead, the atmosphere probably consisted of carbon dioxide, nitrogen, and water

chordates, which include modern vertebrates; and so forth. Mammals came later, but the chordates—the major group to which they belong—were right there at the beginning of the Cambrian."

⁴⁹⁹³ cf. Valentine, James W. and Erwin, Douglas H., 'Interpreting Great Developmental Experiments: "The Fossil Record,"' in Raff, Rudolph A. and Raff, Elizabeth C., editors, *Development as an Evolutionary Process*, pp.84,85

⁴⁹⁹⁴ Strobel, Lee, *The Case for a Creator*, pp.42-45

⁴⁹⁹⁵ cf. Abelson, Philip H., 'Chemical Events on the Primitive Earth,' *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences USA*, (1966), pp.1365-1372

⁴⁹⁹⁶ cf. Florkin, Michael, 'Ideas and Experiments in the Field of Prebiological Chemical Evolution,' *Comprehensive Biochemistry*, 29B (1975), pp.231-260

⁴⁹⁹⁷ cf. Fox, Sidney W., and Dose, Klaus, *Molecular Evolution and the Origin of Life* (revised 1977 edition), pp.43,74-76

⁴⁹⁹⁸ Cohen, John, 'Novel Centre Seeks to Add Spark to Origins of Life,' *Science* 270, (1995), pp.1925,1926

vapour,” Wells said. “So my gripe is that textbooks still present the Miller experiment as though it reflected the earth’s early environment, when most geochemists since the 1960s would say it was totally unlike Miller’s.”

I asked the next logical question: “What happens if you replay the experiment using an accurate atmosphere?”

“I’ll tell you this: you do not get amino acids, that’s for sure,” he replied. “Some textbooks fudge by saying, well, even if you used a realistic atmosphere, you still get organic molecules, as if that solves the problem.”

Actually, that sounded promising. “*Organic* molecules?” I said. I’m not a biochemist, but couldn’t those be precursors to life?”

Wells recoiled. “That’s what they sound like, but do you know what they are? Formaldehyde! Cyanide! He declared, his voice rising for emphasis. “They may be organic molecules, but at my lab. At Berkeley you couldn’t even have a capped bottle of formaldehyde in the room, because the stuff is so toxic. You open the bottle and it fries proteins all over the place, just from the fumes. It kills embryos. The idea that using a realistic atmosphere gets you the first step in the origin of life is just laughable.

Now it is true that a good chemist can turn formaldehyde and cyanide into biological molecules. But to suggest that formaldehyde and cyanide give you the right substrate for the origin of life,” he said, breaking to a chuckle, “Well, it’s just a joke.”

He let the point sink in before delivering the clincher. “Do you know what you get,” he asked. “Embalming fluid!”⁴⁹⁹⁹

Putting Humpty-Dumpty together

The march of science has clearly left Miller’s experiment in the dust, even if some textbooks haven’t yet noticed. But I wanted to press on and test other scenarios.

“Let’s say that a scientist someday actually manages to produce amino acids from a realistic atmosphere of the early earth.....Look, I understand it’s not chemically possible, but let’s say it was. Or let’s say amino acids came to earth on a comet or some other way. My question is this: how far would that be from creating a living cell?”

“Oh,” he said as he pounced on the question, “Very far. Incredibly far. That would be the first step in an extremely complicated process. You would have to get the right number of the right kinds of amino acids to link up to create a protein molecule—and that would still be a long way from a living cell. Then you’d need dozens

⁴⁹⁹⁹ recognizing at long last the manifest deficiencies in their ‘standard explanation’ involving a deeply toxic formaldehyde etc. environment, scientists are now beginning to postulate that life developed at the bottom of the oceans in the form of bacteria in rocks. This is nothing more than a vain attempt to keep the supposed evolutionary development as far away from the toxic surface as possible.

of protein molecules, again in the right sequence, to create a living cell. The odds against this are astonishing. The gap between non-living chemicals and even the most primitive living organism is absolutely tremendous....

“Let me describe it this way,” he said. “Put a sterile, balanced salt solution in a test tube. Then put in a single living cell and poke a hole in it so that its contents leak into the solution. Now the test tube has all the molecules you would need to create a living cell, right? You would already have accomplished far more than what the Miller experiment ever could—You’ve got all the components you need for life....The problem is you can’t make a living cell....There’s not even any point in trying....So even if you could accomplish the thousands of steps between the amino acids in the Miller tar—which probably didn’t exist in the real world anyway—and the components you need for a living cell—all the enzymes, the D.N.A., and so forth—you’re still immeasurably far from life....the problem of assembling the right parts in the right way at the right time and at the right place, while keeping out the wrong material, is simply insurmountable.

....[O]ne popular theory was that R.N.A., a close relative of D.N.A., could have been a molecule cradle from which early cells developed. This ‘R.N.A. world’ hypothesis was heralded as a great possibility for a while. But nobody could demonstrate how R.N.A. could have formed before living cells were around to make it, or how it could have survived under the conditions on the early earth.

Gerald Joyce, a biochemist at the Scripps Research Institute, ruled out the R.N.A.-first theory very colourfully by saying, ‘You have to build straw man upon straw man to get to the point where R.N.A. is a viable first biomolecule.’⁵⁰⁰⁰

In short, it was a dead end—as all other theories have been.”⁵⁰⁰¹

Testing of primates

‘One of the more deceptive practices of anthropologists is to conceal the D.N.A. of the primates tested. For example, we know that the D.N.A. of the Neanderthals had nothing whatsoever to do with modern humans but the structures are not publicly analysed and discussed. Claims being made for hominid ancestry can be clearly refuted by the production of the Y.D.N.A. and mt.D.N.A. of the finds, yet it is not done publicly as it does not support the theory.

Uncontaminated D.N.A. can usually be readily extracted from any tooth found on any fossil when done by professionals that avoids self-contamination of the object or site.’⁵⁰⁰²

⁵⁰⁰⁰ cf. Joyce, Gerald F., ‘R.N.A. Evolution and the Origins of Life,’ *Nature* 338 (1989), pp.217-224; Irion, Robert, ‘R.N.A. Can’t Take the Heat,’ *Science* 279 (1998), p.1303.

⁵⁰⁰¹ Strobel, Lee, *The Case for a Creator*, pp.37-39, interview with Jonathan Wells, Ph.D.

⁵⁰⁰² Cox, Wade, paper b9, *Creation versus Evolution* (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

Irreducible complexity

The term 'irreducible complexity' was coined by Behe who defined it as: 'A single system which is composed of several interacting parts that contribute to the basic function, and where the removal of any one of the parts causes the system to effectively cease functioning.'⁵⁰⁰³ Darwin stated, "If it could be demonstrated that any complex organ existed which could not possibly have been formed by numerous, successive, slight modifications, my theory would absolutely break down, but I can find no such case"⁵⁰⁰⁴ For that case, however, one need look no further than the cell.

'Highly sophisticated molecular machines control every cellular process. Thus, the details of life are finely calibrated and the machinery of life enormously complex....The simplest self-sufficient cell has the capacity to produce thousands of different proteins and other molecules....Synthesis, degradation, energy generation, replication, maintenance of cell architecture, mobility regulation, repair, communication....all of these functions take place in virtually every cell, and each function itself requires the interaction of numerous parts....a child can die because of [a] single defect in one of the many machines needed for taking proteins to the lysosome. A single flaw in the cell's....protein transport pathway is fatal. Unless the entire system were immediately in place, our ancestors would have [died]....attempts at a gradual evolution....are a recipe for extinction!

The impotence of Darwinian Theory in accounting for the molecular basis of life is evident from the complete absence in the professional scientific of any detailed models by which complex biochemical systems could have been produced.'⁵⁰⁰⁵ 'The situation is well known to geneticists and yet nobody seems to blow the whistle decisively on the theory. Most scientists still cling to Darwinism because of its grip on the educational system. You either have to believe the concept or....be branded a heretic.'⁵⁰⁰⁶ Denton, an Australian biologist, writes, 'Science has so thoroughly discredited Darwinian Evolution that it should be discarded.'⁵⁰⁰⁷ Mathematics professor Wolfgang Smith says, '[evolution is a] metaphysical myth....totally bereft of scientific sanction.'⁵⁰⁰⁸

Primordial waters

'Young Earth Creationists have a serious problem in the logic of the [opening two] texts used in Genesis. Genesis says: "*In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.*"⁵⁰⁰⁹ The first verse was a term

⁵⁰⁰³ Behe, Michael J., *Darwin's Black Box*, p.39

⁵⁰⁰⁴ Darwin, Charles, 1809–1882AD, English naturalist and author of *The Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection, or The Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life*, cf. p.189

⁵⁰⁰⁵ Behe, Michael J., *Darwin's Black Box*, pp.5,46,114

⁵⁰⁰⁶ Hunt, Dave, *Occult Invasion: The Subtle Seduction of the World and Church*, p.30

⁵⁰⁰⁷ Denton, Michael, *Evolution: A Theory in Crisis*, p.27 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁵⁰⁰⁸ Denton, Michael, *Evolution: A Theory in Crisis*, p.27 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁵⁰⁰⁹ Gen 1:1

understood as being the Creation in eternity past.⁵⁰¹⁰ This was understood by the Apostles as being “*the world that then was.*” That world was the one before the creation of this age. We now see its fossils and “remains.”⁵⁰¹¹

Genesis 1:2 then goes on to say: “*and the earth was without form and void (i.e. *tohu* and *bohu*)*⁵⁰¹² *and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.*” The science of this claim is that the Earth existed before that time and there was darkness over it and waters in it. The term used for ‘waters’ is mayim, which is the standard Old Testament word for any form of waters, including urine or urination. This was always understood as the primordial chaos that rendered the Earth desolate. It does not logically imply that there was nothing there when this happened, and the distance between vv.1 and 2 spans aeons of time and the destruction of the planet and the ages before. This seems to have included most if not all of the dinosaurs. The sequence in the chapter indicates a reorganising of the solar system and its planets and moons and our fossil records appear to confirm this desolation and reconstruction.

It would be scientifically impossible for a planet to retain H₂O in vast waters as mentioned in Genesis 1:2 and not have the solar system more or less in place until later. There is a large body of water within our solar system and those waters are added to the Earth on a continual basis, so we have discovered recently. The origin of the water in the solar system is unknown as yet and may have been dislodged from another planetary body such as Mars or the planetary body called *Phaeton* before it became the asteroid belt. The condensation from a swirling gas cloud into the various minerals and gases may be argued by Creationists to have occurred 6,000 years ago but the science presents some problems for that process; and the land dinosaurs were certainly not able to survive at least past the Flood. Thus their existence would have to be confined to 2,000 years on that view.’⁵⁰¹³

Haeckel's embryos

“Haeckel’s most renowned images depict the embryos of a fish, salamander, tortoise, chicken, hog, calf, rabbit, and human side-by-side at three stages of development. The illustrations support Darwin’s assertion that the striking similarities between early embryos is ‘by far the strongest single class of facts’ in favour of his theory that all organisms share a universal ancestor....[But] they didn’t fit. There was a big discrepancy. It was really hard to believe....

⁵⁰¹⁰ sometimes referred to as ‘Gap theory,’ after the time (or ‘gap’) between the original creation and the subsequent recreation of the earth.

⁵⁰¹¹ cf. II Peter 3:3,4; in v.4 the words ‘*as they were*’ have been inserted in the K.J.V. by the translators, they do not appear in the original Greek.

⁵⁰¹² The same phrase is found in Jer 4:32, ‘*I beheld the earth, and, lo, it was without form, and void; and the heavens, and they had no light,*’ where it is used by Jeremiah to describe the condition of the land as a result of war. The phrase in Genesis, de maximus, refers to the ravages of war over the entire planet, deriving from Satan’s insurrection against God,; q.v. Isa 14:12-14; Ezek 28:13-15, et sup.

⁵⁰¹³ Cox, Wade, paper b9, *Creation versus Evolution* (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

He only shows a few of the seven vertebrate classes. For example, his most famous rendition has eight columns. Four are mammals, but they're all placental mammals. There are two other kinds of mammals that he didn't show, which are different. The remaining four classes he showed—reptiles, birds, amphibians, and fish—happen to be more similar than the ones he omitted. He used a salamander to represent amphibians rather than a frog, which looks very different. So he stacked the deck by picking representatives that came closest to fitting his idea—and then he went further by faking the similarities.

To me [Wells], as an embryologist, the most dramatic problem is that what Haeckel claimed is the early stage of development is nothing of the sort. It's actually the mid-point of development....If you go back to the earlier stages, the embryos look far more different from each other. But he deliberately omits the earlier stages altogether....Remember, Darwin claimed that because the embryos are most similar in their early stages, this is evidence of common ancestry. He thought that the early stage showed what the common ancestor looked like—sort of like a fish. But embryologists talk about the 'developmental hourglass,' which refers to the shape of an hourglass, with its width representing the measure of difference. You see, vertebrate embryos start out looking very different in the early cell division stages. The cell divisions in a mammal, for example, are radically different from those in any of the other classes. There's no possible way you could mix them up. In fact, it's extremely different within classes. The patterns are all over the place.

Then at the midpoint—which is what Haeckel claimed in his drawings was the early stage—the embryos become more similar, though nowhere near as much as Haeckel claimed. Then they become very different again.

One explanation [of the falsification and discrepancies] that's often given....is that although the drawings are false, they teach a concept that's basically true. Well, this is *not* true. Biologists know that embryos are *not* most similar in their earlier stages."⁵⁰¹⁴

Human genes, ape genes

"If you assume, as neo-Darwinism does, that we are products of our genes, they you're saying that the dramatic differences between us and chimpanzees are due to two per cent of our genes....The problem is that the so-called body-building genes are in the ninety-eight percent. The two percent of genes that are different are really rather trivial genes that have little to do with anatomy. So the supposed similarity of human and chimpanzee D.N.A. is a problem for neo-Darwinism....[and, incidentally, the commonality is] is just as compatible with common design as it is with common ancestry."⁵⁰¹⁵

⁵⁰¹⁴ Strobels, Lee, *The Case for a Creator*, pp.47-50

⁵⁰¹⁵ Strobels, Lee, *The Case for a Creator*, p.54 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

Archæopteryx missing link

'When Darwin's *The Origin of Species* was published in 1859, he conceded that "the most obvious and gravest objection which can be used against my theory" was that the fossil record failed to back up his evolutionary hypothesis....[S]ince that time I have come to learn that the fossil record has utterly let Darwin down. Denton⁵⁰¹⁶ summarizes the bleak situation this way: '[T]he universal experience of palæontology....[is that] while the rocks have continually yielded new and exciting and even bizarre forms of life....what they have never yielded is any of Darwin's myriads of transitional forms. Despite the tremendous increase in geological activity in every corner of the globe and despite the discovery of many strange and hitherto unknown forms, the infinitude of connecting links has still not been discovered and the fossil record is about as discontinuous as it was when Darwin was writing the *Origin*. The intermediates have remained as elusive as ever and their absence remains, a century later, one of the most striking characteristics of the fossil record.'

"[But] [d]oesn't *archæopteryx* fill the gap between reptiles and modern birds?"... "There are several problems with that. Does it show Darwinian evolution?...We would need more than an intermediate form to show that; we would need to know how you get from one to the other."

"But the *archæopteryx* is a half-bird, half-reptile, right?"

"No, not even close....It's a bird with modern feathers, and birds are very different from reptiles in many important ways—their breeding system, their bone structure, their lungs, their distribution of weight and muscles. It's a bird, that's clear—not part bird and part reptile.

But there are more interesting parts to the *archæopteryx* story....The main one comes from a branch of evolutionary theory called *cladistics*. This takes Darwinian theory to the extreme. Cladists define homology, or physical similarities, as being due to common ancestry. Then they say, well, the main way we can group animals in the evolutionary tree is through homologies, which is already a bit of a circular argument. When they go back into the fossil record, they assume birds came from reptiles by descent, and they look for reptiles that are more bird-like in their skeletal structure....It turns out they find them millions of years after *archæopteryx*! So here we have *archæopteryx*, which is undeniably a bird, and yet the fossils that look most like the reptilian ancestors of birds occur tens of millions of years *later* in the fossil record. The missing link is still missing!" ["So *archæopteryx* is not even an ancestor of modern birds?"]. "No, not at all. Palæontologists pretty much agree on that. There are too many structural differences. Larry Martin, a palæontologist from the University of Kansas, said clearly in 1985 that the *archæopteryx* is not an ancestor of any modern birds; instead, it's a member of a totally extinct group of birds."⁵⁰¹⁷

⁵⁰¹⁶ Denton, Michael, *Evolution: A Theory in Crisis*, p.162

⁵⁰¹⁷ Martin, Larry D., 'The Relationship of Archæopteryx to Other Birds,' in Hecht, M. K., Ostrom, J. H., Viohl, G., and Wellnhofer, P., editors, *The Beginnings of Birds*, p.182, quoted in Wells, Jonathan, *Icons of Evolution*, p.116; Strobel, Lee, *The Case for a Creator*, pp.55-58

Frauds & turkeys

'Palæontologists, however, have been on a frenzy to try to locate an actual reptilian ancestor for birds. Driven by an all-consuming commitment to evolutionary theory, their zeal has resulted in some recent embarrassments for science.

"A few years ago the National Geographic Society announced that a fossil had been purchased at an Arizona mineral show that turned out to be 'the missing link between terrestrial dinosaurs and birds that could actually fly....It certainly looked that way. They called it *archæoraptor*, and it had the tail of a dinosaur and the forelimbs of a bird....[T]he problem was that it was a fake!...A Chinese palæontologist proved that someone had glued a dinosaur tail to a primitive bird. He created it to resemble just what the scientists had been looking for....fakes are coming out of the fossil beds all the time....because the fossil dealers know there's big money in it."

I remained sceptical about that charge until I subsequently read an interview with ornithologist Alan Feduccia, an evolutionary biologist at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. When a reporter for *Discover* magazine raised the *archæoraptor* fraud, Feduccia said: "*Archæoraptor* is just the tip of the iceberg. There are scores of fake fossils out there, and they have cast a dark shadow over the whole field. When you go to these fossil shows, it's difficult to tell which ones are faked and which ones are not. I have heard there is a fake-fossil factory in north-east China, in Liaoning Province, near the deposits where many of these recent alleged feathered dinosaurs were found.'⁵⁰¹⁸

Asked what would motive such fraud, Feduccia replied: "Money. The Chinese fossil trade has become a big business. These fossil forgeries have been sold on the black market for years now, for huge sums of money. Anyone who can produce a good fake stands to profit.'⁵⁰¹⁹

Java Man

"If you go back far enough," legendary newscaster Walter Cronkite intoned on a documentary on evolution, "we and the chimps share a common ancestor. My father's father's father's father, going back maybe a half-million generations—about five million years ago—was an ape."⁵⁰²⁰

[Much of this belief appears to have been sold on foot of an assemblage of fossils, known to the world as Java man,] 'with his sloping forehead, heavy brow, jutting jaw, receding chin and bemused expression.... exactly what a blend of ape and man should look like. [An] encyclopedia confidently described how Dutch scientist Eugene Dubois, excavating on an Indonesian island in 1891 and 1892, "dug some bones from a river-bank." Java man, which he dated back half a million years, "represents a stage in the development of modern

⁵⁰¹⁸ Svitil, Kathy A., 'Plucking Apart the Dino-Birds,' *Discover* (2003)

⁵⁰¹⁹ Strobel, Lee, *The Case for a Creator*, pp.54-60

⁵⁰²⁰ Cronkite, Walter, hosting: *Ape Man: The Story of Human Evolution*, 1994; quoted by Hanegraaf, Hank, *The Face That Demonstrates the Farce of Evolution*, p.57

man from a smaller-brained ancestor.”⁵⁰²¹ He was, according to Dubois, *the* missing link between apes and humans.

“What is not so well known is that Java man consisted of nothing more than a skullcap, a femur,⁵⁰²² three teeth, and a great deal of imagination,” one author would later write.⁵⁰²³....Dubois’ shoddy excavation would have disqualified the fossil from consideration by today’s standards; nor [it is widely known that] that the femur apparently really didn’t belong with the skullcap; or that the skullcap, according to prominent Cambridge University anatomist Sir Arthur Keith, was distinctly human and reflected a brain capacity well within the range of humans living today,⁵⁰²⁴ or that a Scientific report⁵⁰²⁵ from a fact-finding expedition of nineteen evolutionists demolished Dubois’ claims and concluded that Java man played no part in human evolution.’⁵⁰²⁶

Narrative of human evolution

“One of the major problems with paleoanthropology is that compared to all the fossils we have, only a miniscule number are believed to be of creatures ancestral to humans,” Wells said. “Often, it’s just skull fragments or teeth. So this gives a lot of elasticity in reconstructing the specimens to fit evolutionary theory....of course, this lack of fossil evidence also makes it virtually impossible to reconstruct supposed relationships between ancestors and descendents. I thought Henry Gee⁵⁰²⁷ was quite candid [when he wrote]: “The intervals of time that separate fossils are so huge that we cannot say anything definite about their possible connection through ancestry and descent ” He called each fossil “an isolated point, with no knowable connection to any other given fossil, and all float around in an overwhelming sea of gaps.” In fact, he said that all the fossil evidence for human evolution ‘between ten and five million years ago—several thousand generations of living creatures—can be fitted into a small box.’

Consequently, he concluded that the conventional picture of human evolution is ‘a completely human invention created after the fact, shaped to accord with human prejudices.’ Then he said quite bluntly: “To take a line of fossils and claim that they represent a lineage is not a scientific hypothesis that can be tested, but an assertion that carries the same validity as a bedtime story—amusing, perhaps even instructive, but not scientific.’⁵⁰²⁸

⁵⁰²¹ *World Book Encyclopedia*, Vol. 10, p.50

⁵⁰²² thigh bone.

⁵⁰²³ Hanegraaf, Hank, *The Face That Demonstrates the Farce of Evolution*, p.50

⁵⁰²⁴ Lubenow, Martin, *Bones of Contention*, pp.86-99

⁵⁰²⁵ extending to 342pp.

⁵⁰²⁶ Hanegraaf, Hank, *The Face That Demonstrates the Farce of Evolution*, p.52; Strobel, Lee, *The Case for a Creator*, pp.130,131 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁵⁰²⁷ chief science writer for *Nature*.

⁵⁰²⁸ Gee, Henry, *In Search of Deep Time: Beyond the Fossil Record to a New History of Life*

In other words, you're not going to reconstruct human evolutionary history just based on examining the few fossils we have....The only reason anyone thinks the evidence supports human evolution is because Darwinism is assumed to be true on other grounds. If it is, then it makes perfect sense to extrapolate that to human history, which is what Darwin did.⁵⁰²⁹

Darwinists assume the story of human life is an evolutionary one, and then they plug the fossils into a pre-existing narrative where they seem to fit. The narrative can take several forms depending on one's biases. As one anthropologist said, the process is 'both political and subjective' to the point where he suggested that 'paleoanthropology has the form but not the substance of a science.'⁵⁰³⁰

Several years ago....[there appeared] a new hypothesis, called "punctuated equilibrium," in a desperate bid to explain away the fossil gaps. [This] suggested that radically new species somehow managed to develop rapidly among isolated populations, conveniently leaving behind no fossils to document the process. When these new creatures rejoined the larger, central populations, this resulted in the preserving of fossils that suggested the sudden appearance of new species. This model has been roundly criticized, and rightly so, for creating far more questions than it answers.⁵⁰³¹

In fact, a paleoanthropologist named Misia Landau wrote a book in which she talked about the similarities between the story of human evolution and old-fashioned folk tales. She concluded that many classic texts in the field were 'determined as much by traditional narrative frameworks as by material evidence' and that these themes 'far exceed what can be inferred from the study of fossils alone.'⁵⁰³²

In the end, Darwinism has remained a philosophy still in search of convincing empirical data to back it up. "There is no encompassing theory of [human] evolution," conceded Berkeley evolutionary biologist F. Clark Howell. "Alas, there never really has been."^{5033 5034 5035}

New Age association

'Another key component to the [New Age] Movement⁵⁰³⁶ is a boundless belief in [E]volution. In fact, it is central to their theology. The Movement teaches that we have all evolved, but some of us have evolved more

⁵⁰²⁹ cf. Darwin, Charles, *The Descent of Man*

⁵⁰³⁰ cf. Tattersall, Ian, 'Paleoanthropology and Preinscription' in: Meikle, W. Eric, Howell, F. Clark, and Jablonski, Nina G., editors, *Contemporary Issues in Human Evolution*, Memoir 21; Clark, Geoffrey A., 'Through a Glass Darkly: Conceptual Issues in Modern Human Origins Research,' in Clark, Geoffrey A. and Willermet, C. M., editors, *Conceptual issues in Modern Human Origins Research*, quoted in Wells, Jonathan, *Icons of Evolution*, p.223

⁵⁰³¹ cf. Johnson, Phillip E., *Darwin on Trial*, pp.50,52,58,60,61,120,141,153,184,185,187 for a critique of 'punctuated equilibrium.'

⁵⁰³² cf. Landau, Misia, *Narratives of Human Evolution*

⁵⁰³³ Howell, F. Clark, 'Thoughts on the Study and Interpretation of the Human Fossil Record,' in: Meikle, W. Eric, Howell, F. Clark, and Jablonski, Nina G., editors, *Contemporary Issues in Human Evolution*, Memoir 21

⁵⁰³⁴ Svitil, Kathy A., 'Plucking Apart the Dino-Birds,' *Discover* (2003)

⁵⁰³⁵ Strobel, Lee, *The Case for a Creator*, pp.61-64

highly than others—just as some of us “manifest our divinity” more highly than others.⁵⁰³⁷ New Age teaching seeks to dispose of God, offering as a replacement a bewildering array of demons, human imaginings, and a self-god, and a self-god that, given time, can heal itself!

Summary

‘Charles Darwin’s theory of evolution [has] provided a popular scientific theory which [has allowed] millions to expel God from [their personal] world. A world without God [means] no punishment for sin, and therefore no sin. This [is] an attractive idea for many,⁵⁰³⁸ and that despite Evolution being a blatantly discontinuous hypothesis without demonstrable support. Evolution is, in fact, a deceptively wild and woolly religion based on blind faith in its theory without any proof—a form of the ultimate fatuity—one which can lead nowhere other than into perdition.

⁵⁰³⁶ Cumbey, Constance, *The Hidden Dangers of the Rainbow*, pp.68,69 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

‘The [New Age] Movement has threatened violence and even extermination of Jews, Christians, and Moslems failing to co-operate with “Maitraya” and the New World Religion. The threat is contained in several places in the Alice Bailey writings and is reiterated in the David Spangler writings, which state that those of us who refuse to accept the “Christ” will be sent to another dimension other than physical incarnation, out of physical embodiment, to another level of vibration where we will be happier!

The threat is also repeated in the Agni Yoga (Nicholas Roerich) teachings, another cornerstone work of the “New Age.” The Movement is profoundly anti-Semitic, all the way through to its esoteric core. Many lesser-level initiates in the Movement are unaware of the situation. The Movement’s theoreticians, including Spangler, also speak freely of the need to maintain Aryan purity—which was Hitler’s justification for exterminating the Jews.

....One has only to read *The Spear of Destiny* by Trevor Ravenscroft, *The Occult and the Third Reich* by Jean-Michel Angebert, *Hitler, the Occult Messiah*, by Gerald Suster, and *Gods and Beasts, the Nazis and the Occult*, by Dusty Sklar to quickly come to the horrible realization that the basic doctrines of the New Age Movement were also the teachings that formed the ethos of Nazism.’

⁵⁰³⁷ Cumbey, Constance, *The Hidden Dangers of the Rainbow*, p.66 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁵⁰³⁸ Hitchens, Peter, *The Abolition of Britain, from Lady Chatterley to Tony Blair*, p.109 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

Chapter 67

‘Gay Pride’

Homosexuality is paraded today in the Western world as a badge of pride: 'Gay Pride.' But is this the way that God wishes or has set things to be? The proper Judæo-Christian doctrine has not been promulgated as it might, and much New Age and apostate thinking has come to dominate the question for quite some considerable time, with the result that in man's society there is now widespread tolerance and acceptance of homosexual practices and lifestyles.

[W]e must look....[at] the problem of homosexuality. It is estimated that perhaps six percent of men are practising homosexuals and the same percentage of women are lesbians. Here then is a problem of some magnitude and a situation within society which cannot be disregarded.

We begin with the biblical attitude to this way of sex. In the Bible there are certain things that must be noted.

1. The old story in Genesis⁵⁰³⁹ gives the origin of the other name for homosexuality: sodomy. To Lot there came two angel visitors, but when he brought them into his house the men of Sodom surrounded it with threats and even with violence, demanding that the two visitors should be handed over to them to satisfy their lust. The story shows the ancient existence of this practice, and the loathing of Old Testament religion for it;

⁵⁰³⁹ Gen 19:1-11

2. The Authorised Version speaks rather misleadingly in certain places of the sodomites....[I]n the temples of the Baals there were sacred prostitutes with whom to have intercourse was an act of worship.⁵⁰⁴⁰ This was part of the worship of the life force which was at the back of so much ancient religion. But the fact is that in these ancient temples there were not only female prostitutes; there were male prostitutes too. The temples were the scene of homosexual activity. There is in Deuteronomy what is to us an obscure passage: *'There shall be no cult prostitution of the daughters of Israel, neither shall there be a cult prostitute of the sons of Israel. You shall not bring the hire of a harlot, or the wages of a dog, into the house of the Lord your God in payment for any vow; for both of these are an abomination to the Lord your God.'*⁵⁰⁴¹

3. The payment to these sacred prostitutes was regarded as an offering to [g]od, and the male prostitutes were commonly called 'dogs.' This verse is a reference to the female and the male prostitutes who were to be found in ancient temples.

4. There are fairly frequent references to these male prostitutes. Among the evils of the reign of Rehoboam it is said that *'there were also male cult prostitutes in the land.'*⁵⁰⁴² It is said of Asa, as an act typical of a good king that, *'he put away the male cult prostitutes out of the land.'*⁵⁰⁴³ It is said of Jehoshaphat that, *'the remnant of the*

⁵⁰⁴⁰ Sonntag, Linda, *Seduction Through the Ages*, pp.114-116:

'All prostitutes are descended from the goddess Ishtar, the great whore of Babylon, the mother of harlots, also known as the great goddess Har. Har gave her name to harem, which meant a temple of women. In Hebrew, her name was Hor, a word that also means hole, cave, or pit. Thus the goddess Hor ruled over the vagina, the womb, and the grave, symbolised by the holy well at the heart of the temple....[T]he first prostitutes were priestesses of the goddess, and they took her name, whore. They officiated in the temple, communing with her by performing a sacred trance-dance to music and incense. Then, 'full of grace,' they dispensed the love of the goddess in sacred acts of ritual sex. The goddess Ishtar....was called 'the prostitute compassionate,' and the love she gave refreshed and restored the body and the soul—it was comforting, deeply sexual, and transcendent....In Persia, temple harlots were called houris, or hours. Each one ruled her own hour of the night, and marked the time by dancing....

The prostitutes of the ancient world were not just skilled in lovemaking. They were prophetesses, sorceresses, herbalists and healers. They were hands-on sex therapists. According to a Sufi proverb, there is healing in a woman's vagina, and also in her saliva. They were accomplished musicians and dancers, and could recite and compose poetry. They specialized in the pleasure of relating on every level—sexual, sensual, and spiritual. As representatives of the goddess, they also held real power. In Babylon, a priestess was required to perform the sacred marriage rites with a king before he could rule with the blessing of the goddess. A Sumerian text from 2800BC describes how a priestess was decorated with a garland of dates, symbolizing prosperity and fertility, and waited to receive the new king at the lapis lazuli doorway of the temple of love. From there she led him to an inner chamber, where the other priestesses had prepared the sacred marriage bed.

On top of their accomplishments in the arts of seduction, Babylonian priestesses were experienced businesswomen. They traded as equals as men, buying and selling, importing and exporting grain and slaves, lending money and managing land.'

Concerning the pagan view of the womb and its entry: Vesica Pisces, a deeply pagan representation of the vagina of the virgin Mary, is found incorporated in the geometric setting out of some cathedrals and chapels, such as in the Chapel of St. George at Windsor Castle, which exhibits a double Vesica Pisces centred on the altar. Some contend that it appears in triple, stylised, and interlocking form in the French fleur-de-lis. It is also seen in the vertically-aligned all-seeing third or pineal eye marked on the forehead in Hindu culture.

⁵⁰⁴¹ Deut 23:17,18

⁵⁰⁴² I Kings 14:24

⁵⁰⁴³ I Kings 15:12

*male cult prostitutes who remained in the days of his father Asa, he exterminated from the land.*⁵⁰⁴⁴ It is said of Josiah that, *'he broke down the houses of the male cult prostitutes which were in the house of the Lord.'*⁵⁰⁴⁵ It can be seen how deeply rooted this practice was in Jewish religion.

5. Homosexuality as such is unsparingly condemned in the Old Testament. Leviticus has it: *'You shalt not lie with a male as with a woman; it is an abomination;*⁵⁰⁴⁶ and in a later passage it prescribes the death penalty for such practices.⁵⁰⁴⁷ In the New Testament Paul cites homosexual practices as part of the moral rot of the pagan world;⁵⁰⁴⁸ and in the letter to the Corinthians he lists homosexuality as one of the sins from which the Christians have been saved and purified.⁵⁰⁴⁹

Plutarch is horrified at the whole business: 'Homosexuality resembles a son born late, of parents past their maturity, or a bastard child of darkness seeking to supplant his elder brother, illegitimate love. For it was only yesterday that the homosexual came slinking into our gymnasia to view the games in which the youths first began to strip for exercise. Quite quietly he at first started touching and embracing the boys. But gradually in those arenas he grew wings and then there was no holding him. Nowadays he regularly insults conjugal love and drags it through the mud.'⁵⁰⁵⁰ There were even male brothels and boy prostitutes walking the streets, although such youths were held in contempt.

It is a grim and dreadful picture, and this is the world into which the Christian Ethic came. But there is one thing to remember—and it is the most astonishing of all. In spite of everything, to the end of the day, in Greece, homosexuality might be universal but it was regarded as abnormal, and it was never legal. We have seen what Plato could say, and how he could act, but just about the last book that Plato wrote was the 'Laws,' and in it he banished homosexuality from his ideal state.⁵⁰⁵¹

Law

The Law of God is clear and concise on the matter: *'Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with woman-kind; it is abomination. For all of these abominations*⁵⁰⁵² *have men done,*⁵⁰⁵³ *and, 'If a man also lie with mankind, as he lieth with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination: they shall surely be put to*

⁵⁰⁴⁴ I Kings 22:46

⁵⁰⁴⁵ II Kings 23:7

⁵⁰⁴⁶ Lev 18:22

⁵⁰⁴⁷ Lev 20:13

⁵⁰⁴⁸ Rom 1:26,27

⁵⁰⁴⁹ I Cor 6:9

⁵⁰⁵⁰ Plutarch, *Erotikos*, 751F

⁵⁰⁵¹ Barclay, William, *The Plain Man's Guide to Ethics*, pp.153-155,158,159 (sublinear emphasis added)

⁵⁰⁵² against God.

⁵⁰⁵³ Lev 18:22,27

death; *their blood shall be upon them.*⁵⁰⁵⁴ *'Their blood shall be upon them'* is seen in relation to those having familiar spirits as meaning, *'they shall stone them with stones.'*⁵⁰⁵⁵ The homosexual act brings down death by stoning, in terms of the Law of God.

Transvestism is dealt with in: *'The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment: for all that do so are abomination unto the Lord thy God.'*⁵⁰⁵⁶ An abomination in transvestism, like the abomination in homosexual acts, is an abomination unto death.

The cities of Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed for their wicked and perverse sexual activities: *'And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly.'*⁵⁰⁵⁷ The *'Sodomites'*⁵⁰⁵⁸ mentioned in Kings were male Baal-cult prostitutes engaged in many obscene cultic rituals.

Paul has the reprobate nature of the ungodly thus: *'Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one towards another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet. And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient; Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, Without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.'*⁵⁰⁵⁹ This recital admirably describes the last stage in a society before complete collapse and destruction.

The sexually perverted pictured here actually engage in their nefarious activities despite, *'knowing the judgment of God.'*⁵⁰⁶⁰ Not that this convicts them of the error of their ways. Rather, they take confidence from their evil doings, even to the point of looking favourably on others who manifest the same error. The self-same brazen attitude and its consequence is alluded to by Isaiah: *'The shew of their countenance doth witness again-*

⁵⁰⁵⁴ Lev 20:13

⁵⁰⁵⁵ Lev 20:27d

⁵⁰⁵⁶ Deut 22:5

⁵⁰⁵⁷ II Peter 2:6

⁵⁰⁵⁸ II Kings 23:7

⁵⁰⁵⁹ Rom 1:24-32

⁵⁰⁶⁰ Rom 1:32a

st them; and they declare their sin as Sodom, they hide it not. Woe unto their soul! For they have rewarded evil unto themselves.'⁵⁰⁶¹

A proscription on such entering the kingdom of God is given by Paul: *'Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolators, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind. Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.'*⁵⁰⁶²

Doomed?

Does this mean, therefore, that homosexuals and transvestites are doomed irrevocably to death? Paul provides the answer: *'And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.'*⁵⁰⁶³ Some in the church at Corinth had been reprobate, but on being convicted of their evil ways, became contrite, repented, and had been baptised for the remission of sins. They were thus sanctified, set aside for a holy purpose, and justified in the name of Christ. In Galatians Paul confirms the modus: *'This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.'*⁵⁰⁶⁴

But this begs the question, what about those who do not repent? What of those who glory in their perversity, whose God is their own reprobate life-style and their own evil selves? Surely they should be consumed just as the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah? Or, that failing, be stoned to death?

There is one distinction that should be observed here, however: *'And the Lord said, If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes.'*⁵⁰⁶⁵ The required number of righteous found within the city to save it was reduced, first to forty-five, then to forty, then to thirty, then to twenty, and, finally, to ten.⁵⁰⁶⁶ The presence of the righteous, even in an amazingly small proportion, would have saved those wicked cities from supernatural destruction by God. They did not make the tally, however, and once Lot, his wife and his two daughters had escaped,⁵⁰⁶⁷ the twin-cities—and the other three of the plain—were destroyed: *'Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven. And he overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground. But the wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt. And Abraham gat up early in the morning in the place where he stood before the Lord: And he looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and*

⁵⁰⁶¹ Isa 3:9

⁵⁰⁶² I Cor 6: 9,10

⁵⁰⁶³ I Cor 6:11

⁵⁰⁶⁴ Gal 5:16; the sexually-inactive homosexual is not living in accordance with the Judæo-Christian code, which imports a bar on both thought and deed.

⁵⁰⁶⁵ Gen 18:26

⁵⁰⁶⁶ Gen 18:27-33

⁵⁰⁶⁷ Gen 19:15-17

toward all the land of the plain, and beheld, and, lo, the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace.'⁵⁰⁶⁸

Response

In this, there is the essence of a proper Judæo-Christian society's⁵⁰⁶⁹ response to the vexed question of what to do with the sexually-perverted living in their midst. They would not stone them. They would put them out, into a common and isolated area where the only inhabitants are the resolutely perverted. In other words, they would be quarantined. God will then deal with them as is His pleasure, for there can be no saving righteous among them. The life we did not create, we have not the right to take. God has that right. God decides, and God alone. No eye for eye; no tooth for tooth. In all of the New Testament there is not one case of a life being taken at the hand of anyone in the primitive church.⁵⁰⁷⁰ The matter is summed by Paul: *'Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.'*⁵⁰⁷¹ There is no conception whatsoever of man-waged war in Judæo-Christianity, for it is God who avenges Himself and His own. The 'elect' do not need to do so; neither would they.⁵⁰⁷²

The Law concerning stoning to death—by the people or the witnesses for the prosecution, never by the state—was given to a nation essentially devoid of the Holy Spirit. The 'elect' are not so. For those perverted who never had opportunity to learn and accept the ways of God, their first and only chance of repentance unto salvation will come at The Great White Throne Judgement, for all receive but one chance of salvation.

⁵⁰⁶⁸ Gen 19:24-28

⁵⁰⁶⁹ no such society exists.

⁵⁰⁷⁰ not even Simon the sorcerer, who tried to buy the gift of the Holy Spirit by offering money, was stoned to death, Acts 8:9-24. Only two, Ananias and Sapphira, were killed for conspiring and tempting the Holy Spirit, a wilful act, Acts 5:1-11, but no human agency was involved in it: it was done by God.

⁵⁰⁷¹ Rom 12:19

⁵⁰⁷² very different than modern western society's view of homosexuality, but that is not the Law of God.

Chapter 68

Disfellowshipping

An examination is needed of the underlying reasons and motives behind the apparently widespread practice of disfellowshipping brethren—a form of excommunication—in the apostate Worldwide Church of God and its whoring offspring which comprise a substantial part of the worthless Laodicean era of the church.

'The expression 'withdraw fellowship' is not found in the sacred scriptures. This ought to give pause to those who claim to 'speak where the Bible speaks, and remain silent where the Bible is silent.' The word 'fellowship' is our inadequate English translation of a Greek term which means to 'share a common life.'⁵⁰⁷³ The life which we share in common is eternal life [sic]. It dwells with the Father and was made visible to the apostles. One of them wrote, *'What we have seen and heard we declare to you, so that we and you together may share in a common life, that life which we share with the Father and his Son Jesus Christ.'*⁵⁰⁷⁴

No man or group of men can receive one into this fellowship. No man or group of men can withdraw it.⁵⁰⁷⁵ The fellowship can neither be extended nor withdrawn by any being in the flesh. It can only be shared. Men cannot dispense eternal life, nor can they deny it.⁵⁰⁷⁶ We are called into the fellowship of Jesus Christ by

⁵⁰⁷³ Greek: koinonia.

⁵⁰⁷⁴ I John 1:3, N.E.B.; K.J.V. version of this text is by far the more accurate, and does not imply that we have a share in eternal life at the moment, given that we are, now, merely mortal beings. It reads: *'That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye may also have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.'*

⁵⁰⁷⁵ cp. deeds of Diotrephes in III John 9,10

⁵⁰⁷⁶ the Worldwide Church of God—W.C.G.—hierarchy has blasphemously claimed that no one will enter the kingdom of God without the imprimatur, i.e., prior sanction or authorisation of the W.C.G.

the Father himself, and His fidelity is at stake in the call. The New English Version aptly renders this, *'It is God himself who calls you to share in the life of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord; and God keeps faith.'*⁵⁰⁷⁷

In spite of this, legalistic sects in our day continually engage in what they call 'withdrawal of fellowship,' and indulge in the heady notion that when they exclude an honest dissenter from their number the recording angel in heaven immediately expunges his name from the Lamb's book of life. Those who regard the love letters indicted by the apostles as a written code, transform themselves into God's executive board and law enforcement agency, and exercise the power of banishment, without realising that their petty tyrannical action is given no recognition in heaven, except as a mark against them for such unloving and unbrotherly action.

Every sect is built upon fear, and fear breeds unwholesome attitudes. It promotes suspicion of any new concept and becomes agitated when confronted with dissent. It is an easily provable fact that it was the Roman hierarchy which took the word 'heresy' and injected into it the idea that it consists of holding or expressing any view contrary to the orthodox, or official view of the [Roman] church. The word 'heresy' thus became a club to batter and bludgeon into unwilling compliance every original thinker.⁵⁰⁷⁸ And the chief threat [of all] was excommunication, a word meaning, 'out of the fellowship.' Rome was the first legalistic sect [cult], and the mother of all sects [cults], and the spirit which she breathed gave life to other legalistic parties, even to those which challenged her claim to primacy.

Any religious group on earth which makes any opinion honestly held as a deduction gleaned from personal study of the sacred scriptures, a test of fellowship or a condition of union or communion, is suckling from the paps of 'the hoary mother on the Tiber.' Any group which excludes from its number a humble and non-factious brother simply because he differs in his thinking with the 'official norm' is practising on a minor scale the tactics of the Inquisition,⁵⁰⁷⁹ and takes its place beside the persecutors of all ages.

⁵⁰⁷⁷ I Cor 1:9; K.J.V. renders this verse, *'God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.'*

⁵⁰⁷⁸ an heretic was originally merely one who held unconventional opinions on any matter; this is expounded below.

⁵⁰⁷⁹ while the Spanish Inquisition and the Portuguese auto-da-fe—the sentencing and burning of heretics—have long been bywords for religious bigotry and brutality, less well known, but equally reprehensible and repugnant, were the other Roman Catholic Inquisitions. The purpose of these, like the Spanish, was to 'inquire' into people's religious beliefs, and, having done so, to purge out the 'heretics,' as they were called. These others were 'about their evil business' long before Torquemada and his cowed henchmen flourished in Spain.

Of particular interest, in the context of the further mutation and declension of the Roman church to that pertaining to the time of the end, is the Papal or Roman Inquisition, transmuted to the Universal Inquisition. Inaugurated in the 13th-century, and pre-dating the Spanish Inquisition by about 250 years, it has outlasted its Iberian counterpart. While the Inquisitions in Spain and Portugal had petered out by the third decade of the 19th-century, the Papal or Roman Inquisition survived, and exists and continues to function actively to this day, under the somewhat sanitised title of, 'The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.'

This secretive Vatican committee no longer tortures, burns, mutilates, or kills, but it does play a salient role in the lives of Roman Catholics the world over. However benign it may seem at the moment to the casual observer, the ability of the Roman church to persecute through 'Holy Inquisition' those whom it deems 'heretics' is well attested down through history. The close relationship of Roman church and torture-chamber appears again and again. Like all the others, the final persecution, prophesied in Revelation, visited on the 'elect' by the great whore church, Rome, will be specifically targeted. This time it will be the 'elect' together with the three kings' empires

Of course, those who make sincere dissent the ground for excommunication do not realise they are enforcing an unwritten creed, as damaging and destructive as all creeds invented to secure uniformity. Actually, they assume they are being faithful to the word of God. But whatever a man must believe to be received and recognised by any group is the creed of that group. Few factional groups realise that they search the scriptures to find some 'heavenly' validation for their presuppositions, attitudes and actions, yet this is the accepted procedure of all sectarianism. In the case now under discussion, men with the sectarian spirit lifted an expression from its setting and wove around it an elaborate tissue of traditional dogma which had no relationship to its apostolic significance.

The instruction of Paul, as given by the translators appointed by King James reads thus: *'Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which ye have received of us.'*⁵⁰⁸⁰ This is a statement appearing in a context and if fairly interpreted must be interpreted within that context. To better understand how it has been abused let me specify a few things the context does not sanction or teach.

It does not teach 'withdrawal of fellowship' by a congregation. It has nothing to do with a public corporate action. It says nothing about writing out charges and demanding a public acknowledgement of guilt. It is not even related to a mistaken view of some scriptural teaching or a deduction from the sacred oracles which may be wrong. In fact, the context gives to the term 'disorderly' a specific application, and it has to do with daily conduct or behaviour. It is not remotely related to an idea about scripture, whether right or wrong.

The problem is the age-old one of reading back into the apostolic letters modern ideas to justify our present practices. The remedy is to ignore what we 'want to prove' and inaugurate an investigation of the conditions which called forth the letter.⁵⁰⁸¹ What situation at Thessalonica demanded correction and prompted the recommendation of the apostle? What did he actually say? What action did he expect the saints to take? It sounds well and good to raise these questions but it will not be easy to accomplish our purpose in asking them

which are to fall before the Antichrist, plus the Jews, of course, that will bear the brunt of it. Put simply, it will be the worst persecution in all of man's bloody history.

⁵⁰⁸⁰ II Thes 3:6; Thessalonica was a city of pride. Location, history and status all contributed to the feeling of self-gratification among the citizens. But some of it was false pride. It was empty and vacuous. The hot springs gushing from the earth in numerous places gave the city its original name of Therma. The rivulets from these, emptying into the sea, came in contact with the colder water and created a cloud of vapour through which sailing ships appeared as argosies of the skies. It was for this reason the body of water was designated 'The Thermaic Gulf.' The harbour bustled with the activity created by vessels of lading from many ports. It was Cassander who changed the name of the city. The son of Antipater, he married the daughter of Philip of Macedon. The latter had won a great victory on the very day that a runner brought news of the birth of a baby girl. He returned word that she was to be called Thessalonica. After she married Cassander, he was assigned the task of slum clearance and modernisation in the city which had not carted away the rubble of preceding wars. Not only did he alter the city, but he changed its name to that of his wife. In honour of her he issued new coinage on which the form of 'Victory' was imprinted. It was no dishonour for a city to bear the name of the sister of Alexander the Great.

⁵⁰⁸¹ nowadays termed 'Information bias.'

because men are reluctant to admit they have been wrong. Even when forced to admit their application was unjustified, they still want to salvage from it some crumb of comfort and save face.

The sincere student who seeks only truth will simply confess that he misunderstood a passage and was wrong about it. It will make no difference how long he taught his mistaken view or how many he influenced to accept it. I have absolutely no hesitancy in stating that I was in error on that verse most of my past life. I used it as a basis of driving out from us men and women whose only 'sin' was daring to think out loud. Many of the things they said then, I accept now. They were ahead of me in many particulars. Unfortunately, I had 'zeal, but not according to knowledge.' I was wrong in spite of my sincerity. Let me share with you the things I learned which forced me to change.

Background

In our own United States of America, Highway 66 (now Interstate 44) was long recognised as the chief arterial thoroughfare from coast to coast. Chambers of Commerce advertised their cities along this route with the slogan, 'On the Main Street of America.' There is some evidence that publicity groups for various municipalities functioned even in apostolic days. If so, the advertisers in Thessalonica could have adopted the phrase, 'On the Main Street of the Empire.' The famous Via Egnatia, the main artery through which life flowed from the heart of Rome to the remote extremities of the Asian world, passed directly through the centre of Thessalonica. It was the largest and most influential city from Dyrrhachium to the Hellespont. Every pulse beat of the empire was felt as it surged through the political and economic veins of the district.

Most important is the fact that Thessalonica was a 'free city.' This cherished status was granted to but few places in the Greek world. Sometimes it was bestowed as a political gesture because of an illustrious past, as in the case of Athens. Again, it was given as a reward for assistance to the armed forces of the empire in a period of crucial struggle, as in the case of Tarsus. This was true also of Thessalonica. After the assassination of Julius Cæsar by the republican conspirators, a civil war began which culminated in the plains of the River Strymon, between Philippi and Thessalonica. These plains have been called 'The Deathbed of the Roman Republic.' Here the imperial forces led by Augustus and Mark Antony completely overwhelmed the army led by Brutus and Cassius.

As a result, Philippi was made a military colony,⁵⁰⁸² and Thessalonica a free city.⁵⁰⁸³ There were four distinct privileges accorded a free city:

⁵⁰⁸² Latin: colonia.

⁵⁰⁸³ Latin: urbs libera.

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1. The citizens were self-governing and not subject to a district administrator appointed by Rome. They could determine their own form of government and were wholly responsible for its application. The local magistrates held the power of life and death over the citizenry, but were responsible for any outbreaks of violence;
 2. No armed Roman guard was stationed in a free city and the citizens were not subjected to the sight of an occupational force;
 3. No Roman insignia, either political or militaristic, could be displayed. This avoided the frequent revolts which occurred elsewhere when the hated symbols violated places held sacred by the populace; and,
 4. In most cases, freedom from taxation⁵⁰⁸⁴ was granted, and direct descendants of original families, as well as retired soldiers, were supported by the dole if they registered and requested it.

If time and space permitted it would be a genuine privilege to show our readers how this background is woven into the very language in Acts describing Paul's encounter in the city, and how it also provides an understanding of many of the very phrases appearing in his two epistles to the Thessalonians. However, we must forego the pleasure to be derived from such a course in the interests of a more limited pursuit. We shall begin by investigating the general effect upon the inhabitants of a city of the declaration, 'free city.'⁵⁰⁸⁵

Obviously the decree would eliminate a great deal of the personal responsibility and provide much time for leisure. In a cultural environment, like the one at Athens, this afforded the average citizen opportunity for listening to the various philosophers, most of whom conducted their dialogues in the Forum, or marketplace. At Thessalonica, devoid as it was of such scholastic opportunities, the tendency was for many of the men to degenerate into lazy and irresponsible louts and loungers, ready for any excitement which might be aroused to offset the monotony. This type of character is depicted in the references we have seen to the Thessalonians in the literature of the times, and the rabble might well be described in the words of Epimenides concerning the Cretans: 'liars, vicious brutes, lazy gluttons.'⁵⁰⁸⁶ This will explain what happened in Thessalonica as described by Luke: But the Jews, in a fury of jealousy, got hold of some of the unprincipled loungers in the marketplace, gathered a crowd together, and set the city in an uproar. Then they attacked Jason's house in an attempt to bring Paul and Silas out before the people. When they could not find them they hustled Jason and some of the brothers before the civil authorities, shouting: "*These are the men who have turned the world upside down and have now come here, and Jason has taken them into his house. What is more, all these men act against the decrees of Cæsar, saying there is another king called Jesus!*"⁵⁰⁸⁷ By these words the Jews succeeded in alarming both

⁵⁰⁸⁴ Latin: libertas cum immunitate.

⁵⁰⁸⁵ Latin: urbs libera.

⁵⁰⁸⁶ cp. Titus 1:12

⁵⁰⁸⁷ Acts 17:5-9, esp. v.7

the people and the authorities, and they only released Jason and others after binding them over to keep the peace.

A congregation of saints exists within an environment and cannot be wholly disaffected by it. Those who compose it are also victims of their own past conditioning. This will serve to explain why Paul laid such emphasis upon the necessity of securing honest employment, holding it, and earning one's own livelihood. He did this in three ways:

1. By personal command while with the brethren. In his first epistle he directs them to *"look after your own business, and to work with your hands, as we commanded you."*⁵⁰⁸⁸ In his second epistle, he says, *"For even during our stay with you we laid down the rule: the man who will not work shall not eat."*⁵⁰⁸⁹

2. By personal example in their midst. *"Remember, brothers, how we toiled and drudged. We worked for a living night and day, rather than be a burden to anyone, while we proclaimed before you the good news"*⁵⁰⁹⁰ *of God."*⁵⁰⁹¹ *"You know yourselves how you ought to copy our example. We were no idlers among you; we did not accept board and lodging from anyone without paying for it; we toiled and drudged, we worked for a living night and day, rather than be a burden to any of you—not because we have not the right to maintenance, but to set an example for you to imitate."*⁵⁰⁹²

3. By special admonition in both epistles. *"Let it be your ambition"*⁵⁰⁹³ *to keep calm and look after your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we ordered you, so that you may command the respect of those outside your number, and at the same time may never be in want."*⁵⁰⁹⁶

⁵⁰⁸⁸ I Thes 4:11

⁵⁰⁸⁹ II Thes 3:10; not to be conflated with the gross perversion that someone unable to find work or who is incapacitated and cannot work should be denied food and, should the condition maintain, eventually starved to death!

⁵⁰⁹⁰ Barclay, William, *A New Testament Word Book*, pp.41,42 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'The euggelion [*'good news' or 'gospel'*] is something for which a man must 'risk everything' (Mark 8:35,10:29; Rom 1:16; I Cor 9:23). He must be prepared to stake everything on the certainty that the man who obeys God's commandments will find God's promises true.'

⁵⁰⁹¹ II Thes 1:9

⁵⁰⁹² II Thes 2:7-9

⁵⁰⁹³ Barclay, William, *The Daily Study Bible, Gospel of Mark*, pp.223,224:

'It was not that Jesus abolished ambition. Rather, He recreated and sublimated ambition. For the ambition to rule He substituted the ambition to serve. For the ambition to have things done for us He substituted the ambition to do things for others....True selflessness is rare, and when it is found it is remembered.'

⁵⁰⁹⁴ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol.2, p.167:

'The Christian may have to abandon personal ambition to serve Christ.'

⁵⁰⁹⁵ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol.2, p.169:

'Someone once wrote a bitter epitaph on a man: "He was born a man and died a grocer." Any trade or profession might be substituted for the word 'grocer.' The man who plays for safety ceases to be a man, for man is made in the image of God.'

⁵⁰⁹⁶ I Thes 4:11,12

These letters grew out of life situations. They were written to cover actual conditions. The favours for which they expressed thanks were real. The behaviour which was commanded was genuine. The rebukes administered were not for imaginary wrongs. The corrections prescribed were not for fictitious ills. We can visualise the state of the brethren from that which was written to and about them. This fact lays a foundation of a scripture which has been wrested and contorted: *'Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which ye received of us.'*⁵⁰⁹⁷

'Walking disorderly'

'On the basis of this passage honest dissenters have been hounded out of every faction and sect [and cult]. Every disagreement with 'the powers that be' and with those 'who appear to be somewhat' has been labelled a disorderly walk and action has been taken to 'withdraw fellowship.' In my own days of factional adherence and bigotry, I misused the passage as justification for refusal to recognise many of the brethren in the Lord Jesus. I was wrong! I am ashamed of the spirit of intolerance which I sought to excuse by this verse. I am also ashamed of the ignorance which prompted that spirit. I am convinced from unbiased research that what is commonly called 'withdrawal of fellowship' is not countenanced in the verse and corporate action resulting in excommunication of a brother is not even a consideration in it.

The problem of interpretation centres around the meaning of 'walking disorderly.' The word for disorderly is ataktos. It occurs in the form of an adverb twice.⁵⁰⁹⁸ It occurs in the verb form ataktein once.⁵⁰⁹⁹ When amplified to the military it means 'to break rank, to get out of step.' When applied to another orderly arrangement such as a school or business, it means 'to play truant.' It has to do with a slack and irresponsible attitude. Dr. Barclay mentions its use in the papyri, "in an apprentice's contract in which the father agrees that his son must make good any days on which he absents himself from duty or plays truant."

The context clearly shows that Paul used it to designate the idleness into which the brethren had drifted or lapsed. Having reached the mistaken view that the return of Christ was imminent, they saw no further need for working. They gave up their jobs and decided to live off the other brethren, even prying into their personal affairs and becoming busybodies in other men's matters. Paul defines 'disorderly' by showing both what it is and what it is not. In verse eleven he shows that it consists of 'working not at all.' In verses seven and eight, he demonstrates that he did not behave disorderly because he did not eat any man's food without paying for it, but supported himself by secular labour engaged in by day and by night.

⁵⁰⁹⁷ II Thes 3:6

⁵⁰⁹⁸ II Thes 3:6;11

⁵⁰⁹⁹ II Thes 3:7

To walk disorderly, in this context, is to live in idleness and sponge off of the other brethren. To read anything else into it is to ignore the setting entirely and twist the scriptures capriciously and arbitrarily to fit a pre-conceived idea or notion. But what should be done to a person who simply will not get or keep a job and earn his own bread? The teaching is plain.

The brethren are commanded in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ to *'Withdraw yourselves from every brother who walketh disorderly,'* that is, who falls into idle habits. The R.S.V. renders it, *'Keep away from any brother who is living in idleness.'* Today's English Version reads, *'Keep away from all brothers who are living a lazy life.'* The Authentic Version reads, *'Shun every brother who behaves as a shrinker.'* Barclay translates, *'Keep yourselves from every brother who behaves like a truant.'* The N.E.B. has it, *'Hold aloof from every Christian brother who falls into idle habits.'* There is not the slightest intimation of congregational or corporate action. It has no relationship to public or formal discipline. It is individual. No action is taken on the idle person. Nothing is done to him. He is simply left where he is while the brethren step back from him. To *'withdraw yourselves'* means to step back, to retreat, or to retire from the scene. Observe that the one from whom the brethren are to step back or hold themselves aloof is a brother, although a lazy one who is living in idleness. Paul twice refers to the lazy individual as a brother. 'Withdraw' is from stello which means *'to gather up.'* It was used for gathering up and binding one's loose outer garment to keep it from coming in contact with that which would soil or contaminate it. It was used for furling the sails of a ship to keep them from striking together and suffering damage. It is the term which would apply when a mother called her children into the house to protect them from threatened danger. It is easy to see how it came to mean, *'to avoid, to hold aloof.'* The brethren in Thessalonica were simply commanded to refrain from extending hospitality to loafers and slackers. They were not to feed them for the command was that *'if any would not work, neither should he eat,'* verse ten. If one of these dawdling drones appeared at the front door just before mealtime he was to be offered a job instead of food. If he refused the former he was to be refused the latter. One who shunned honest toil was to be gently shunted from the table. It was just that simple.

The idle busybodies were commanded and exhorted to get a job, *'That with quietness they work and eat their own bread.'* The term 'busybody' is especially interesting since it is a play upon words. In the original it incorporates the word for 'work.' In verse eleven Paul uses the verb ergazomai, to work, and follows it with periergazomai, busybodies. Those who neglected their own work, which should have been central in their own lives, were flitting and buzzing around telling others how to conduct their business. The prefix peri means 'around,' as in periscope and periphery. Vine⁵¹⁰⁰ says a free rendering of the passage would be, *'Some who are not busied in their own business, but are overbusied in that of others.'* 'Quietness' is from hesuchia. It implies that tranquillity which arises from within and causes no disturbance of others. The Greeks had a different word for

⁵¹⁰⁰ Vine, W. E.

that serenity which proceeds from without, but it would not have been appropriate here. The idle brother was to secure a job and earn his own keep, without creating problems and complications for others in the congregation.

'And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, that he may be ashamed.' (verse fourteen). 'Note' is from semeioo, of which Vine says, 'In the Middle Voice, to note for oneself, and is so used,⁵¹⁰¹ in an injunction to take cautionary note of one who refuses obedience to the Apostolic word by the Epistle.' In the commentary in which Vine teamed up with Hogg,⁵¹⁰² there occurs this interesting observation, 'continuous tense, suggesting that no hasty conclusion was to be drawn from an act, but that the course and general conduct was to be observed.' The phrase *'have no company with him'* is intended to forbid the extending of hospitality. It would preclude invitations to social gatherings to which the idle might flock and at which they would eat at the expense of others. The word *'ashamed'* is from entrepo, and refers to a 'wholesome shame which involves a change of attitude or conduct.'

Although the offender is to be noted and hospitality refused while he persists in idleness, the record says, *'Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.'* Refusal to furnish food for such a person does not mean he is to be treated as a heathen. He is simply a lazy and indolent brother, who must be shunned to save him from his course. When a man cannot be reached through appeal to his heart he may have to be reached through appeal to his stomach. So long as his head is empty and his stomach is full little can be done.

It is almost impossible to imagine how the tangled maze of disciplinary action—boycott, excommunication, accusation, and congregational exclusivism—has grown out of this passage. We can only conclude that when men seek for justification for their sectarian attitudes they will find it. *'Withdraw yourselves'* provided the handy passage to satisfy their partisan needs because it contained the word *'withdraw,'* and they swooped down and appropriated it as a new weapon in the arsenal of factionalism.

It would be humorous, were it not so serious, that the passage has been used to exclude people for almost every thought that has been expressed, but has never been used to deal with the problem which the apostle had in mind. I have never known of anyone being hailed before the congregation on the charge of laziness. Perhaps it is recognised that, in some places, if idle habits were made a test of fellowship, there might not be enough persons remaining to even have meetings. Again, it has to be remembered that it may be that in most places the membership is too lazy to bring an accusation of laziness.

I suspect the King James Version is partially responsible for our condition and if some of the other versions had been used the brethren might have been saved the embarrassment of confessing their mistaken

⁵¹⁰¹ in II Thes 3:14

⁵¹⁰² Hogg, C. F.

application. I suggest that those who are really concerned read the third chapter of the second Thessalonian letter in the New English Bible.⁵¹⁰³

Falling away

There are instances where those elevated to the 'elect' later wittingly and wilfully revert to their former self, a route ably described by Peter, *'For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.'*⁵¹⁰⁴ Ketcherside describes such falling away in the following terms: 'A much better way to state this is to say, the advocacy of doctrines which separate from God.' Such doctrines are humanly contrived systems of philosophy which overtly or covertly deny the faith....The term 'false teacher,' which in the Greek is didaskelos, occurs only once in the New Testament scriptures. It occurs then as a description of a certain type of character. False teachers were those who denied the Lord that bought them, secretly brought in damnable heresies, and caused the truth to be blasphemed.'^{5105 5106}

Paul delivered Hymenæus and Alexander unto Satan for blasphemy, *'Holding faith and a good conscience: which some have put away concerning faith have made shipwreck: Of whom is Hymenæus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme.'*⁵¹⁰⁷ Hymenæus is mentioned again, and his effect: *'And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenæus and Philetus; Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some.'*⁵¹⁰⁸

Paul also delivers a warning in Corinthians: *'But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat.'*⁵¹⁰⁹ The reason is given in the following chapter: *'Know we not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.'*⁵¹¹⁰ Simply, it is not possible for a man to be a brother, a member of the 'elect,' and retain and nurture all or any of these fatal deficiencies. The 'elect' are not to

⁵¹⁰³ Ketcherside, W. Carl, *The Twisted Scriptures* (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁵¹⁰⁴ II Peter 2:20-22

⁵¹⁰⁵ II Peter 2:17-19; *'the Lord that brought them,'* of course, is Satan, q.v. inf.

⁵¹⁰⁶ Ketcherside, W. Carl, *The Twisted Scriptures*

⁵¹⁰⁷ I Tim 1:19-20

⁵¹⁰⁸ II Tim 2:17,18

⁵¹⁰⁹ I Cor 5:11

⁵¹¹⁰ I Cor 6:9,10

associate with such as these. And where can one find such an appalling litany of acts against the brethren perpetrated through such means as fornication, incest, child abuse, drunkenness, extortion, and the like?—in the so-called Worldwide Church of God, and in its whoring spawn!⁵¹¹¹

Doubt

'No one need be ashamed of his doubts; for it is amazingly and blessedly true that he who seeks will in the end find.'⁵¹¹² *'Keep on asking, and it shall be given you; keep on seeking, and ye shall find; keep on knocking, and it shall be opened unto you.'*⁵¹¹³ *'Keep on'* is continuous imperative tense.

'Although this is the charter of prayer, it lays certain obligations upon us. In Greek there are two kinds of imperatives; there is the aorist imperative which issues one definite command. "Shut the door behind you," would be an aorist imperative. There is the present imperative which issues a command that a man should always do something or should go on doing something. "Always shut doors behind you," would be a present imperative. The imperatives here are present imperatives; therefore Jesus is saying, *"Go on asking; go on seeking; go on knocking."* He is telling us to persist in prayer; He is telling us never to be discouraged in prayer. Clearly therein lies the test of our sincerity. Do we really want a thing? Is a thing such that we can bring it repeatedly into the presence of God, for the biggest test of any desire is: Can I pray about it?

Jesus here lays down the twin facts that God will always answer our prayers in His way, in wisdom and in love; and that we must bring to God an undiscouraged life of prayer, which tests the rightness of the things we pray for, and which tests our own sincerity in asking for them.'⁵¹¹⁴

Incest⁵¹¹⁵

While disfellowshipping members over what were, by comparison, trivial matters, wilful, recurring sin of the most heinous kind was evident in the cultic church that had the effrontery to style itself: 'The Church of God.'

The sin of incest, and its ramifications, is mentioned by Paul in Corinthians: *'It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife. And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you....To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the*

⁵¹¹¹ cf. *Ambassador Report*, all 72 editions, a deadful litany.

⁵¹¹² Barclay, William, *The Gospel of John*, Vol.2, p.157

⁵¹¹³ Mat 7:7, corrected translation; K.J.V., *'Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.'*

⁵¹¹⁴ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol.1, p.272

⁵¹¹⁵ also cf. 'Wilful sin' sup.

*flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. Your glorying [boast] is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?*⁵¹¹⁶

Most expositors here have Satan 'doing the work of God,' by destroying the flesh,⁵¹¹⁷ and having some strange part in the saving of the breath.⁵¹¹⁸ This is illogical, incongruous in the extreme, and a wholly incorrect conclusion to draw from the context. There is no mention in the latter of any repentance on the part of the perpetrator, or his forgiveness by God, for pummelling by the Devil unto death can import neither. Taking these two 'referrals' to Satan, and allowing for the Greek grammatical construction, the appropriate meanings are:

1. For blasphemy, the divine protection over the 'elect' is withdrawn, and the blasphemer is left unprotected against the wiles of the Devil; all this is for the purpose of punishment, repentance, and eventual reinstatement; but,

2. For incest—patently a premeditated, wilful sin on the part of the perpetrator, presumably one who was baptised for he is noted as being a member of the church—upon receipt, Satan is allowed to influence the person in question in ways leading to the destruction of the body, that is, death. However, this actually refers to the 'Devil's damnation,' often referred to as the 'second death.' Given that there is no forgiveness noted in the Scriptures for unrepented wilful sin after baptism, the saving of the '*spirit*,' from the Greek meaning '*breath*,'⁵¹¹⁹ can only refer to those who were boastful of their own self-righteous position, who tolerated the perpetrator in their midst, and who did not seek that he be taken away from amongst them. Once the perpetrator was '*delivered to Satan*' he would no longer be able to influence the '*whole lump*' of the church, and, in such a case, the '*lump*' would be a deal more likely to be preserved '*in the day of the Lord Jesus*,' that is, The Day of Judgement. Once this delivery were accomplished, the result would be the purifying described in Corinthians, '*Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened*,'⁵¹²⁰ and the complete annihilation of the person who had committed incest.

Wilful sin⁵¹²¹

Concerning the unavailability of forgiveness for unrepented and repeated wilful sin after baptism, the Old Testament sacrificial law mirrors this in Numbers: '*And if any body sin through ignorance, then he shall*

⁵¹¹⁶ I Cor 5:1,2,5,6 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁵¹¹⁷ viz., 'the first death.'

⁵¹¹⁸ saving from 'the second death.'

⁵¹¹⁹ Greek: pneuma.

⁵¹²⁰ I Cor 5:7

⁵¹²¹ also cf. 'Wilful sin' sup.

bring a she goat of the first year for a sin offering,'⁵¹²² compared with, 'But the person that doeth ought presumptuously, whether he be born in the land or a stranger, the same reproacheth the Lord; and that person shall be cut off from among the people.'⁵¹²³ In the New Testament there is no reversionary mechanism for those committing unrepented wilful sin after baptism, for all are given but one chance: 'For it is impossible for those who were once⁵¹²⁴ enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Spirit, And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.'⁵¹²⁵

Paul exposes another wanting in a flawed congregation, with the words: 'But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain. A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject; Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself.'⁵¹²⁶ This excerpt requires some explanation in its details, as it can be difficult to grasp all of the meaning at first sight. The contentions and strivings over foolish questions and the Law, which were so very characteristic of the Pharisaic and other Jewish religious rulers of the time, have no place in the Judæo-Christian belief and conduct. Vanity was a strong element in such Jewish disputing, as philosophising proponents vied for the attention and admiration of their peers, while treating competing views with scorn and derision. The word '*heretick*' comes from the Greek meaning '*to choose,*' '*prefer,*' or '*to take for oneself*.'⁵¹²⁷ It imports the idea of choosing to believe what one wants, in this case in spite of what God says. It also conveys the concept of including the erroneous additions and further revelations that have erupted from time to time down through the ages after completion of the New Testament canon. Such a person holding these aberrant views is termed '*subverted,*' from the Greek meaning '*twisted*.'⁵¹²⁸ By dint of his own contentions, the subverted condemns himself. Again, this is continuing and wilful subversion, as can be seen from the complete disregard of '*the first and second admonition*' delivered by the 'elect.'

Recovery

Correction and recovery is possible, under certain circumstances, as can be seen from, '*But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness. If a man therefore purge himself from*

⁵¹²² Num 15:27; i.e., unintentional sin.

⁵¹²³ Num 15:30; i.e., intentional or wilful sin.

⁵¹²⁴ Greek: hapax, '*once-for-all*.'

⁵¹²⁵ Heb 6:4-6

⁵¹²⁶ Titus 3:9-11

⁵¹²⁷ Greek: hairetikos.

⁵¹²⁸ Greek: ektrepo.

these, he shall be a vessel unto honour,⁵¹²⁹ sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work. Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart. But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do generate strifes. And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.⁵¹³⁰ It should be noticed that the 'elect' are to point out and expose the errors of the fallen concerning the truth, but that it is God who gives repentance.⁵¹³¹ Repentance is not sorrow for sin—that is contrition—but such heartfelt sorrow leads to repentance: *'Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing. For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death.'*⁵¹³² God, in his infinite wisdom, grants correction and recovery for those who might be termed 'the elect, temporarily fallen, contrite, and, by the grace of God, repentant.' The rest stand condemned by their own wilful and continuing subversions.⁵¹³³

Exclusion from congregation of the Lord

This matter is specific, and concerns the exclusion of the Ammonites and Moabites. The account is found in Deuteronomy: *'An Ammonite or Moabite shall not enter into the congregation of the Lord, even to their tenth generation shall they not enter into the congregation of the Lord for ever.'*⁵¹³⁴

Some see the words *'for ever'* as complete exclusion. The Hebrew word translated *'for ever'*⁵¹³⁵ means 'concealed, that is, to the vanishing point,' 'a long time hidden, the beginning or end of which is either uncertain or else not defined.'⁵¹³⁶ 'It more often refers to future time, in such a manner, that what is called the [end],⁵¹³⁷ is always defined from the nature of the thing itself.'⁵¹³⁸ As a result, complete and irrevocable exclusion could not have been in the purview. A complete proscription would appear grossly inequitable, placing all Ammonite and Moabite descendants beyond redemption in this life, and bringing into question the free and universal availability of the grace of God and redemption and salvation through His son, our Saviour.

⁵¹²⁹ Greek: skenos eis timen, 'utensil of value.'

⁵¹³⁰ II Tim 2:16,21-26

⁵¹³¹ Greek: metanoia.

⁵¹³² II Cor 7:9,10

⁵¹³³ Roman Catholicism, as ever importing all manner of pagan notions and occult beliefs, maintains in the face of all Scripture that penance within the rites of the Roman church restores divine grace after wilful sin.

⁵¹³⁴ Deut 23:3

⁵¹³⁵ Hebrew: olam.

⁵¹³⁶ according to Gesenius.

⁵¹³⁷ Latin: terminus ad quem.

⁵¹³⁸ Gesenius.

Rabbinic tradition,⁵¹³⁹ noted by Edersheim,⁵¹⁴⁰ has the verse in Deuteronomy⁵¹⁴¹ as not applying to alliances with Ammonite or Moabite women. But is this a valid doctrine?

Ruth, the Moabite, ⁵¹⁴² was married to Boaz,⁵¹⁴³ and she was received into full Israelite covenant relationship. Ruth became an heir of the promise and was also in the line of the Messiah. She was in the eleventh generation from Moab, who was born out of an act of incest.⁵¹⁴⁴ Also, David is listed as the tenth generation descendant of Pharez,⁵¹⁴⁵ for, having been born of a highly questionable relationship between Judah and Tamar, illegitimate under the Law, the tenth generation would be the first capable of assuming leadership of the congregation of the children of Israel; and so it was, with David.

From this it is clear that the prescription '*to their tenth generation*' is not a complete, utter and irrevocable exclusion / proscription. It means that, after the tenth generation, admission to '*the congregation of the Lord*' is possible, both for male and female, and not for female only, as the Rabbins claim.

Pharez and Zarah were members of the congregation, and Ruth had been admitted, of course, but, in part, the lineal recital given at the close of the book of Ruth is God's way of clarifying the prescription in Deuteronomy.⁵¹⁴⁶

Foolish shepherds

Those in positions of service in the church⁵¹⁴⁷ are to police themselves, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit: '*Against an elder receive not accusation, but before two or three witnesses. Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear. I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality.*'⁵¹⁴⁸ '*Accusation*'⁵¹⁴⁹ was the word used in formal charges before a court. If found guilty, an elder must be rebuked publicly, '*before all,*' and the entire must be done in a proper and orderly manner, with complete impartiality.

This compares with the basic premise underlying the system of a didactic ministry, formal ordination, and centralised headquarters, which is simply one of control, manipulation, and exploitation. The actual operation of the system, in the instance of the Worldwide Church of God, was one based on discipline: man's discipl-

⁵¹³⁹ 'Halakhoth of Moses from Sinai.'

⁵¹⁴⁰ Edersheim, Alfred, *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, p.953

⁵¹⁴¹ Deut 23:3

⁵¹⁴² Ruth 1:1

⁵¹⁴³ an Israelite.

⁵¹⁴⁴ Gen 19:30-38

⁵¹⁴⁵ Gen 38:27-30; Ruth 4:18-22

⁵¹⁴⁶ Deut 23:3

⁵¹⁴⁷ 'service' as in servants, such as elders.

⁵¹⁴⁸ I Tim 5:19-21

⁵¹⁴⁹ Greek: kategoria.

ine. The creation of a somewhat complex hierarchy, by definition, of itself demands modes of discipline. In these circumstances, the tighter the control desired by man, then, necessarily, the stricter the discipline.

In the cult in question, the discipline extended to enforcing what was, variously and at any time, deemed by central headquarters to be 'the truth,' or, indeed, in patently oxymoronic form: 'the new truth.' How often it is that the worldly hierarchy view themselves as the sole possessors and keepers of the 'true and sound doctrine,' irrespective of whatever little validity it may have, and irrespective of how many changes and mutations it has suffered at their hands. Following on from that was the Laodicean perception that those in authority in the church had the power to ostracise and eject from God's church those unfit to wear the Christian mantle, as they perceived it: the lukewarm deeming themselves judge in their own eyes of those they deemed unfit to be Christians. How can vomit, for this is Christ's description of them, judge anything? It cannot even discern itself for what it is!

The accuracy of the description of their actions, contained in Ezekiel, is simply beyond dispute: *'Seemeth it a small thing unto you to have eaten up the good pasture, but ye must tread down with your feet the residue of your pastures? and to have drunk of the deep waters, but ye must foul the residue with your feet? And as for my flock, they eat that which ye have trodden with your feet; and they drink that which ye have fouled with your feet. Therefore thus saith the Lord God unto them; Behold, I, even I, will judge between the fat cattle and the lean cattle. Because ye have thrust with side and with shoulder, and pushed all the diseased with your horns, till ye have scattered them abroad; Therefore will I save my flock, and they shall no more be a prey; and I will judge between cattle and cattle.'*⁵¹⁵⁰ In stark counterpoint, it is Christ who, *'will judge between the fat cattle and the lean cattle....Therefore will I save my flock, and they shall no more be a prey; and I will judge between cattle and cattle.'* Christ is the judge; not the foolish shepherds.

These aberrant shepherds, described in Ezekiel,⁵¹⁵¹ foul everything they touch. The Laodicean leaders—self-appointed, for God does not appoint such dvomit—actively persecuted the very people of God, thrusting them out of what they perceived to be the church, actually terming them 'abortions.'⁵¹⁵² In so doing, they took upon themselves the role of the fat cattle, outside the true church and doomed to their fate. They will not be saved; neither can they be. Their deeds are those of the Pharisees, excoriated by Christ in Matthew: *'But woe unto you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in.'*⁵¹⁵³

The condition of the saved of the church is also described in Ezekiel: *'Therefore, O ye shepherds, hear the word of the Lord; As I live saith the Lord God, surely because my flock became a prey, and my flock became meat to every beast of the field, because there was no shepherd, neither did my shepherds search for*

⁵¹⁵⁰ Ezek 34:18-22

⁵¹⁵¹ Ezek 34:1-10

⁵¹⁵² to quote Herbert Armstrong.

⁵¹⁵³ Mat 23:13

*my flock, but the shepherds fed themselves, and fed not my flock; Therefore, O ye shepherds, hear the word of the Lord; Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I am against the shepherds; and I will require my flock at their hand, and cause them to cease from feeding the flock; neither shall the shepherds feed themselves any more; for I will deliver my flock from their mouth, that they may not be meat for them. For thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I, even I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out. As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day. And I will bring them out from the people, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land, and feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the rivers, and in all the inhabited places of the country. I will feed them in a good pasture, and upon the high mountains of Israel shall their fold be: there shall they lie in a good fold, and in a fat pasture shall they feed upon the mountains of Israel. I will feed my flock, and I will cause them to lie down, saith the Lord God. I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick: but I will destroy the fat and the strong; I will feed them with judgment. And as for you, O my flock, thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I judge between cattle and cattle, between the rams and the he goats.'*⁵¹⁵⁴

Christ will 'bring again that which was driven away,' 'seek that which was lost,' and, 'gather them from the countries.' The shepherds, on the other hand, 'fed themselves, and fed not my flock.' They lorded over their charges, and brought a heavy yoke to bear upon them. And that the Lord will hold against them.

Binding & loosing

This concerns the vile doctrine of 'binding and loosing in heaven,' by which means apostate man has perverted the will of God, seeking to make it subject to his own carnal will. This is founded on an erroneous reading of, '*And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.*'⁵¹⁵⁵ The Amplified Version has the latter part rendered: '*and whatsoever you bind*⁵¹⁵⁶ *on earth must already be bound in heaven; and whatsoever you loose on earth*⁵¹⁵⁷ *must be what is already loosed in heaven.*'

In the case of this particular verse, the Amplified Version is more faithful to, and more fully and accurately captures the meaning of the original Greek. There is only one Greek word for 'thou shalt bind,' and the same root word, though conjugated differently, for 'shall be bound.' The same can be said for, 'thou shalt

⁵¹⁵⁴ Ezek 34:7-17

⁵¹⁵⁵ Mat 16:19, K.J.V.

⁵¹⁵⁶ declare to be improper and unlawful.

⁵¹⁵⁷ declare lawful.

loose,' and, 'shall be loosed.' Rienicker⁵¹⁵⁸ makes it is possible to de-conjugate Greek language construction to discover tenses, and on being subjected to this inspection, the latter translation is found to be the correct form.

A similar import can be seen from Williams: '*And whatever you forbid on earth must be whatever is forbidden already in Heaven, and whatever you permit on earth must be whatever is already permitted in Heaven.*' The New American Standard Bible gives: '*And whatever you shall bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven and whatever you shall loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven.*' Again, in the Concordant Literal New Testament: '*And whatsoever you should be binding on the earth shall be those having been bound in the heavens and whatsoever you should be loosing on the earth shall be those having been loosed in the heavens.*'⁵¹⁵⁹ Finally, Wurst: '*And whatever you bind on earth⁵¹⁶⁰ shall have been already bound⁵¹⁶¹ in heaven and whatever you loose on earth⁵¹⁶² shall have already been loosed in heaven.*'^{5163 5164}

The same is repeated by Christ in Matthew and, again, in John, this time in truncated form: '*Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.*'⁵¹⁶⁵ Some cite this text in isolation in support of their ability to remit sins based on their supposed standing in a church or other religious organisation, while ignoring two key verses in Matthew.⁵¹⁶⁶ It was not the work of the disciples to forgive sins, but the work of Jesus Christ, for He alone had taken their sins upon His innocent head. Christ gave the disciples authority to state that forgiveness of sins was both possible and available to sinners.

It follows that the meaning and prescription in those two verses is clear. God's 'elect' can only operate within the confines of what is stipulated in heaven as permissible and not permissible. If Christ forgives sins, they are forgiven; if they are retained, they are retained.⁵¹⁶⁷ 'We must note that it is whatever you bind and loose, not whomsoever you bind or loose. This has clearly nothing to do with binding or loosing people.'⁵¹⁶⁸ So disfellowshippings, papal fiats, bulls, anathemata, dictats, excommunications, and all the rest are filthy, self-aggrandising devices and completely apostate. And the same applies to those of any other man-appointed religious personage, including those variously self-styled 'latter-day apostles.'

⁵¹⁵⁸ Rienicker, Fritz, *A Linguistic Key to the Greek New Testament*

⁵¹⁵⁹ Williams, Charles B., *The New Testament: a translation in the language of the people*

⁵¹⁶⁰ forbid to be done.

⁵¹⁶¹ forbidden to be done.

⁵¹⁶² permit to be done.

⁵¹⁶³ permitted to be done.

⁵¹⁶⁴ Wurst, Kenneth S., *The New Testament, an expounded translation*

⁵¹⁶⁵ Mat 18:18; John 20:23

⁵¹⁶⁶ Mat 16:19,18:18

⁵¹⁶⁷ I Cor 16:22's Aramaic: anathema maranatha, 'let him be cursed whom the Lord curses,' shows the strictly hierarchical relationship in binding and loosing. It is always initiated from above.

⁵¹⁶⁸ Barclay, William, *The Mind of Jesus*, p.182

Walking together

Another oft-postulated textual reading given off by those 'adherents of the tyrannical school' is found in Amos: *'Can two walk together except they be agreed?'*⁵¹⁶⁹ This is a quite calamitous translation, more correctly rendered: *'Two men cannot walk together, unless there has been a previous appointment.'* Young,⁵¹⁷⁰ quite critical of the K.J.V. translators for laxity in translating, gives the verse as: *'Do two walk together, if they have not met?'* The Revised Standard Version has: *'Do two walk together unless they have made an appointment?'*

This verse, together with the balance of the tract in Amos,⁵¹⁷¹ is a recital of cause and effect. This was a prophecy to Israel, given through the prophet Amos, alluding to the inevitability that the sin of the northern nation Israel and its punishment must meet. God does not punish without full and due cause: cause and effect. Amos chapter three has nothing to do with the twisted reading that compliance and concurrence in all matters religious, as determined by the errant mind of man, is a condition of membership of God's church.

'It is an interesting observation that those who head for Amos⁵¹⁷² for a text of unity, actually are not trying to promote unity at all. They are searching for grounds on which to justify their separation from others. Every one of them postulates unity upon agreement with himself or the party or faction for which he is the front man. Each should make Amos say, 'Can two walk together toward glory unless they agree with us?' Even if two were perfectly agreed after long and arduous study they would not be considered as faithful or loyal unless they agreed with the speaker. There have been occasions when as many as three different men used [that verse] as a text on the same day in the same town, and no two of them could ever agree upon what they had to agree upon to walk together.'⁵¹⁷³

Rabbinical authority

'The phrase 'binding and loosing' was very common in Jewish language in regard to rabbinical and scribal decisions about the Law. To bind something was to declare it forbidden; to loose something was to declare it allowed.'⁵¹⁷⁴ Gruber expounds on arrogated authority: 'In his farewell discourse, Moses told the children of Israel, *"For this commandment which I command you today is not too difficult for you, nor is it far off. It is not in heaven, that you should say, 'Who will go up to heaven for us to get it for us and make us hear it, that we may observe it?' Nor is it beyond the sea, that you should say. 'Who will cross the sea for us to get it for us and*

⁵¹⁶⁹ Amos 3:3, K.J.V.

⁵¹⁷⁰ Dr. Robert Young, the author of various works in original Bible and related languages, and also an Analytical Concordance.

⁵¹⁷¹ Amos 3:3-8

⁵¹⁷² Amos 3:3

⁵¹⁷³ Ketcherside, W. Carl, *The Twisted Scripture* (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁵¹⁷⁴ Barclay, William, *The Mind of Jesus*, p.183

make us hear it, that we may observe it?' But the word is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, that you may observe it."⁵¹⁷⁵

Rabbi Joshua's response to God—"It is not in heaven"—is taken from this portion in Deuteronomy. Rabbi Jeremiah explained Rabbi Joshua's response to mean that God gave His Law to Israel at Sinai, and now it is up to the majority of sages to determine what it means. In effect, it has become the property of the Rabbis. In support of this position, God was told, "Thou hast long since written in the Torah at mount Sinai, 'After the majority must one incline.'"

Actually, that phrase is not written in the Torah at all, nor anywhere else in the Tanakh. It is an inversion of what is written in Exodus, '*You shall not follow a multitude [rabbim] to evil, nor shall you testify in a dispute so as to turn aside a multitude [rabbim] in order to pervert justice.*'⁵¹⁷⁶

The Talmud explains: "By the implications of the text, '*Thou shalt not follow a majority for evil,*' I infer that I may follow them for good."⁵¹⁷⁷ Aside from the problem of making God accountable for and subject to a rabbinic inference, this explanation bypasses the real issue in such cases.

How does one determine whether a particular majority is doing good or evil? Or even more directly, how does one determine what is good and what is evil? Especially when God's "opinion" is not decisive?

"The principle of 'it is not in heaven'⁵¹⁷⁸ is that the Torah itself confers authority on the sages to interpret and apply its laws."⁵¹⁷⁹ As we have seen, however, the Torah does not confer such authority on the sages....

In the biblical history of Israel from Sinai on, there is not the slightest hint of a suggestion that God had submitted Himself to the authority of the Rabbis....

There is an explicit Talmudic principle: "[In a dispute between] one individual and a majority the halak-hah is in agreement with the majority."⁵¹⁸⁰ That holds true whether the one is R. Eleizer or God Himself....'

Akiba championed the position that 'the decision of the majority is binding.' He made it an instrument to overthrow the traditional authority. Akiba established the decision of the majority as the ultimate authority.

"R. Akiba came and taught: Thou shalt fear⁵¹⁸¹ the Lord thy God, that is to include scholars."⁵¹⁸² It is Akiba who put the Rabbis in the place of "the Lord thy God." And Akiba is the editor, if not the recorder, of the account himself.

It was a change of inestimable significance. Sacks⁵¹⁸³ notes, "For lo ba-shamayim hi is—if I may be forgiven for using such terminology—an assertion of a '[Roman] Catholic' as against a 'Protestant' view of divine

⁵¹⁷⁵ Deut 30:11-14

⁵¹⁷⁶ Ex 23:3

⁵¹⁷⁷ Sanh 2a

⁵¹⁷⁸ Hebrew: lo ba-shamayim hi.

⁵¹⁷⁹ Sacks, Jonathan, *Creativity and Innovation in Halakhah*, p.127

⁵¹⁸⁰ Yeb 40a

⁵¹⁸¹ Hebrew: eth.

⁵¹⁸² Kid 57a

law. By it, interpretative authority is vested in the ecclesia, the community of the sages, as against the individual in lonely confrontation with the divine word."⁵¹⁸⁴

"What they decide is what God has commanded" is exactly the same claim that the Roman Emperor Constantine made for the bishops in council, when he set up a similar system. Rabbinic Judaism and 'Constantinian Christianity' share these three major principles:

1. The will of God is established by the majority of sages / bishops in the Sanhedrin / council;
2. A profession of upholding the Scriptures, though authorised "interpretation" may be unrelated to the text; and,
3. State sword support of the synagogue / church.

The system set up by Akiba placed ultimate authority neither in the hands of God nor in the hands of the majority of people, but rather in the hands of the majority of Rabbis. It established an insular, self-contained, ruling Party. The Rabbis of the Great Sanhedrin, that is, the leading party members, would determine who else would be admitted to the ruling elite. There was no means of correction from outside, or from above.

As with all such parties, the Rabbis saw themselves in control for the good of the people. As with all such parties, that "good" was defined as whatever the Rabbis chose it to be. The only other independent authority they recognised was a Gentile state ruling over them.

The picture of a self-appointed ruling elite as guardians of the will of God stands in marked contrast to the outcast prophet denouncing the sins of leaders and people alike. It was a system that would not allow a challenge to its authority. The source of its rulings was "not in heaven." Even as the voice of God from heaven had to be silenced, so did the voice of God on earth, the prophet....'

The entire rabbinic system was based upon the authority of the Rabbis to declare that 'right is left and left is right.'⁵¹⁸⁵ "The terms 'bind' and 'loose',⁵¹⁸⁶ employed by the Rabbis in their legal terminology, point indeed to a sort of supernatural power claimed by the Pharisees for their prohibitory or permissive decrees, probably because they could place both men and things under ban.⁵¹⁸⁷....Singularly enough, the abolition of the power of excommunication, under the influence of modern times and through the inference of the worldly government, marks the beginning of the decline of Rabbinical Authority in occidental Judaism."^{5188 5189}

⁵¹⁸³ Sachs, Jonathan, Chief Rabbi, Great Britain and the Commonwealth.

⁵¹⁸⁴ Sachs, Jonathan, *Creativity and Innovation in Halakhah*, p.129

⁵¹⁸⁵ Jackson, Bernard S., *The Concept of Religious Law in Judaism*, p.47:

According to the need of the moment, 'The Rabbis do not hesitate to pronounce upon and on occasions alter the relation between man and God in the operation of the legal system.'

⁵¹⁸⁶ Hebrew: asar we-hittar.

⁵¹⁸⁷ Hebrew: herem.

⁵¹⁸⁸ *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, p.338, article 'Rabbinical Authority.'

⁵¹⁸⁹ Gruber, Daniel, *Rabbi Akiba's Messiah: The Origins of Rabbinic Authority*, pp.116-118,120,127,128 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

'The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be' is better rendered: *'The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver [or, that decreed] from [between] his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall be the cleansing of the nation' [or, unto him shall the nation be obedient].*⁵¹⁹⁰

The K.J.V. translation of *'a lawgiver,'* was not, and is not, a reference to the Rabbis; they came later, and while they did add law upon law, almost without number, they were not God's Laws, but simply vain devices and imaginings of man.⁵¹⁹¹ They also introduced curtailments or restrictions of the Law, such as seen in the Noachide perversion.⁵¹⁹²

The sceptre is the right and exercise of rulership, the ruling power—signifying dominion, power, and authority—deriving from God and encompassing the throne, exposed in what is commonly referred to as the throne of David. That throne was God's, the Word, and was given to the nation Israel, in the first instance to the occupancy of king Saul. That throne will⁵¹⁹³ be taken up by Christ on His return: *'I will overturn, overturn, overturn, it: and it shall be no more, until he come whose right it is; and I will give it him.'*⁵¹⁹⁴ And that sceptre will not depart the tribe of Judah until Shiloh, *'he who is to be sent,'* the Messiah, Christ—should come. At the time of Christ's death the Jews expressly claimed: *'We have no king but Cæsar,'*⁵¹⁹⁵ but that will be corrected and righted, for the 'elect' and the great multitude of all nations⁵¹⁹⁶ will have Jesus Christ as their *'King of kings, and Lord of lords.'*⁵¹⁹⁷

This, in large measure, is known to the Jews. Three Targums interpret *'Shiloh'* of the Messiah, as many of the Jewish writers do, both ancient and modern.⁵¹⁹⁸ It also is the name of the Messiah in the Talmud.⁵¹⁹⁹ The name *'Shiloh'* well agrees with Him, for it comes from a root word that signifies to be *'quiet,' 'peaceable,'* and *'prosperous.'* These qualifications well fit Him, for he was of a quiet and peaceable disposition. He came to make peace between God and men, and made it by the blood of His cross. And He gives spiritual peace to all His followers. He brings them at length to everlasting peace and happiness. He is doing all this, because He has prospered and succeeded in the great work of their redemption and salvation which He undertook.

⁵¹⁹⁰ Deut 49:10, K.J.V. (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁵¹⁹¹ q.v. Christ's exhortation of the Pharisees, Matthew chpt. 23

⁵¹⁹² q.v. inf.

⁵¹⁹³ extant today in the throne of Britain, q.v. sup.

⁵¹⁹⁴ Ezek 21:27

⁵¹⁹⁵ John 19:15

⁵¹⁹⁶ q.v. sup.

⁵¹⁹⁷ Rev 17:14b, 19:16b

⁵¹⁹⁸ Zohar in Gen. fol. 32. 4. & in Exod. fol. 4. 1. & in Numb. fol. 101. 2. Bereshit Rabba, fol. 98. sect. 85. 3. Jarchi & Baal Hatturim, in loc. Nachmanidis Disputat. cum Paulo, p. 53. Abarbinel. Mashmiah Jeshuah, fol. 10. 1. R. Abraham Seba, Tzeror Hammor, fol. 36. 4. & 62. 2

⁵¹⁹⁹ I. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 98. 2, and in other writings; Echa Rabbati, fol. 50. 2

During the best of times during the time of the Second Temple—sadly all too rare, as we can see from the depressing Scripture record—the Law was promulgated, taught, and explained by the priesthood. In the local synagogues, it was preached from Moses' seat, until Shiloh, Christ, came.

But Jewish religious authorities had another position on the matter, for the entire thrust of Phariseism / rabbinical Judaism was adamantly opposed to Jesus Christ, His teachings, and His church. The Rabbis did not, do not, and cannot constitute the lawgiver of Deuteronomy,⁵²⁰⁰ regardless of their claimed arrogation. The Jews, in adhering to their anti-Christian religious beliefs, were discarded by God after their probationary period,⁵²⁰¹ until the time of the end, when the veil will fall from their eyes, and, at long last, they will see, and understand.⁵²⁰²

Last claim

The final 'claim to superiority' made by some rests on the words of Christ in Matthew: *'Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples, Saying, The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: All therefore whatsoever they bid you to observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not.'*⁵²⁰³ Mad has been the scramble for custody and occupation of Moses' seat, either figuratively or literally, and for the peculiar type of power and authority deemed vested in it by the aspirants. The problem with all such gambits lies in what Christ was not referring to: it was not the authority to change the Laws and commandments of God. The people were to *'observe and do'* that which they were bid, but in light of the content of the following verses,⁵²⁰⁴ the scope of valid *'bid[ding] to observe'* was heavily prescribed.

All of these 'claims to superiority' lie in utter confusion. It is not the work of God, *'For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.'*⁵²⁰⁵

Happily, the end of all of these dissembling, self-aggrandising 'false shepherds' and 'false teachers,' together with their fawning followers, was predicted by Paul: *'Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with diverse lusts. Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith. But they shall proceed no further: for their folly shall be manifest unto all men, as*

⁵²⁰⁰ Deut 49:10a

⁵²⁰¹ forty years, the duration of probation, q.v. sup., from 30AD (the year of the crucifixion) to 70AD (the year of the destruction of the temple).

⁵²⁰² Zech chpt. 12f.; II Cor 3:14-16, etc.

⁵²⁰³ Mat 23:1-3 (sublinear emphasis added); Edersheim:

'Great has been the scramble for Moses' seat.'

⁵²⁰⁴ Mat 23:4-39; and Christ's excoriation of the customs and traditions of the scribes and Pharisees, and similarly in relation to the customs of the elders, Mat 15:1-20

⁵²⁰⁵ I Cor 14:33

*theirs also was.*⁵²⁰⁶ The proof of the accuracy of this prophecy can be seen on the Internet today, in the myriad web-sites and electronic discussion fora which are dedicated to analysing the fall and spectacular collapse of the core of the end-time Laodicean spew, known as the Worldwide Church of God, and it's daughters of hell.

Final condition

In stark comparison, the final condition of the true Christian church, just before the return of Christ, is one of being cast out and plundered by the Laodiceans, and lacking a shepherd, *'because there was no shepherd.'*⁵²⁰⁷ This is the Philadelphian era, one of only two of the seven eras of the church that escaped criticism from Our Lord in Revelation chapters two and three: one, Smyrna, a persecuted church; the other, Philadelphia, a little one.

Without this true church, all mankind would be condemned, for, as Christ said: *'When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whosoever readeth, let him understand), Then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains: For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened,'*⁵²⁰⁸ and, *'I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?'*⁵²⁰⁹ The implied answer to the question is 'No,' or as near 'No' as it is possible to get, such will be the falling away. The 'end time falling away'⁵²¹⁰ is part of the subject of the parable of the '*great supper*' in Luke which indicates that *'all [the bidden guests] with one mind make excuse,'* and are excluded, and that the '*Lord's house*' will be '*filled*' with *'the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind,'* who are sought out, *'in the highways and the hedges, and compel[led] to come in, that my house may be full.'*⁵²¹¹ The first part, concerning the exclusion, is prophesied in Zechariah.⁵²¹² Without the existence of the end-time 'election'—'separated from their fallen and cast-out Laodicean fellows by God,⁵²¹³ even though frequently disfellowshipped by the spew that comprises the discarded rump—there is nothing of worth left in all the earth.

⁵²⁰⁶ II Tim 3:5-9 (sublinear emphasis added)

⁵²⁰⁷ Zech 10:2c, diminutive case.

⁵²⁰⁸ Mat 24:15,16,21,22 (sublinear emphasis added); the word '*sake*' should be deleted as it does not occur in the original Greek text, leaving '*but for the elect.*'

⁵²⁰⁹ Luke 18:8

⁵²¹⁰ Joseph Tkach Snr.'s infamous 'Christmas Eve Sermon' was given in 1994, in Atlanta, Georgia. The '*falling away*' started on the first new moon thereafter, which coincided with 1 January, 1995, terminating on 30 January. This is the month or moon referred to in Zech 11:8a. During that time, the W.C.G. lost about 30% of its membership. Worse was to follow.

⁵²¹¹ Luke 14:16-24; a reference to the collection or ingathering of the 'intermediate peoples,' in the main, q.v. sup.

⁵²¹² Zech 11:8,9

⁵²¹³ Rev 11:2

Thankfully, the wiles and devices of the workers of iniquity have failed, and are doomed to fail again in the near future, irrespective of their uttermost efforts, and the 'elect' are destined to be raised in glory, and to reign with our Lord Jesus Christ, forever.

May the Lord be praised.

Chapter 69

'Glossolalia'

'The earliest and most spectacular manifestation of the Spirit's presence was glossolalia or speaking with tongues. Of all the activities of the early church this is the furthest removed from normal experience....As the name "tongues" indicates, those who were endowed with this gift were popularly supposed to be speaking foreign languages. To this belief Paul himself subscribed, as may be seen from his mention of different types of tongues and his quotations from Isaiah⁵²¹⁴....There can be no doubt, therefore, that glossolalia gave the normal impression of articulate utterance and not of hysterical raving. In Acts there is good evidence that glossolalia was a common experience of the early church....

According to Luke, Peter at once concluded that the tumultuous experience which he and his companions had undergone was the outpouring of the Spirit foretold by the prophet Joel. They had been taught by Jesus to regard His ministry as the beginning of the new age, and to await the gift of the Spirit. But it is noteworthy that they should have regarded glossolalia as the fulfilment of this promise....Paul, to be sure, insisted that it was both necessary and possible to confine glossolalia within the limits of decency and good order,⁵²¹⁵ and he spoke from personal experience, for he possessed the gift in a high degree.^{5216 5217}

⁵²¹⁴ Isa 12:10,14:21

⁵²¹⁵ I Cor 14:40

⁵²¹⁶ I Cor 14:18

⁵²¹⁷ Caird, G. B., *The Apostolic Age*, pp.59-63 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

Edification [was] the chief aim.⁵²¹⁸ To convince the Corinthians, without needless offence, of what he had asserted, the apostle put the case, that if when he came next to Corinth he should merely display his gift of speaking in a variety of languages, of what use in that case would his visit be to them? Surely of none, except he spake intelligibly, either by immediate revelation from God, or by some prophetic message suited to their case, or concerning some doctrine in which they wavered or were mistaken. Unless in some of these ways (which indeed it is difficult for us to distinguish with exactness) he gave them clear instructions, all that he could say in unknown languages would be an unmeaning noise....For unless [he] uttered significant and intelligible words, how could the hearers understand what was spoken? [He] might as well speak in an empty room or an unfrequented desert, where [his] words would be lost in the air and never reach any human ear.⁵²¹⁹

Superficially similar, but of immeasurably greater religious significance, was the gift of prophecy. The two gifts are mentioned together⁵²²⁰....In first-century Judaism, prophecy was confined to apocalyptic predictions of the End with all its preliminary woes....[but] John the Baptist and then Jesus had revived prophecy in its classical form, and in the New Testament prophecy covers many types of inspired utterance....John of Patmos includes under the heading of prophecy the martyrs' testimony to Jesus (*'for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy'*⁵²²¹).^{5222 5223}

Today

These days, much is written about and claimed for 'speaking in tongues.' Modern manifestations frequently occur in Pentecostal churches, and the same can be seen, for example, in the Toronto Blessing and the Alpha Initiative. In all cases, it is enthusiastically cited by its advocates as absolute proof of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. But is it? Or is it something sinister?

Ecstatic fanaticism, in so-called 'feeling' churches, is surprisingly closely related in many traits to certain modern African, pseudo-African, or similar revivalist religious eruptions where aberrant, hysterical, and possessed behaviour is positively encouraged, frequently under the guise of being 'slain for Jesus,' 'slain by the Spirit,' speaking in highly repetitive gibberish tongues,⁵²²⁴ or, as evidenced at certain so-called 'tarry meetings,' in barking like dogs, roaring like lions, lengthy and uncontrollable laughter,⁵²²⁵ weird shrieking, wailing, weeping, being

⁵²¹⁸ I Cor 14:6-12

⁵²¹⁹ *Scott's Commentary*, I Corinthians chpt. 14 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁵²²⁰ Acts 19:6; I Corinthians chpts. 12-14

⁵²²¹ Rev 19:10e

⁵²²² bearing faithful testimony to Jesus, therefore, was held ineluctably to incorporate prophetic teachings and utterances.

⁵²²³ Caird, G. B., *The Apostolic Age*, pp.59-63 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁵²²⁴ Glossolalia.

⁵²²⁵ called 'Holy laughter,' no less!

rendered immobile, fainting, falling down or being thrown about, and in seriously deluded women writhing on the floor and claiming orgasm with the Holy Spirit. Even levitation is reported on some occasions.

None of these traits is evident in the primitive church of the first- and second-centuries. There is no record of the Apostles being overtaken by 'Holy laughter,' or imitating animal cries, or weeping uncontrollably, or being thrown about, or levitating, or speaking gibberish, or having orgasmic encounters with the Holy Spirit. There are, however, a number of references in the New Testament to 'speaking in other tongues,' or interpreting same, signifying it as a sign of the presence of the Holy Spirit.⁵²²⁶

In Acts it is evident that the 'speaking in other tongues' describes speaking in foreign languages: *'And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language. And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, behold, are not all these which speak Galileans? And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?'*⁵²²⁷ This was not 'gibberish-speak.' Those Jews, from around the world, heard their own local languages. They understood what was said in these various languages. A surprisingly frequent interpretation of this passage by expositors is that the Apostles spoke in their own or the local tongue, presumably Aramaic or Greek, and that the hearers heard in their own languages. There is no support for this and certainly a straightforward reading, especially when taken with the other *'tongues'* references in the New Testament, leads to the sudden ability to speak in a number of languages being conferred on the Apostles at the start of the Christian era.

The Gospel message was about to be promulgated widely, among people who had little or no understanding of Hebrew and Aramaic, and quite possibly Greek too. The generality of the gift is mentioned by Christ in Mark where He says: *'signs shall follow them that believe: In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.'*⁵²²⁸ Christ prophesied that His followers would heal the sick and speak in new tongues, that is, other languages.⁵²²⁹

*'They shall take'*⁵²³⁰ *up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.'*⁵²³¹ *'Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing'*⁵²³² *shall by any means hurt you. Notwithstanding in this rejoice*

⁵²²⁶ Mark 16:17; Acts 2:4-8,10:46,19:6; I Cor 12:10

⁵²²⁷ Acts 2:4-8

⁵²²⁸ Mark 6:17,18

⁵²²⁹ the phrase *'unknown tongues'* does not appear in the Greek; it is *'tongues.'*

⁵²³⁰ Greek: *airo*, *'raise up.'*

⁵²³¹ Mark 16:18

⁵²³² better: *'no one.'*

*not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.*⁵²³³ It should be noted that the tract in Luke, addressed to the ‘*seventy*’ sent before Jesus into all the ‘*cities and places*’⁵²³⁴ that He would visit during His earthly ministry, was spoken not before their departure, but upon their return. As such is has meaning and applicability beyond the mere ‘*seventy*’ to all those who go forth in His name, and whose ‘*names are written in heaven.*’

‘*Raising serpents,*’ and having power over ‘*scorpions,*’ are used figuratively, extending and applying ‘*over all the power of the enemy,*’ namely, Satan, his demons, and his vast posse of evil human emissaries. The better translation found in Luke, ‘*no one,*’ confirms the personality of the enemy, removing any possibility of its restriction to stinging serpents.

There is one further point worthy of consideration here, for there is no record in the New Testament of any Christian taking poison inadvertently, or being given poison covertly by an enemy. All the others ‘*signs*’ recited⁵²³⁵ are recorded as having happened:

1. Casting out devils;⁵²³⁶
2. Speaking with new tongues;⁵²³⁷
3. Taking up serpents;⁵²³⁸ and,
4. Healing the sick.⁵²³⁹

Paul’s inadvertently lifting a serpent in a bundle of firewood is tenuous in context. Mark uses the Greek meaning to ‘*raise up, as on high,*’⁵²⁴⁰ so that all may see what was formerly hidden. Snakes are notoriously difficult to detect when in their own natural habitat, but being held up on high facilitates easy scrutiny for all. Either of the usual words used in the New Testament for raising up from the dead⁵²⁴¹ do not appear in this instance, because the word here used imports the unique idea of being held aloft.

Taking up serpents—figurative representations of evil beings, both human and spirit—out of their own habitat and holding them aloft for public scrutiny and opprobrium without any danger of venomous attack, is unique. As such, it can only apply to eschatological events of the end time, events which have yet to happen.

⁵²³³ Luke 10:19,20

⁵²³⁴ Luke 10:1

⁵²³⁵ in Mark 16:17,18

⁵²³⁶ Luke 10:17; correctly ‘*demons.*’

⁵²³⁷ Acts 2:4f.

⁵²³⁸ by Paul, inadvertently, Acts 28:3-6

⁵²³⁹ Acts 3:2f., etc.

⁵²⁴⁰ Mark 16:18; Greek: airo.

⁵²⁴¹ Greek: egeiro, anistemi.

The typical and antetypical fulfilment of biblical prophecy is well known, with the forerunning typical often appearing more than once. The antetypical, however, is the end state, the final fulfilment. The people of God at the time of the end of the current era, where the world is under the sway of Satan, will have special powers; none more so than in the personages of the two last witnesses.⁵²⁴² They will lift up the wicked devices of Satan and his own to public scrutiny, without fear of injury or hurt. The retaliatory acts of the wicked, in seeking to poison them, for example, will fail, because the witnesses and others will be divinely protected. In short, Mark and Luke contain prophecies of eschatological import in this regard.⁵²⁴³

Perhaps the greatest reliance on the part of the Pentecostal movement is placed on Corinthians⁵²⁴⁴ for 'gibberish tongues' of the Holy Spirit. The context in which Paul speaks is that of the Apostle to the Gentiles, and the Gentiles spoke a wide variety of languages. Owing largely to the extent and reach of the Roman road and trade system, there was much travel in those days between regions, and Gentile members of the church could easily find themselves in foreign lands, attending assemblies which used languages unknown to them. In chapter fourteen of first Corinthians, Paul deals at some length with the difficulties arising.

Unfortunately, the K.J.V. contains the poor translation '*understandeth*' of the Greek meaning '*hear*'.⁵²⁴⁵ A better rendering is given by Green: '*Pursue love, and seek eagerly the spiritual things, but rather that you may prophesy. For the one speaking in a tongue does not speak to men, but to God, for no one hears, but in spirit he speaks mysteries*'.⁵²⁴⁶ Here the '*tongue*' is spoken to God, in '*spirit*,' in prayer,⁵²⁴⁷ '*for no one*⁵²⁴⁸ *hears*.' This refers to open forum spoken words in an alien language. What cannot be understood cannot edify, and so a foreign language spoken in a church is without purpose, for, if people cannot understand, they cannot benefit from what is said. Paul expounds on the benefit of open forum prophesying: '*But the one prophesying to men speaks for building up, and encouragement, and comfort*'.⁵²⁴⁹ This is held in contrast to the foreign words spoken to God. The two are again contrasted, '*For if I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth; but my mind is unfruitful*'.⁵²⁵⁰ Here, the '*unfruitful mind*' is the thought unexpressed or prayer unuttered before men. There is no plenary edification; no benefit to the assembly.

Paul continues in the relative standing of a gift of languages, issuing instruction, '*And I desire all of you to speak in tongues, but rather that you may prophesy. For the one prophesying is greater than the one speaking in tongues, unless he interpret that the church may receive building up*'.⁵²⁵¹ The distinction here is that these

⁵²⁴² Rev 11:3f.

⁵²⁴³ Mark 16:17,18; Luke 10:19,20

⁵²⁴⁴ I Cor 14:1-24,27,28

⁵²⁴⁵ in I Cor 14:2; Greek: *akouo*.

⁵²⁴⁶ Green's Literal Translation; I Cor 14:1,2

⁵²⁴⁷ cf. I Cor 14:14, inf.

⁵²⁴⁸ mortal.

⁵²⁴⁹ I Cor 14:3

⁵²⁵⁰ I Cor 14:14

⁵²⁵¹ I Cor 14:5

'tongues' are spoken before members of the church in open forum and in full understanding, since they are translated. They are not foreign *'tongues'* left untranslated, and thus spoken only to God.⁵²⁵² An unintelligible foreign language spoken in an open church assembly, even though a gift of God, is of no benefit unless the words be interpreted to the edification of those hearing them, for, without this, the one speaking a foreign language simply gratifies himself, in a vain and ostentatious show. Paul says, *'Now, brethren, if I come unto you speaking with tongues, what shall I profit you, except I shall speak to you either by revelation, or by knowledge, or by prophesying, or by doctrine?'*⁵²⁵³ that such a display is unedifying and unprofitable. It would signify nothing if any of these gifts were to be uttered and left in an unknown tongue.

The visiting Christian, having a foreign mother tongue, is the subject of, *'Wherefore let him that speaketh in an unknown tongue, pray that he may interpret,'*⁵²⁵⁴ that he may be able to express himself in the language of the people among whom he now finds himself, otherwise the whole thing is left without worth. Paul stresses the need to communicate effectively, for that is the whole purpose of language. He gives the value in, *'Yet in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue.'*⁵²⁵⁵

Paul then goes on to instance the case where more than one person attending a church assembly speaks in a foreign language: *'If any man speak in an unknown tongue, let it be by two, or at the most by three, and that by course; and let one interpret. But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in church; and let him speak to himself, and to God.'*⁵²⁵⁶ He does not want a 'foreign language clique' to develop in an assembly, for that would be divisive. For this reason, they are to speak successively, and all is to be interpreted. If it cannot be interpreted, and this includes explaining the meaning in the local language by targuming, then those speaking the foreign language are to remain silent. Everything in the church is geared to understanding. There is nothing here remotely supportive of the Pentecostal claim that gibberish tongues are a sign of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Paul rounds off his dissertation on tongues with: *'For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.'*⁵²⁵⁷

Demon possession, where devils take control of a person's mind and body—frequently after illness or injury, or through the use of hallucinogenic drugs, but also after specific, 'cold light of day' wilful invitation—often manifests itself in the likes of intermittently or continuously-altered states of consciousness, altered personality, frequent massive mood swings, hallucinations, neurosis, mysticism, enhanced physical strength, sclerosis, con-

⁵²⁵² I Cor 14:2

⁵²⁵³ I Cor 14:6

⁵²⁵⁴ I Cor 14:13

⁵²⁵⁵ I Cor 14:19

⁵²⁵⁶ I Cor 14:27,28

⁵²⁵⁷ I Cor 14:33

vulsive writing, self-flagellation or flesh-cutting, fascination with the occult and surreal, and supernatural abilities. Levitation is one sign of the latter, and appears to apply only to those who are profoundly possessed.⁵²⁵⁸

Judas Iscariot⁵²⁵⁹ is described thus by Christ in John: '*yet one of you is a devil.*'⁵²⁶⁰ The Greek translated '*devil*,'⁵²⁶¹ signifies one who has sold his 'soul,' namely, his entire being, to Satan; a Luciferian, in other words. He is also described as the '*son of perdition*,' an opprobrious title he shares with none other than the Antichrist.⁵²⁶² Iscariot, however, was only intermittently possessed by Satan, which goes some way to explain how he could be accepted sufficiently by the other disciples to be trusted to '*hold the bag*,' the bag containing their communal money. When not possessed, he would appear 'normal.'

Lacking omnipresence, Satan can possess but one person at a time, although the target can be possessed by one or more demons in addition. By far the most serious and dangerous possession, however, arises from the indwelling of Satan, and the most powerful human adversaries of the 'elect' are Luciferian, possessed by Satan, the fallen cherub. The Pharisees knew that Beelzebub (another name for Satan) was the ruler of the demons,⁵²⁶³ and in that they had the ranking of demons correctly.⁵²⁶⁴ At the time of the end, the Antichrist, and his evil partner, the false prophet, will be possessed for a very substantial part of the time during their hegemony. It is evident from Scripture that the Antichrist and the false prophet will be satanically possessed, and probably demonically too, as opposed to merely demonically. As the son of perdition above all possessed by the Devil,⁵²⁶⁵ the Antichrist will be the more deeply possessed of the two.

Perhaps Satan, on entering Iscariot, suggested something like: "Get rid of this guy, he's stopping the overthrow of the Romans. He's going to die, and all will be lost. Betray him, and I'll make you the lynchpin of the rebellion and ruler of the world." After all, Judas did not approach the authorities to betray⁵²⁶⁶ until Jesus had

⁵²⁵⁸ Levitation is one of the most frequently mentioned phenomena in the lives of many Roman Catholic 'saints,' including, St. Benedict Joseph Labre, St. Angela of Brescia, St. Antoinette of Florence, St. Arey, St. Peter Celestine, St. Colette, St. Margaret of Hungary, St. Stephen of Hungary, St. Mary of Egypt, St. Joseph Oriol, Bl. Bentivolio Buoni, St. Francis of Paola, St. John of Facundo, and St. Martin de Porres.

Certainly one of the 'Saints' best known for levitating during prayer is St. Joseph of Cupertino (1603–1663AD), who experienced so many levitations that were witnessed by his brothers in the Franciscan Order and others that he is regarded in the Roman Catholic Church as the patron saint of aeroplane passengers!

⁵²⁵⁹ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of John*, Vol.2, p.112:

'We see how a man's view can be warped....Judas was an embittered man and he took an embittered view of things. A man's sight depends on what is inside him. He sees only what he is fit and able to see. If we like a person, he can do little wrong. If we dislike him, we may misinterpret his finest action. A warped mind brings a warped view of things; and, if we find ourselves becoming very critical of others and imputing unworthy motives to them, we should, for a moment, stop examining them and start examining ourselves.'

⁵²⁶⁰ John 6:70c

⁵²⁶¹ Greek: diabolos.

⁵²⁶² q.v. sup.

⁵²⁶³ Mat 12:24; '*demons*' rather than the incorrect K.J.V. '*devils*.'

⁵²⁶⁴ q.v 'Ranking of Demons' inf.

⁵²⁶⁵ as was Judas Iscariot; cf. Luke 22:3,4

⁵²⁶⁶ Mark 14:10

been anointed for His burial.⁵²⁶⁷ That symbolic act would have sealed the matter in Judas's mind: Jesus was going to die, and all would be lost. Satan was right. As a Luciferian adept, Judas would have expected to gain Satanic powers by the shedding of blood through the taking of human life, powers conferred by Satan himself, but it did not happen. To the contrary, Satan appears to have discarded him, for he had no further interest once the betrayal had occurred and the evil process had been set in irrevocable train, leading to Jesus' death on the cross. In the garden of Gethsemane, Jesus said, '*It is enough, the hour is come; behold, the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.*'⁵²⁶⁸ The Greek translated '*it is enough*' is a single word which means '*paid in full*.'⁵²⁶⁹ In context, it refers in part to Judas, for he was the man who betrayed Him for thirty pieces of silver, the price of a dead slave, and he had been paid in full, at least in terms of that transaction. '*Paid in full*' also imports the idea of an irrevocable contract: Judas could not go back and unwind the deal he had done with the authorities. When he did try later, the '*chief priests and elders*' refused to accommodate him.⁵²⁷⁰ The technical, commercial term used in receipting an account did not permit it.⁵²⁷¹ When paid in full, all obligation ceased, and the matter closed. Iscariot, remorseful, returned the blood money, and went and killed himself. The major part of the meaning behind '*paid in full*,' however, is bound up in the Greek word meaning '*the price of release*,'⁵²⁷² usually found in the plural.⁵²⁷³

'[I]n classical Greek there are a whole series of phrases, 'to receive a ransom for someone,'⁵²⁷⁴ 'to give a ransom for someone,'⁵²⁷⁵ 'to let go without a ransom,'⁵²⁷⁶ and a phrase which describes a sum paid 'as a ransom.'⁵²⁷⁷ Nearly always in classical Greek the word is quite literal; it means the price paid to effect someone's delivery....It may be laid down, as a general rule, that in the Greek of the Old Testament⁵²⁷⁸ the word⁵²⁷⁹ never has anything other than a literal meaning. It always means a payment which releases a man from an obligation which he was otherwise bound to fulfil. In the Old Testament the ransom may be paid by the man himself, or it may be paid by someone for him; but always it is a price and a payment which releases him from a debt and a liability which otherwise he would have been bound to satisfy.

⁵²⁶⁷ Mark 14:1-9

⁵²⁶⁸ Mark 14:41b

⁵²⁶⁹ Greek: apechei.

⁵²⁷⁰ Mat 27:3-20

⁵²⁷¹ Greek: apechein.

⁵²⁷² Greek: lutron.

⁵²⁷³ Greek: lutra, and related word loutrous.

⁵²⁷⁴ Greek: labein lutra tinos.

⁵²⁷⁵ Greek: lutra didonai tinos.

⁵²⁷⁶ Greek: aneu lutron aphienai.

⁵²⁷⁷ Greek: huper lutron.

⁵²⁷⁸ Septuagint (LXX).

⁵²⁷⁹ Greek: lutron.

We now turn to the background which 'ransom'⁵²⁸⁰ had in [the then] Greek thought and practice. In the contemporary Greek of the New Testament times it has two main uses:

1. It is regularly used of 'the price which is paid to redeem something which is in pledge or in pawn,' and,
2. It is regularly used of 'the purchase price paid or received for the liberation of a slave.'⁵²⁸¹

Now here we have to take account of another Greek custom in New Testament times which gives to New Testament language one of its most vivid pictures. There are another two New Testament words that we must bring in here, which mean 'to buy,'⁵²⁸² and 'price.'⁵²⁸³ Paul says, '*Know ye not....that ye are not your own? For ye are bought*⁵²⁸⁴ *with a price?*'^{5285 5286} He writes, '*Ye are bought*⁵²⁸⁷ *with a price;*⁵²⁸⁸ *be not ye the servants of men?*'⁵²⁸⁹ In Galatians he says that '*Christ has redeemed*⁵²⁹⁰ *us from the curse of the law.*'⁵²⁹¹ He says that God sent His Son 'to *redeem them that were under the law.*'⁵²⁹² In Galatians he says, as it should be translated, '*For freedom*⁵²⁹³ *did Christ set us free,*'⁵²⁹⁴ and, '*Ye were called for freedom.*'^{5295 5296} There are a great many Greek inscriptions which speak about a person being sold to a [g]od, for example, to Athene, to Asclepius, to Apollo. There was one special way in which a Greek slave could obtain his freedom. He could scrape and save, perhaps for years, such little sums as he was able to earn; and, as he saved the money, he deposited it little by little in the temple of some god. When he had laboriously amassed his complete purchase price, he took his master to the temple where the money was deposited. There the priest paid over to the master the purchase price of freedom, and the man who had been a slave became the property of the god and therefore 'free of all men'....It is precisely this to which Paul indirectly refers when repeatedly he calls himself and others, '*the slave of Christ.*'⁵²⁹⁷ He has been bought by Christ and has become His property [and that of the Father]. It is very

⁵²⁸⁰ Greek: lutron.

⁵²⁸¹ Barclay, William, *A New Testament Workbook*, pp.76-80

⁵²⁸² Greek: agorazein or exagorazein.

⁵²⁸³ Greek: time.

⁵²⁸⁴ Greek: agorazein.

⁵²⁸⁵ Greek: time.

⁵²⁸⁶ I Cor 6:19,20

⁵²⁸⁷ Greek: agorazein.

⁵²⁸⁸ Greek: time.

⁵²⁸⁹ I Cor 17:23

⁵²⁹⁰ Greek: exagorazein.

⁵²⁹¹ Gal 3:13

⁵²⁹² Gal 4:4,5

⁵²⁹³ Greek: ep'eleutheria.

⁵²⁹⁴ Gal 5:1

⁵²⁹⁵ Greek: ep'eleutheria.

⁵²⁹⁶ Gal 5:13

⁵²⁹⁷ doulos Christou; Barclay, William, *The Gospel of John*, Vol.2, pp.177,178 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

significant how Paul uses the very phrase '*for freedom*,'⁵²⁹⁸ which occurs again and again in these inscriptions. The purchase price is paid and the Christian belongs to Christ and is therefore free from all the powers which held him.

Now in the New Testament itself, [the] word ransom⁵²⁹⁹ occurs twice. In Mark⁵³⁰⁰ and Matthew⁵³⁰¹ Jesus says that He came to give His life as '*a ransom*,' for many. There is one other kindred word which is used.⁵³⁰² In Timothy we read of Christ Jesus who gave Himself '*a ransom*,'⁵³⁰³ for all. An antilutron is a very rare word. It is worth noting in the passing that in the Orphic literature it is used to mean an '*antidote*' and '*remedy*.' Christ's death, we could understand it, is the '*antidote*' for the poison, and the '*remedy*' for the disease of sin....The word lutron expresses the '*redeeming*,' '*rescuing*' of a man from a power or a situation which has him in its grip and from which he is powerless to free himself....They imply that by no conceivable means could man have effected his own liberation or rescue.⁵³⁰⁴ He was helpless in the grip of a power and a situation which he could not mend and from which he could not break away. His liberation was effected by the coming of Jesus Christ who paid the price which was necessary to achieve it.'

Barclay goes on to say that, 'Nowhere in the New Testament is there any word of to whom that price was paid. It could not have been paid to God because all the time God was so loving of the world. It was in fact God's love that sent Christ into this world. It could not have been paid to the Devil for that would put the Devil equality with God. All we can say is this—it cost the life and death of Christ to liberate man from the past, the present, and the future power of sin. Beyond that we cannot go, but although thought may be baffled, experience shows that it cost the life of Jesus Christ to bring us home to God.'⁵³⁰⁵

This last comment is incredibly weak. The acts of sin are infractions of the Law, God's Law. The debt, therefore, is owed to God. Even the position of Satan or the Devil, as the analogous 'master' who owned the slave, is far from unassailable, for Satan's power and position, pro tempore, is by the permission and condescendence of God, and that is to be extinguished in early course. In congruent form, given that the Word gave the Law to man, the entire becomes consolidated in the Godhead, no matter the route, and all and any difficulty is resolved. The Law is God's; God the Father, in analogy, is the parallel of the pagan god of the temple; the

⁵²⁹⁸ 'John 15:11-17: Doulos, the slave, the servant of God was no title of shame; it was a title of the highest honour. Moses was the doulos of God (Deut 34:5); so was Joshua (Josh 24:29); so was David (Psa 89:20). It is a title which Paul counted it an honour to use (Titus 1:1). The greatest men in the past had been proud to be called the douloi, the slaves of God. And Jesus says: "I have something greater for you yet, you are no longer slaves; you are friends." Christ offers and intimacy with God which not even the greatest men knew before He came into the world.'

⁵²⁹⁸ Greek: ep'eleutheria.

⁵²⁹⁹ Greek: lutron.

⁵³⁰⁰ Mark 10:45

⁵³⁰¹ Mat 20:28

⁵³⁰² Greek: antilutron.

⁵³⁰³ I Tim 2:6; Greek: antilutron.

⁵³⁰⁴ it is this, inter alia, that distinguishes Judæo-Christianity from autosoteric religions.

⁵³⁰⁵ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of John*, Vol.2, pp.177,178 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

greatest of evil spirits, Satan, is a creation of God—as are the demons, for they were, respectively, cherub and angels before their fall; their evil power is carefully circumscribed by God, even to the point of being used by Him for His holy purposes; the Law was communicated to man by the Word, who in incarnate form became Jesus Christ; the sinless Lamb killed for the sins of the world was Jesus Christ who, as the Word and later as the resurrected and immortal Son of God, was and is the Creator of all; only He could pay that penalty, and that debt goes back to whom the ultimate insult of sin is directed: God the Father. Thus there are no loose ends, no incongruities. All loops back to the Godhead: God the Father and God the Son.

Experientialism

Many of these traits are manifest in the Toronto Blessing and its prime derivative, the Alpha Initiative. It is also often apparent in Pentecostalism and 'New Age' groupings. Participants experiencing such things⁵³⁰⁶ have not entered into the Judæo-Christian church through baptism for the remission of sins, and have not received the gift of the Holy Spirit. Rather, they are raw, unbaptised sinners who are led astray through a trite, superficial, and doctrinally-embarrassed 'course of learning,' orchestrating them to invite the 'spirit' into them. Wilful invitation leads to possession in many cases, as does what may be termed 'careless invitation.'

Gumbel describes how the Alpha Course came to be brought into the established church in England:⁵³⁰⁷ "We went to their house....where a group of leaders of their church was meeting....Ellie Mumford told us a little bit of what she had seen in Toronto....it was obvious that Ellie was just dying to pray for all of us....Then she said, "Now we'll invite the Holy Spirit to come," and the moment she said that, one of the people there was thrown, literally, across the room and was lying on the floor, just howling and laughing....making the most incredible noise....I experienced the power of the Spirit in a way I hadn't experienced for years, like massive electricity going through my body....One of the guys was prophesying...."

Gumbel returned to Holy Trinity for a meeting in the vestry. Asked to close it in prayer, he recounts: "I prayed, 'Lord, thank you so much for all that you are doing and we pray you'll send your Spirit,' and I was just

⁵³⁰⁶ Experientialism is closely related to Behaviourism, a view which holds that nothing can exist in the mind that hasn't been created by personal experience, producing a quite ridiculous restriction on the capacity of the mind. McDonald, Elizabeth, *Alpha: the Unofficial Guide*, p.112, quotes Benjamin Creme's description of it (with added comment and clarification in square brackets; subscripted emphasis added): 'Benjamin Creme [thinks] the Toronto Blessing [is] a good thing: it is, according to him, the method being used by his spiritual Masters to soften up Christian fundamentalists to accept the New Age Christ [Lord Maitreya] when he appears.'

⁵³⁰⁷ from the Toronto Airport Vineyard Church in Canada, conveyed by Eleanor Mumford of the South-west London Vineyard Church.

about to say, 'in Jesus' name, Amen,' and go out the door, when the Spirit came on the people who were in the room. One of them started laughing like an hyena."⁵³⁰⁸

In this there is a stupefying, utterly unquestioning acceptance of some very disturbing manifestations. The nature of the 'spirit' is not even considered. It is certainly not tested to discern whether it is for good or for evil.⁵³⁰⁹ So-called prophecies are ignored, usually because they are unintelligible. Course participants are taught that all this is perfectly normal and desirable, and to request the 'spirit' into their lives. These antics are even likened to what happened on the day of Pentecost after the ascension of Christ. Later, 'words of knowledge'⁵³¹⁰ are often used in an attempt to overwhelm with signs and wonders and experiences of supernatural power, in order to convince that all is genuine, and all God-sourced.

Noakes gives a revealing North American perspective on the Toronto phenomenon: "The 'Toronto twitch,' for example, is explained as a power surge from the Holy Spirit. But Jesus did not go around having sudden power surges He couldn't control....Many of the jerkings I saw in Toronto I would identify as being due to the spirits of voodoo. Some are due to spirits of martial arts. Some are due to spirits of lust. I would have no hesitation in declaring that animal noises do not come from the Holy Spirit. I have seen far too much of people manifesting animal noises and being delivered from the spirits of those very animals they are imitating."⁵³¹¹

This is extremely dangerous, and all done, sadly, in the name of God. It has nothing to do with Judæo-Christianity, and all to do with the Devil. And it is leading many people far astray from God.

⁵³⁰⁸ Gumbel, Nicky; a Church of England vicar and the course leader in a training video produced by Holy Trinity Church in Brompton, London: video III, talk 9.

⁵³⁰⁹ I John 4:1-3

⁵³¹⁰ an occult-driven practice whereby demon spirits inform the medium or channeller of hidden, personal, and confidential knowledge known only to the gullible and impressionable individual participant.

⁵³¹¹ Noakes, David, in a tape entitled, *Dealing with Poison in the Pot*

Chapter 70

Where are Enoch & Elijah?

*'And Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah three hundred years, and he begat sons and daughters.'*⁵³¹² The verb 'walked' is in the past tense; Enoch is still not walking with God, because, *'all the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty and five years.'*⁵³¹³ The phrase 'all the days,' mutatis mutandis,⁵³¹⁴ is used in the same fifth chapter of Genesis about a dozen times, and it always means that the person in question lived only for that length of time and then died. Enoch was not made immortal; he simply died.

Moses didn't write that Enoch did not die; rather he wrote, *'And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him.'*⁵³¹⁵ Paul records the same event: *'By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and he was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.'*⁵³¹⁶ The meaning of the phrase, *'that he should not see death,'* is considered later, but in the meantime Scripture does not state that Enoch went to heaven when he was translated; it says he was not found. Nowhere in the Bible does the word *'translate'* mean to be made or to become immortal.⁵³¹⁷ Moses said that God took Enoch; removed him, translated him so that he was not found. In other words, God took Enoch

⁵³¹² Gen 5:22

⁵³¹³ Gen 5:23

⁵³¹⁴ meaning, 'adjusted as necessary.'

⁵³¹⁵ Gen 5:24

⁵³¹⁶ Heb 11:5

⁵³¹⁷ Greek: metaithemi, rendered 'translated,' signifies: 'transfer, transport, exchange, change sides, translate.' The same Greek word is used in Acts 7:15,16, *'So Jacob went down into Egypt, and died, he, and our fathers, And were carried over into Sychem, and laid in the sepulchre that Abraham bought for a sum of money of the sons of Emmor the father of Sychem.'* Jacob was carried over or transported or translated to the place of his burial.

and buried him. He also took Moses and buried him and his sepulchre has not been found either: *'And He buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, over against Bethpeor: but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day.'*⁵³¹⁸ Enoch did not go to heaven; Enoch could not go to heaven. Christ stated unequivocally that: *'No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven.'*⁵³¹⁹

Yet another and crucial example of the meaning of the word *'translated'* is found in Colossians: *'Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son.'*⁵³²⁰ Here Scripture states that Christians are already translated, but Christians still die. They are mortal and die. However, they are translated out of darkness and sin of this world into the light of future partakers of the kingdom.⁵³²¹

Enoch is included by Paul,⁵³²² above, as among the fathers who obtained a good report through faith: *'And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise; God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.'*⁵³²³ This promise is admirably described in Titus: *'In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began.'*⁵³²⁴ So Enoch, therefore, is one of all of those who have not yet obtained the promise of eternal life and the inheritance of a part in the kingdom. They will receive it together with all true Christians at the return of Christ, and that is yet in the future: *'God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.'*⁵³²⁵ Since Enoch has yet to inherit eternal life, he must be dead. This is exactly what Paul wrote: *'These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.'*⁵³²⁶ The *'all'* includes Abel, Enoch, Noah, and the patriarchs and their wives.⁵³²⁷ These *'all'* died in faith. But if this were so, why did Paul write that Enoch *'should not see death'*? As Enoch lived for three hundred and sixty five years, what possible meaning could Paul perceive when writing, *'by faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death'*? This particular phrase has caused great difficulty to many and utterly perplexed not a few.

⁵³¹⁸ Deut 34:5,6

⁵³¹⁹ John 3:13

⁵³²⁰ Col 1:12,13

⁵³²¹ Col 1:12-18, *'Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption in his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.'* Christ is the firstborn of all into the spirit-being kingdom of God.

⁵³²² Heb 11:5

⁵³²³ Heb 11:39,40

⁵³²⁴ Titus 1:2

⁵³²⁵ Heb 11:40

⁵³²⁶ Heb 11:13

⁵³²⁷ Heb 11:1-12

The answer is that there is more than one death mentioned in the Bible. *'Blessed and holy is he that hath a part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.'*⁵³²⁸ Now to which death did Paul allude? In chapter nine he refers to the first death, *'And it is appointed unto all men once to die, but after this the judgment.'*⁵³²⁹ This death cannot be evaded humanly. It is inevitable. It happened to Enoch and all the fathers. But Paul was not writing of that death. The phrase *'should not see'* is in the conditional tense of the verb, thus having reference to a future event. It is not in the past tense in that it is not termed, *'he did not see.'* It is future. Whatever death Paul is referring to here, it is one that can be escaped in the future.

Christ spoke of such a death: *'Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death.'*⁵³³⁰ He shall never see, that is, suffer, the second death. Again, *'Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this? She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world.'*⁵³³¹ This death, the second death, is one that can be escaped on condition that man keeps the sayings of Christ and believes on Him. This is not the first death; all men are appointed to die once; that is the first death. Thus the death that Enoch should escape must be the second death that will never touch those who are included in the first resurrection.⁵³³² Enoch will be in the first resurrection as he met the conditions set by Christ. Enoch had faith; he believed God, he walked with God, he had faith in God. In keeping the sayings of God, he kept the sayings of Christ: *'Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father, that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.'*⁵³³³ Thus Enoch met the conditions that he should not see death, the second death; the death which has yet to come immediately after The Great White Throne Judgement at the end of the Millennium of rest.⁵³³⁴

Now verse five can be understood in its proper context: *'By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and he was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.'*⁵³³⁵ This verse mentions not the one translation twice but two separate and distinct translations. Enoch had faith and was translated—the translation referred to in the Bible as being conditional on faith: *'Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his*

⁵³²⁸ Rev 20:6

⁵³²⁹ Heb 9:27

⁵³³⁰ John 8:51; 'see,' Greek theoreo, meaning a 'fixed, earnest, and intent gaze, intently beholding something,' is a reference to the second death.

⁵³³¹ John 11:25-27

⁵³³² Rev 20:6

⁵³³³ John 14:10

⁵³³⁴ q.v. inf.

⁵³³⁵ Heb 11:5

*dear Son.*⁵³³⁶ This is a figurative translation, a figurative removal from or transference from the spiritual darkness of this world to the light of the family of God. Paul writes, *'That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God.'*⁵³³⁷ This is exactly what Enoch did. Enoch walked with God. Enoch pleased God. By faith Enoch was separated, or removed, or translated from the world, in the same way as Christians, who are not to be part of this present world, although living in the midst of it, are kept separate, and have to keep themselves separate.⁵³³⁸

Enoch's faith will save him from the second death, for *'[b]y faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death,'*⁵³³⁹ as all who have faith and walk with God will escape the second death, the death in the lake of fire after the Great White Throne Judgement: *'Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.'*⁵³⁴⁰

Not only was Enoch figuratively taken from the society of his day, he was also literally removed, translated, so that he was not found. God took him physically away from the people, just as he later took Moses, and God buried each so well that the remains of neither have ever been found. Enoch had completed his normal, mortal life, and all his days were three hundred and sixty five. This was the second-mentioned translation, a literal, physical removal at death.

God gave Enoch this sign of physical removal as a type for all those who should later follow Enoch's example of faith. He was taken physically from the people just as Judæo-Christians down through the ages have been spiritually removed or separated from the ways of this evil world. The physical translation or carrying away of Enoch was also a sign to him from God that his faith had been accepted.⁵³⁴¹

Like every true saint, Enoch was awaiting the sure and certain hope of the resurrection and the return of Jesus Christ. The last mention of Enoch in the Bible is in Jude: *'And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints, To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all of their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.'*⁵³⁴² Enoch will be there, as one of the saints.

So if not Enoch, then what of Elijah as a 'translated' contender for one of the witnesses? As stated earlier, the Jews await his return and that of the Messiah. The early Roman church believed Elijah to be one of

⁵³³⁶ Col 1:12,13

⁵³³⁷ Col 1:10

⁵³³⁸ II Cor 6:17,18; v.17a, *'Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate'* or, better, *'....be ye cut off by a boundary.'*

⁵³³⁹ Heb 11:5a

⁵³⁴⁰ Rev 20:6

⁵³⁴¹ God often gives signs, e.g., Isa 38:7, *'And this shall be a sign unto thee from the Lord, that the Lord will do this thing that he hath spoken.'*

⁵³⁴² Jude 14,15

the two witnesses. Fatally to both these variant beliefs, the Bible has a different record. Over nine hundred years after Elijah was taken by a whirlwind, Christ said, *'No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man.'*⁵³⁴³ Since Elijah is not in heaven, then where did he go?

Surprisingly for some, there is more than one heaven mentioned in the Bible: there are, in fact, three. In terms of reverse spatial proximity, they are:

1. The third heaven is the heaven of God's throne where, Christ, today, is the only One Who has the right to ascend and be in that heaven with the Father. The original earthly tabernacle, under the Old Testament, with its most holy place, the Holy of Holies, was a type of the throne of God in heaven. Only the high priest, a fore-shadow of Christ as our High Priest now, was allowed to enter: *'Now of the things of which we have spoken, this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the majesty in the heavens; A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man. For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore it is of necessity that this man hath somewhat also to offer. For if he were on earth he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law: Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern showed to thee in the mount';*⁵³⁴⁴

2. The second heaven represents the expanse of the universe: *'When I consider the heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained';*⁵³⁴⁵ and, *'And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years: And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so. And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he made the stars also. And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth';*⁵³⁴⁶ and,

3. The first heaven, the earthly atmosphere: *'And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl that may fly above the earth, in the open firmament of heaven.'*⁵³⁴⁷ Birds fly in the midst of heaven: the first heaven. They cannot fly in outer space or around God's throne, so the earthly heaven is our life sustaining atmosphere. Isaac, in blessing Jacob, said, *'Therefore God give thee of the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine.'*⁵³⁴⁸ Moses, in blessing the tribes, said, *'Israel*

⁵³⁴³ John 3:13

⁵³⁴⁴ Heb 8:1-5

⁵³⁴⁵ Psa 8:3

⁵³⁴⁶ Gen 1:14-17

⁵³⁴⁷ Gen 1:20

⁵³⁴⁸ Gen 27:28

then shall dwell in safety alone: the fountains of Jacob shall be upon a land of corn and wine; also his heavens shall drop down dew.'⁵³⁴⁹ This first heaven, which produces dew, means the atmosphere where clouds form and are driven by winds. All mankind breaths the air of heaven: the first heaven.

Given that Elijah could not and did not go to the heaven of God's throne, then to which heaven did he go? He did go to one or other of the remaining heavens as II Kings states: *'And it came to pass, when the Lord would take up Elijah into heaven by a whirlwind, that Elijah went with Elisha from Gilgal. And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.'*⁵³⁵⁰ Elijah was taken up in a 'whirlwind into heaven,' not to God's throne, nor into deep space, but into the only 'heaven' capable of sustaining a whirlwind: the earth's atmosphere.

What reason could God have for such an event? To make Elijah immortal, perhaps? Scripture says nothing of this. To the contrary, the ancient prophets, including Elijah, had no promise of immortality prior to or apart from Judæo-Christians, *'These all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise; God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.'*⁵³⁵¹ Elijah was not to be made immortal; that would have given him preeminence over Christ. However, the Bible does reveal the reason for Elijah's removal: *'And the sons of the prophets that were at Bethel came to Elisha, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the Lord will take away thy master from thy head today? And he said, Yea, I know it, hold ye your peace. And the sons of the prophets that were at Jericho came forth to Elisha, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the Lord will take away thy master from thy head today? And he said, Yea, I know it, hold ye your peace.'*⁵³⁵² Elijah was the head or leader of the sons or disciples of the prophets in that day. God had sent Elijah as His prophet to the wicked king Ahab and to his son Ahaziah. Now God wanted Elisha to direct His work, Ahaziah having died,⁵³⁵³ and a new king being in place—Jehoram, or Joram as he is sometimes called.

So this is what God did. He could not allow Elijah to remain among the people while Elisha directed the work, so he had to remove Elijah, physically, from the work so that another, Elisha, could assume the office. When Elijah was taken up, his mantle fell to the ground and was picked up by Elisha.⁵³⁵⁴ The mantle was 'worn by the prophets and priests as the simple insignia of their office.'⁵³⁵⁵

⁵³⁴⁹ Deut 33:28

⁵³⁵⁰ II Kings 2:1;11

⁵³⁵¹ Heb 11:39,40

⁵³⁵² II Kings 2:3,5; or, as rendered in the Smith and Goodspeed translation, *'Do you know that today the Lord is about to take away your master from being your leader?'*

⁵³⁵³ II Kings 1:1-18

⁵³⁵⁴ II Kings 2:12-15

⁵³⁵⁵ Clarke's Commentary, Vol. 2, p.484

The purpose of God's removing Elijah was to replace him with another man who would occupy the office for another fifty years and, so as not to disqualify or denigrate Elijah in the sight of the people, God took Elijah away in a whirlwind, allowing the mantle to fall to Elisha. In this way, God preserved the name and office of his prophet. Meanwhile, Elisha received a double portion of the Spirit of God through being allowed to see the departure of Elijah.⁵³⁵⁶ Elisha was to be the new leader, the new head of the sons of the prophets.

Having ascended into the air and out of the sight of Elisha, where was Elijah taken? It is obvious that he was not to die at that time as his death would have led to a simple and seamless transfer of title to Elisha. The sons of the prophets who knew the master was to be removed that very day also knew he was not to die at that time. That is why they were fearful that the Spirit of God might allow him to be cast *'upon some mountain or into some valley,'*⁵³⁵⁷ and that is why they took counsel to go and search for him. Elisha knew God would prevent Elijah from being cast onto a mountain or into a valley and, despite initially refusing, he did allow men to go in search of him, to no avail.⁵³⁵⁸ Elijah was gone.

The new king of Israel, Joram, began his reign, during which the recognised prophet was Elisha. In the fifth year of Joram, the son of the king of Judah began to reign along with his father; his name was also Jehoram: *'And in the fifth year of Joram the son of Ahab the king of Israel, Jehoshaphat then being king of Judah, Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat king of Judah began to reign.'*⁵³⁵⁹ The first thing he did to establish and protect his kingdom rule was to put his relatives to the sword: *'Now when Jehoram was risen up to the kingdom of his father, he strengthened himself, and slew all his brethren with the sword, and divers also of the princes of Israel.'*⁵³⁶⁰ For nearly six years he followed the ways of the nations about him and did evil in the sight of the Lord. About ten years had elapsed since Elijah was taken, but then God chose Elijah to write a letter and have it delivered to the king: *'And there came a writing to him from Elijah the prophet, saying, Thus saith the Lord God of David thy father, Because thou hast not walked in the ways of Jehoshaphat thy father, nor in the ways of Asa king of Judah. But hast walked in the way of the kings of Israel, and hast made Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to go a whoring, like to the whoredoms of the house of Ahab, and also hast slain thy brethren of thy father's house, which were better than thyself: behold, with a great plague will the Lord smite thy people, and thy children, and thy wives, and all thy goods: And thou shalt have great sickness by disease of thy bowels, until thy bowels fall out by reason of the sickness day by day.'*⁵³⁶¹

From the wording of the letter it is clear that Elijah wrote it after the events had occurred, for he speaks of them as past events, and of the disease of being in the future. Two years after the king became diseased, he

⁵³⁵⁶ II Kings 2:9,10

⁵³⁵⁷ II Kings 2:16c,d

⁵³⁵⁸ II Kings 2:17

⁵³⁵⁹ II Kings 8:16

⁵³⁶⁰ II Chron 21:4

⁵³⁶¹ II Chron 21:12-15

died, having reigned but eight years.⁵³⁶² Given this chronology, Elijah wrote the letter about ten years after he was taken up in the whirlwind, and obviously he was still alive at that time. The letter he had others deliver was recognised as his, proving that he was known to be alive, somewhere. Just how much longer he lived, the Bible does not reveal.

*'And it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.'*⁵³⁶³ All human beings born of Adam must die, including Elijah: *'For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.'*⁵³⁶⁴ There is also, *'What man is he that liveth, and shall not see death? shall he deliver his soul from the hand of the grave? Selah.'*⁵³⁶⁵ Elijah was a man, with mankind described in the following terms: *'subject to like passions as we are'*;⁵³⁶⁶ subject to human nature and death. The prophet, being mortal flesh, died. To suppose that God gave him the power of a supernatural, endless life, extending to some two thousand, eight hundred years to date, is to read into the Bible something that is patently not there. Elijah was mortal, subject to death, and, after being lifted into the atmospheric heavens, spent the remaining years of his separate life at some little known location on earth before he died a natural death.

⁵³⁶² II Chron 21:18-20

⁵³⁶³ Heb 9:27

⁵³⁶⁴ I Cor 15:22

⁵³⁶⁵ Psa 89:48

⁵³⁶⁶ James 5:17

Chapter 71

Isaiah 7:14—'Almah'

An investigation into the correct meaning and import of the Hebrew word almah, together with its derivatives, associates, and alternatives: 'Much of the controversy surrounding [this verse]⁵³⁶⁷ revolves around the meaning of almah: specifically as to her virginity and marital status. The derivation of the noun almah is not known. It is suggested that it originates from either the Hebrew verb 'lm ("to conceal or hide")⁵³⁶⁸ or from the Aramaic 'lm ("to be strong").⁵³⁶⁹ In sexual connotations, the former verb suggests "virgin" because literally and

⁵³⁶⁷ Isa 7:14

⁵³⁶⁸ young unmarried women were protected in the society of the time; children were protected too. Exposures and such like tamperings with life were utterly forbidden, and fatherhood was removed from a pagan species of ownership to a holy trust. By contrast, everywhere in the pagan world life was held cheap, and one of the best-attested vices of antiquity was the limitation of families by abortion or exposure. The majority of exposed children were girls who, during the time of the Roman Empire, were commonly picked up by baby farmers and reared to fill the brothels of the big cities.

⁵³⁶⁹ *Wikipedia:*

The word 'cognate' derives from Latin: cognatus "blood relative". In linguistics, cognates are words that have a common etymological origin.

An example of cognates within the same language would be English shirt and skirt, the former from Old English scýrte, the latter loaned from Old Norse skyrta, both from the same Common Germanic skurtjōn-. Words with this type of relationship within a single language are called doublets. Further cognates of the same word in other Germanic languages would include German Schürze and Dutch schort, "apron".

Cognates need not have the same meaning: dish (English) and Tisch ("table", German) and desco ("table", medieval Italian), or starve (English) and sterven ("die", Dutch), or head (English) and chef ("chief, head", French), serve as examples of how cognate terms may diverge in meaning as languages develop separately, eventually becoming false friends.

At times, cognates may even be opposites. For instance, while the Hebrew word chutzpah means "impudence," its Arabic cognate ḥasāfah means "sound judgement;"^[2] even more contradictorily, the English word black and Polish biały, meaning white, both derive from the Proto-Indo-European (P.I.E.) bhleg-, meaning, "to burn or shine."

physically, as a woman she has not been uncovered—she has not known man. The latter verb leads to the meaning of sexual maturity and youthful vigour.

In addition, almah was used eight other times in the Old Testament. In Chronicles⁵³⁷⁰ and Psalms⁵³⁷¹ (B.H.S.), the plural was used as a technical musical term; [a] Psalm⁵³⁷² gives no indication of the moral character or marital status of the almaoth. The plural was again used in Canticles.⁵³⁷³ In both, almaoth referred to women who are unmarried. Proverbs⁵³⁷⁴ seems to have referred to the pre-marriage courting of a young man toward his prospective bride.

The remaining two passages shed considerable light on the meaning of almah. In Exodus,⁵³⁷⁵ Moses' sister, Miriam, was called an almah. Not only is it assumed she was sexually chaste, "it is [also] very difficult to think that at this time she was a married woman." Rebecca was called an almah in Genesis.⁵³⁷⁶ Scripture took great effort to give a full picture of her character: not only was she unmarried, she was also⁵³⁷⁷ given the three-fold description of nahar ("girl"), betulah ("virgin") and w'sh lo' ydh ("and not knowing a man"). In recounting to Laban the details of this well-known story, the servant summed up Rebecca's moral and marital status with one word: almah.⁵³⁷⁸ After his detailed examination of almah in the Old Testament, Niessen concludes: "There is no etymological evidence to support the frequently aired claim that almah can refer to a young married woman or an unmarried woman who has had intercourse. The [Hebrew] root 'lm suggests quite the opposite view and supports the traditional understanding of "young virgin" as a suitable rendering of the term.

While the terms lmt and almah consistently referred to unmarried women and sometimes—as in the case of Rebecca—to women who were on the verge of marriage, the moral character of the biblical almah needs to be addressed. Does parthenos adequately translate almah or is it merely an interpretational preference rather than a linguistic necessity? The LXX ignores almaoth in Psalms;⁵³⁷⁹ transliterated it as alaimoth in Chronicles;⁵³⁸⁰ uses neates ("young woman") in Exodus;⁵³⁸¹ Psalms;⁵³⁸² Canticles;⁵³⁸³ and neotes ("youthful girl") in Proverbs.⁵³⁸⁴ Other than Isaiah,⁵³⁸⁵ the only other instance of parthenos translating almah was in

⁵³⁷⁰ I Chron 15:20

⁵³⁷¹ Psalms 46:1

⁵³⁷² Psalms 68:26

⁵³⁷³ Cant 1:3,6:8

⁵³⁷⁴ Prov 30:19

⁵³⁷⁵ Ex 2:8

⁵³⁷⁶ Gen 24:43

⁵³⁷⁷ Gen 24:16

⁵³⁷⁸ Gen 24:43

⁵³⁷⁹ Psalms 46:1

⁵³⁸⁰ I Chron 15:20

⁵³⁸¹ Ex 2:8

⁵³⁸² Psalms 68:26

⁵³⁸³ Cant 1:3,6:8

⁵³⁸⁴ Prov 30:19

⁵³⁸⁵ Isa 7:14

Genesis of Rebecca.⁵³⁸⁶ The translation of almah in Isaiah by parthenos,⁵³⁸⁷ then, was surely not by accident, but was a conscious choice of the translator. In the biblical world, chaste behaviour was expected, indeed demanded, of an unmarried woman. Deuteronomy details two scenarios for a newly married couple.⁵³⁸⁸ If the husband falsely charged his new wife with premarital sexual activity, he was to pay a fine to his father-in-law for the trouble he caused.⁵³⁸⁹ If, however, the charge proved to be true, the woman was to be stoned to death in order to '*purge the evil from Israel*.'⁵³⁹⁰ Although almah was not a technical terms for virginity, "the presumption in common law was, and is, that every almah is virgin and virtuous, until she is proven not to be, we have a right to assume that Rebecca and the almah is Isaiah and all other almahs were virgin, until and unless it shall be proved that they were not."

Gray, who demurs that almah naturally incorporates the notion of virginity, expresses an often stated criticism: "Where stress needed to be laid on a woman's virginity even more unambiguous phraseology was employed." Other words and expressions were available for Isaiah's use but none would have succinctly conveyed the same meaning as almah. Yidl was used to refer to a very young girl of unmarriageable age. N'rh was the generic word for a female and referred to young girls, unmarried women, concubines, and evil women—its range of meaning was too broad and indefinite. Bthl was the usual and technical term for virgin. The words n'rh and bthl were used to qualify one another four times in the Old Testament. The former referred to a young women whose chastity was unknown, the latter to a virgin whose age was unknown. Niessen observes: "When the two terms are used together, the meaning is the girl is a "*young virgin*." However, though these two words are used as qualifiers for each other, neither word is ever used to qualify almah. Rather, the word almah incorporates the common element of the two terms, which are youth and virginity."

This survey, which establishes the intended meaning of almah as a young, unmarried virgin of marriageable age, avers with Young: "one is tempted to wish that those who repeat the old assertion that [almah] may be used of a woman, whether married or not [and whether virgin or not], would produce some evidence for their statement."⁵³⁹¹

Gesenius has this bracketed note on the meaning of almah in Isaiah: 'The object in view in seeking to undermine the opinion which would assign the significance of '*virgin*' to this word, is clearly to raise a discrepancy between Isaiah⁵³⁹² and Matthew:⁵³⁹³ nothing which has been stated, however, really gives us any ground for assigning another meaning. The ancient versions, which gave a different rendering, did so for party purpos-

⁵³⁸⁶ Gen 24:43

⁵³⁸⁷ Isa 7:14

⁵³⁸⁸ Deut 22:13-21

⁵³⁸⁹ Deut 22:13-19

⁵³⁹⁰ Deut 22:20,21, N.A.S.B.

⁵³⁹¹ Brooks on almah; cited in *Virgin or Young Woman: An Analysis of Isaiah 7:14*, pp.11,12 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁵³⁹² Isa 7:14

⁵³⁹³ Mat 1:23

es, while the LXX, who could have no such motive, renders it '*virgin*' in the very passage where it must to their minds have occasioned a difficulty. Alma in the Punic language signified '*virgin*,' as Gesenius rightly states in Thess., on the authority of Jerome. The absolute authority of the New Testament is, however, quite sufficient to settle the question to a Christian."⁵³⁹⁴

The genealogy of Christ in Matthew⁵³⁹⁵ points to the virgin conception and birth, since the wording adopted⁵³⁹⁶ differs from that used in all of the foregoing begettals: '*And Jacob begat Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ.*' Here, Mary is inserted between Joseph and Jesus, calling Joseph her husband, but not saying that he begat Jesus. Matthew, writing his synoptic gospel primarily or especially for the Hebrews, took care in his genealogies to show that Christ was not, through Joseph, the '*fruit of David's body*:' that is, a direct descendant of David through Joseph.

Feinberg has this on the '*sign*'⁵³⁹⁷ of the virgin birth, which Jews and others maintain must have happened at that time, and not any later: '[T]he immediate context....was in the reign of Ahaz, king of Judah, [and against whom] a coalition had been formed between Rezin, king of Syria, and Pekah, king of Israel. Their objective was the dethronement of Ahaz [by] a Syrian pretender and vassel king, Tabeal. Ahaz [fearful for his own future and that of the throne of Judah] was invited by God to ask for a sign [oth] in attestation of God's previously made promises to the Davidic house....But Ahaz, in an hypocritical display of sudden piety, refused to put God to the test....In spite of the king's disobedience and without his co-operation, God Himself promised a specific sign: a virgin with child was to bring forth a son whose name would be Immanuel. [The miraculous sign was the] assurance that Christ [in the fullness of time] was to be born in Judah, of its royal family [and so it followed] that the kingdom should not perish [what Ahaz sought] in [Ahaz'] day. [Indeed], so far was the remoteness of the sign in this case from making it absurd or inappropriate, that the further off it was, the stronger the promise of continuance of Judah, which it guaranteed.'⁵³⁹⁸

'Genesis 'almah'⁵³⁹⁹ is used to describe unmarried Rebekah, who is also called 'betulah.' In Exodus,⁵⁴⁰⁰ the word used to describe the girl Miriam who was watching her baby brother Moses is 'almah.' Psalms refers to '*in the midst of the alamot*,'⁵⁴⁰¹ the young unmarried girls playing tambourines. In Proverbs, '*the way of a man with an almah is contrasted with the way of an adulterous woman.*'⁵⁴⁰² In no place in the Scriptures does almah

⁵³⁹⁴ Gesenius, *Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament*, p.634

⁵³⁹⁵ Mat 1:1-17

⁵³⁹⁶ Mat 1:16

⁵³⁹⁷ Hebrew: oth.

⁵³⁹⁸ Feinberg, Charles Lee, *The Virgin Birth in the Old Testament and Isaiah 7:14* (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁵³⁹⁹ Gen 24:43

⁵⁴⁰⁰ Ex 2:8

⁵⁴⁰¹ Psa 68:25

⁵⁴⁰² Prov 30:19,20

denote a woman who is not a virgin. Joel says, 'Wail like a woman⁵⁴⁰³ girded with sackcloth for the husband⁵⁴⁰⁴ of her youth.'⁵⁴⁰⁵

In order to stray beyond this settled position, one must enter the rather different world of the Talmud, which 'uses baal for "husband." It does not use it for "betrothed / fiancé," which is arus. "Bridegroom is chatan, not baal.' The Talmud explicitly uses beulah to refer to a woman who has consummated her marriage.⁵⁴⁰⁶ [It] also speaks elsewhere of a betulah conceiving.⁵⁴⁰⁷ [It] also speaks in ambiguous terms, distinguishing between a betulah and a betulah shleymah, that is, a perfect virgin.⁵⁴⁰⁸ In other words, betulah shleymah means one who is a physical virgin, but betulah does not, except by inference.'⁵⁴⁰⁹

⁵⁴⁰³ Hebrew: betulah.

⁵⁴⁰⁴ Hebrew: baal.

⁵⁴⁰⁵ Joel 1:8

⁵⁴⁰⁶ Yeb. 60b

⁵⁴⁰⁷ Chagigah 14b,15a

⁵⁴⁰⁸ Yev 60b

⁵⁴⁰⁹ Gruber, Daniel, *God, the Rabbis, and the Virgin Birth*, pp.7f.,34f. (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

Chapter 72

Wine Poured Out Before Idols

In general, religious Jews do not drink wine from any country other than Israel, fearing that it might have been dedicated to, or poured out before idols.⁵⁴¹⁰ Some, however, drink wine produced elsewhere if it is of guaranteed Orthodox-Jewish manufacture. The proscription, however, only affects grape wine of non-Jewish manufacture. Thus Orthodox Judaism permits the drinking of non-grape wine,⁵⁴¹¹ and spirits,⁵⁴¹² which are of non-Jewish source and manufacture.

Edersheim shows the extent to which the Jews anciently held themselves above others in the matter of wine: '[Heathen] wine was wholly interdicted—the mere touch of a heathen polluted a whole cask; nay, even to put one's nose to heathen wine was strictly prohibited!....According to R. Asi, there was a threefold distinction [concerning the interdiction of wine]. If wine had been dedicated to an idol, to carry, even on a stick, so much as the weight of an olive of it, defiled a man. Other wine, if prepared by a heathen, was prohibited, whether for personal use or for trading. Lastly, wine prepared by a Jew, but deposited in the custody of a Gentile, was prohibited for personal use, but allowed for traffic....Jews were to avoid passing through a city where there was an idolatrous feast—nay, they were not even to sit down within the shadow of a tree dedicate to idol-worship.'⁵⁴¹³

⁵⁴¹⁰ Ex 34:15,16; Jer 7:18c, '*and pour out drink offerings unto other gods, that they may provoke me to anger.*'

⁵⁴¹¹ e.g., elderberry.

⁵⁴¹² e.g., Scotch malt whisky.

⁵⁴¹³ Edersheim, Alfred, *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, p.63

Traditional Jewish view

Gruber recites the traditional rabbinical view of Judæo-Christians⁵⁴¹⁴ in the matter: 'The Minim, and all that they touched, were to be strictly and completely avoided. "Slaughter by a Min is idolatry; their bread is Samaritan bread, their wine is wine offered to idols; their fruits are not tithed, their books are books of witchcraft, and their sons are bastards. One does not sell to them or receive from them or take from them or give to them. One does not teach their sons trades, and one does not obtain healing from them, either healing of property or healing of lives."⁵⁴¹⁵

Notwithstanding such drivel, the Judæo-Christian belief encompasses the regulation of both food and drink in relation to idols. And it is a deal more complex than the Judaic version.

New Testament writings

Some investigation into the New Testament view of both food and drink 'dedicated' to idols has been undertaken in view of the proscription within Judaism on any wine effectively not from Israel or otherwise of guaranteed Orthodox Jewish provenance.

In Romans, Paul is writing to the few 'elect' in Rome—there was not a Judæo-Christian church there at the time; there hardly ever has been—and these comprised both Jews and Gentiles. He admonished that the stronger was not to dispute unimportant matters with the weaker: *'Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations. For one believeth that he may eat all things:⁵⁴¹⁶ another, who is weak, eateth herbs. Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth, for God hath received him.'*⁵⁴¹⁷

Paul adds this to the Corinthians: *'Now as touching things offered unto idols, we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth. And if any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know. But if any man love God, the same is known of him. As concerning therefore the eating of those things that are offered in sacrifice unto idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other Almighty but one. For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many,) But to us there is one Almighty, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him. Howbeit that there is not in every man that knowledge: for some with conscience with the idol unto this hour eat it as a thing*

⁵⁴¹⁴ termed Minim.

⁵⁴¹⁵ Edersheim, Alfred, *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, p.63 and footnote (sublinear emphasis added); footnote: Herford, V., *Christianity in the Talmud*, p.389, notes that 'This is not a halachah, an authoritative legal decision, but it represents a consensus of opinion amounting almost to a law.'

⁵⁴¹⁶ But restricted to 'clean meats,' in accordance with the Law.

⁵⁴¹⁷ Rom 14:1f.

*offered unto an idol; and their conscience being weak is defiled. But meat commendeth us not to God: for neither, if we eat, are we better; neither, if we eat not, are we the worse. For if any man see thee which hast knowledge sit at meat in the idol's temple, shall not the conscience of him which is weak be emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols; And through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died? But when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ. Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend.'*⁵⁴¹⁸

This gives a very succinct statement of what is allowed to a Christian, and under what circumstances, although at first this might not appear so. However, with some additional information, it may be viewed with considerable clarity.

Background

Paul was apostle to the Gentiles. It is important to remember this, for those Gentile peoples had a long history of worshipping a wide variety of idols, and of sacrificing to them. In some localities, Rome being one, presumably Corinth another, it appears that it was well-nigh impossible in those pagan days to get meat that was anything other than sacrificed to idols, or in some way connected with idol worship. It must also be borne in mind that the Authorised Version calls food by the generic term '*meat*.'

The prevailing circumstance in Gentile societies of the time was that pagan priesthoods often mandated that the flesh of the prevailing deity be eaten by worshippers, very often in communal meals or banquets.⁵⁴¹⁹ Angus outlines the breadth of the problem: 'In nearly all the mysteries, an agapé, or sacramental meal, preceded initiation. At Eleusis, the sacrifice to Demeter and Kore was followed by a banquet on the flesh of the victims....In the Mysteries of Mithra, bread and a cup of water were offered in the rites of initiation accompanied by certain explanations, to which Pliny refers.⁵⁴²⁰ Extant symbola attest the sacramental meal in the cult of the Great Mother. The inscription of Andania and one from Messenia prove the same for Demeter, while for the Samothracian Mysteries an inscription from Tomi relates that the priest shall break and offer the food and pour out the cup to the mystæ. But in what sense did the participant of the sacramental meal become....of the god? Was he conceived as feeding on the god by eating his totem or sacrifice, that is, by the entry of the deity into the believer in a magical fashion? That there was a firm belief, in the earlier stages of religion, of such participation in the god by eating him in a sacramental meal cannot be questioned. In the Thracian-Zagreus cult the communicants rushed madly upon the sacrificial animal, tore it to pieces, and ate it raw, believing that the god

⁵⁴¹⁸ I Cor 8:1-13

⁵⁴¹⁹ e.g., in ancient Greece, the mouse was sacred to Apollo. The religious hierarchy sometimes ate mice as a sign of being 'one with their god.'

⁵⁴²⁰ In Latin: magicis cenis initiaverit.

was resident in the offering. Cumont believes that the original significance of the eating of a sacred animal in the Phrygian cults was that. It was believed that thus there took place an identification with the god himself, together with a participation in his substance and qualities, and that in certain mystic meals of the Syrian cult the priests and the initiates, by eating the fish sacred to Atargatis, considered themselves to be devouring the life of the deity.⁵⁴²¹

The inhabitants of Corinth in Paul's time were deeply pagan and polytheistic. They believed evil spirits inhabited everything,⁵⁴²² including food. '[D]emons [were believed to be constantly seeking] an entry into a man's body. Their commonest way of gaining an entry into a man was to hover round him while he ate and to settle on his food, and so to get inside him. All illness was ascribed to these demons. They entered into a man and seduced him into falling to temptation. They were responsible for mental illness, for madness and for insanity.'⁵⁴²³ Were any contaminated food eaten, the evil spirit would enter the person, and dwell in the person. In order to rid the food of the evil presence, it had to be taken beforehand to a pagan temple and dedicated to the god of that temple, whereupon it became cleansed and suitable for human consumption. It was then sold in the '*shambles*,' the local stallholders' meat market. The question being addressed by Paul is what to do about meat bought in the shambles which may or may not have been so dedicated to a pagan god. Meat sacrificed to idols abounded in the markets. Communal meals to trade and society deities were an everyday occurrence, where the meat, invariably, was that which had been sacrificed previously to the god involved. Wholly 'untainted' meat, in many societies, was virtually unknown. When living in such an alien society, with so many potential pitfalls, the question of what to do in terms of the Law was faced constantly by Judæo-Christians. They did, after all, wish to eat a balanced diet. Accordingly, Paul addresses these important issues and gives guidance.

In context

There is an axiom: 'Text without context is pretext,' and, in this instance, the context, or background, is of considerable importance. In the first excerpt,⁵⁴²⁴ Paul is putting down vain disputing over the eating or refraining from meats.⁵⁴²⁵ The footnote on clean meats was inserted because Paul would not have suggested otherwise. The phrase he used, '*all things*,' refers to all clean things, and, in context, specifically to meats, as a counterpoise to 'herbs.' In the second excerpt, Paul is addressing the Gentile '*weak*.' These he describes as being those who would eat meat / food offered unto an idol just as that. In other words, the weak would still retain a residual respect for the idol, and, indeed, for the meat / food that had been offered to that idol, in its

⁵⁴²¹ Angus, S., *Mystery Religions and Christianity*, pp.129,130

⁵⁴²² Pantheism.

⁵⁴²³ Barclay, William, *The Mind of Jesus*, p.79

⁵⁴²⁴ Romans 14:1f.

⁵⁴²⁵ i.e., food.

having been connected with that idol, and purified by it. The strong would not be so encumbered, for what is an idol, but a pagan figment of man's deluded mind, and a pagan working of man's hands? It can neither walk, or talk, or eat, or think. It has no power whatsoever.

However, the weak could still be emboldened to eat meat / food with the mindset described above, especially upon seeing the strong eating it, since the mode of supply of meat in Rome and Corinth could well have rendered the temples almost the only source of meat. This would serve no good purpose at all, and could lead to the weak perishing. In such circumstances, where the strong eating it would wound the weak, either in the presence of the weak or otherwise, and lead to their destruction, then no meat / food offered to idols should be eaten by the strong for fear of inducing a weaker brother to offend, resulting in the loss of that brother to the faith, and to his losing his salvation. All were to watch out for each other, and refrain from doing anything which would offend, or discourage, or place a weaker brother on the wrong track, or induce him to do things injurious to his salvation.

Acts chapter fifteen records a somewhat protracted discussion of the matter of the Gentiles' difficulties over the dual questions of the need of circumcision and of securing and eating meat in countries not given to keeping the Mosaic food laws. The relevant texts are: '*And certain men which came down from Judæa taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved.*'⁵⁴²⁶ Here salvation was held to be restricted to those circumcised in accordance with the Law, on the eighth day after birth. Then, in Jerusalem, certain former Pharisees, who had become Christian believers, transmuted that contention: '*But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying, That it was needful to circumcise themselves, to transmit a message to the others to attend carefully the law of Moses.*'⁵⁴²⁷ Here circumcision is being promoted retrospectively, in adulthood, and that unlawful act was actually conjoined with keeping the Law. After a doctrinal debate at Jerusalem, it was decided that a letter be sent to the Gentiles: '*For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us,*'⁵⁴²⁸ *to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things; But that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication,*⁵⁴²⁹ *and from things strangled, and from blood.*'⁵⁴³⁰ When this admonition was subsequently put in the form of the actual letter, it was

⁵⁴²⁶ Acts 15:1

⁵⁴²⁷ Acts 15:5 (correct translation)

⁵⁴²⁸ apostles and elders of the whole church, almost, if not exclusively Jewish at the time.

⁵⁴²⁹ *Fornication,* in this context, relates to dalliance with all facets of idol worship (other than the eating of food polluted by idols) rather than solely to concupiscence and gross sexual perversity. As such, the recorded wording of the letter does not address the question of circumcision of adult Gentile converts or of their keeping the Law (K.J.V.'s Acts 15:24b, '*saying, ye must be circumcised, and keep the law*' is a wholly unsupported translators' addition to the Greek primary source and, as a result, must be deleted). The lack of need of physical circumcision is dealt with elsewhere, but the general availability of teaching of the Law and, hence, the necessary knowledge to enable the Gentile converts to keep it, is seen in Acts 15:21, '*For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath day.*' Many of the synagogues of the Jewish diaspora of the time contained Hellenists, to whom the attendance of Gentiles would be far less of an issue than in tendentiously Pharasaic synagogues.

⁵⁴³⁰ Acts 15:20

reworded somewhat: *'That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well.'*⁵⁴³¹

The quadripartite admonition, *'abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication,'* lists things related to rites involved in pagan forms of worship. Idols, and all things pertaining, including idol-dedicated meat, blood, strangulation, and fornication, lay at the very core of the pagan rites and mores: *'to teach and seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols.'*⁵⁴³² Such pagan practices were to be completely avoided by Gentile converts to Judæo-Christianity who had grown up in societies where such things were commonplace.

Even for the strong, in circumstances where there was no possibility of offending the weak, there were still conditions placed on the Gentile adherents coming to the faith and 'ex-Gentile' members of the Judæo-Christian church;⁵⁴³³ there is a need to comply with the Law—in terms of eating—as to things strangled, and the eating of blood, and the pollutions of idols. This would make it difficult for the 'strong Gentiles' to eat meat, especially, since there would be no way of knowing what state any particular meat in question would be in concerning the Law on things strangled, and on containing blood.⁵⁴³⁴

Paul introduces a difficulty to some, where he poses the possibility of attendance at feasts, with a crucial condition: *'Behold Israel after the flesh: are not they which eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar? What say I then? That the idol is anything, or that which is offered in sacrifice to idols is anything? But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils. Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils. Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than he? All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not. Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth. Whatsoever is sold in the shambles [markets], that eat, asking no question for conscience sake: For the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof. If any of them that believe not bid you to a feast, and ye be disposed to go; whatsoever is set before you, eat, asking no question for conscience sake. But if any man say unto you, This is offered in sacrifice unto idols, eat not for his sake that shewed it, and for conscience sake: for the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof: Conscience, I say, not thine own, but of the other: for why is my liberty judged of another man's conscience? For if I by grace be a partaker, why am I evil spoken of for that for which I give thanks? Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God. Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of*

⁵⁴³¹ Acts 15:28,29; v.29b,c was a statement formulated to permit Jews to eat with Gentile members of the church; this was put in writing before the epistle to the Corinthians.

⁵⁴³² evidenced in Rev 2:20, although here Scripture actually is speaking of a falling away into apostasy, it is apposite nonetheless.

⁵⁴³³ Acts 15:19,20

⁵⁴³⁴ Non-meat food would not suffer as severely in this context of strangled / blood, for obvious reasons.

God: *Even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved.*⁵⁴³⁵

This is perceived by some to be an inference not to question the provenance of meat, but if it were to be identified as being sacrificed unto idols, to refrain from eating it. However, such a conclusion would then be silent on the meaning of his words to the Corinthians, *'Behold Israel after the flesh: are not they which eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar? What say I then? That the idol is anything, or that which is offered in sacrifice to idols is anything? But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils. Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils.'*⁵⁴³⁶

Taken in context, Paul is comparing the pagan sacrificial form with that under the Law. In both instances, the sacrificed food was eaten by the priesthood; the pagan perversion being nothing but an obscene parody of the Law of God. If some person attending a pagan feast,⁵⁴³⁷ *'say[s] unto you, This is offered in sacrifice unto idols,'* the instruction deriving is that partaking of such a sacrifice, on the part of a Gentile church member, would place the party so doing in the position of that of the pagan priest, serving at a demonic altar, and so the commandment given is, *'eat not for his sake that shewed it, and for conscience sake: for the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof.'* Eating in such circumstances imports the position of a pagan priest serving at *'the table of devils.'* This is bolstered immediately: *'But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils. Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils.'*⁵⁴³⁸ Eating at the table of demons, partaking of food sacrificed to idols where the participant believed that he was actually sitting at the god's table and that through the meal he would enter into fellowship with the pagan deity—as was evidenced in Hellenistic religions and many trade guilds where the partaking of sacrificial meals to the guild's pagan deity would have been mandatory on all members—was strictly prohibited for those who wished to drink the cup of the Lord, and be partakers of the Lord's table: in other words, eat the Lord's Supper / Passover.

Where the meat / food at a feast—rather than at the table or altar of a pagan god—was not identified as being sacrificed unto idols, then, in such circumstances, it could be eaten, *'If any of them that believe not bid you to a feast, and ye be disposed to go; whatsoever is set before you, eat, asking no question for conscience sake,'*⁵⁴³⁹ were the believer inclined to attend the feast. Likewise if it were bought in the market, *'Whatsoever is sold in the shambles, that eat, asking no question for conscience sake. For the earth is the Lord's, and the ful-*

⁵⁴³⁵ I Cor 10:18-33 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets; sublinear emphasis added)

⁵⁴³⁶ I Cor 10:18-21

⁵⁴³⁷ cf. Appendix for listing of annual pagan feasts.

⁵⁴³⁸ I Cor 10:20,21

⁵⁴³⁹ as I Cor 10:27

ness thereof,'⁵⁴⁴⁰ it would be sensibly free from any such pagan association. In both these instances, it is patent that the consumer is not seen as standing, as would a pagan priest, at an altar to the devils, sacrificing to them, and eating of the sacrifice, or of a follower eating communally at the table of a pagan god in the belief and expectation of entering into a sacred and mystical fellowship therewithal.

Jewish traditions

One additional matter which bears upon all of this is that even though there were considerable numbers of church members of Gentile extraction, and, indeed, adherents who were Gentile and in process of coming to the faith, there were mingled with many who were Jewish. Now the Jews, in accordance with their traditions, would not even associate with Gentiles who did not keep what were termed 'the essentials.'⁵⁴⁴¹ Those served to instruct Israelites, a part of whom were Jews, not even to associate with peoples who do the things proscribed above. Even at the level of maintaining fellowship in the 'Gentile church,' the apostle James and the others had to ensure that these 'essentials' were rigorously enforced, or else many of the Gentile churches would have been rent asunder over the question of the Leviticus proscription.

It is easy to highlight the depth of the problem, for according to Edersheim, those of the sect of the Pharisees would not even eat at a table that had been touched by a Gentile, as it had been rendered, in their view, ritually unclean. Pharisees would not even eat the food of non-Pharisee Jews for fear that it had not been properly tithed.

Residual and ill-founded considerations such as these were still to be found in some of the Jewish members of the early church, particularly at Jerusalem. The old baggage of ultra-legalism and ritual purity was being carried into the church in near wholesale manner by some converts to Christianity, to the detriment of Jew and Gentile alike. Obviously, Christian brotherly love cannot flourish amid such man-devised demarcations and rigours. The problem facing Paul was a substantial one.

Modification?

Now it can be asked, why put something in writing in such proscriptive terms, as seen in Acts, then later, in an epistle, introduce something that appears to constitute a 'modification?' in allowing church members to attend a non-church feast in a pagan society. The answer lies in context. The early church had Gentile members who were very ignorant of the details of the Law: they had lived their lives under a different, pagan, system. They had to be guided in simple terms, beginning with what the New Testament calls, '*milk*,' as in food

⁵⁴⁴⁰ I Cor 10:25,26

⁵⁴⁴¹ recited in Leviticus chpt. 17

for babes. Later, as their religious beliefs and convictions matured, and as the Holy Spirit took firmer hold of them, they would be able to discern to a much greater extent, and would know the pagan idol for what it was: a worthless product of the hand of man. Also, as time went by and they grew in the Spirit, the Devil and his cohorts would have less and less tangible influence over them. At that point they could do things which to weaker members would prove to be nothing short of the foolhardy. But even then, they were not to eat the meat or food in question in front of the weaker members, or even in such circumstances that the weaker members might get to hear of it, lest the weak be inclined to falter, and fall prey to Satan.

Summary

So, in summary, Paul's writings, while frequently complex, have to be taken in context, especially when being compared to those of others.⁵⁴⁴² When dealing with the Gentile converts in the early days of the church, they could only proceed at a certain and relatively slow pace. The underlying intent of Paul, James, and others in all of this is clear: the maintenance and encouragement of the vigorous growth of the 'former-Gentiles' in the church, the avoidance of vain and worthless disputing, and, of course, the avoidance of placing unnecessary temptations and seeming incongruities before new or relatively weak church members. It was difficult enough to work and survive as a Judæo-Christian in ancient pagan societies without adding to the burden. Indeed, many of the trade associations demanded that prospective members take oaths in the names of pagan gods as a pre-condition of admission, and the same went for many positions in public office. These oaths precluded Judæo-Christian membership. Surrounded by rank paganism at all levels in society, it was never going to be easy.

Today

In modern times the difficulty in '*avoiding things sacrificed or dedicated to idols*' is just as profound and perhaps even more pernicious. The so-called 'Christian festivals' of Christmas, Easter, and Halloween have imported, along with heathen occult ceremonial, many pagan foods dedicated to the gods. Christmas has mince tarts based on the cakes of Semiramis / Astarte, originally depicting a cradle with a babe lying in it, or possibly in her image as in the moulds found at Mari; Easter has hot spiced buns bearing the pagan symbol of the cross, as well as pagan painted eggs; and Halloween has cakes, fruit and nuts, and lamps made out of root vegetables. In addition, New Year's Eve, the Scots' Hogmanay,⁵⁴⁴³ has black (blood and offal) fried large diameter meat sausages. Votive drink offerings to the pagan pantheon of gods include mead and mulled wine, both being commonly consumed at Christmas time.

⁵⁴⁴² Luke wrote Acts; Paul wrote Romans and Corinthians.

⁵⁴⁴³ from Chaldee, meaning, 'the feast of the man of the moon,' viz., the moon-god; or the man who represents the moon-god, the 'king of the south,' q.v. sup.

So what of today,⁵⁴⁴⁴ and the proper Judaeo-Christian conduct in this matter? Would anyone, for example, eat meat / food offered to an idol? No! But if there ever happened to be a need for food, and the only food available was that which was available in the markets and which may have been offered to idols, subject to the restrictions of the Law⁵⁴⁴⁵ as it stands and applicable to full and baptised members of the church, and only if it were certain that it complied, then could it be eaten in extremis, to survive, rather than to starve; for even David ate the shewbread when he was an hungered.

⁵⁴⁴⁴ written in 1998AD

⁵⁴⁴⁵ e.g., Lev 17:7-16

Chapter 73

Pharaseeism in the Church

Hamartia and Hamartanein: the failure which is sin. Hamartia is the commonest New Testament noun for 'sin'; it occurs in Paul's letters sixty times; and hamartanein is the usual verb for 'to sin.' Let us see what the New Testament teaches about hamartia:

1. Hamartia, 'sin,' is 'universal.'⁵⁴⁴⁶ Sin is not like a disease which some men contract and some men escape. It is something in which every single human being is involved and of which every single human being is guilty. Sin is not simply a sporadic and spasmodic outbreak; it is the universal state of man; and,

2. Hamartia, 'sin,' is 'a power which has man in its grasp.' Here the words which are used are very interesting and significant. Man is huph' hamartian. Literally that means 'under sin.' But this preposition hupo with the accusative case, as here, is used to mean 'in dependence on, in subjection to, under the control of.' A minor, for instance, is 'under his father'; an army is 'under its commander'; so we are 'under, in the power of, in the control of sin.'⁵⁴⁴⁷ So certain words are used of sin. Sin is said 'to rule over (basileuein) men.'⁵⁴⁴⁸ Basileus is the Greek for 'a king.' Sin is the ruler of men. Sin is said 'to lord it over us,'⁵⁴⁴⁹ (kurieuein). Kurios is the Greek for 'lord,' and the word has the flavour of absolute 'possession' and 'domination.' Sin is said 'to take us captive,'⁵⁴⁵⁰

⁵⁴⁴⁶ Rom 3:23,7:14; Gal 3:22; I John 1:8

⁵⁴⁴⁷ Gal 3:22; Rom 3:9

⁵⁴⁴⁸ Rom 5:21

⁵⁴⁴⁹ Rom 6:14

⁵⁴⁵⁰ Rom 7:23

(aichmalotizein). The word is the word which is used for taking a prisoner in war. Sin is said 'to dwell within man,'⁵⁴⁵¹ (oikein, enoikein). So basic is the hold of sin over man that sin is not merely an external power which exercises sway over a man; it has got into the very fibre and centre and heart of his being until it occupies him, as an enemy occupies an occupied country. The result is that we can be said 'to be the slaves of sin,'⁵⁴⁵² (doulos, douleuein). It is to be remembered that the power of the master over the slave was absolute. There was no part of life, no moment of time, no activity which was the personal property of the slave. He belonged to his master in the most total way. So man is totally under the domination of sin.

In Paul there is the closest connection between 'law' and 'sin,' between nomos and hamartia:

1. The law 'teaches what sin is.'⁵⁴⁵³ It may be said in one sense that the law creates sin.⁵⁴⁵⁴ Sin is not sin until it is defined. Until sin is defined a man cannot know what sin is; and until there is a law of sin a man cannot be guilty of sin....The law has both defined and created sin. If there were no law there would be no sin;⁵⁴⁵⁵ and,
2. 'The law creates sin,' as Paul sees it, in another sense. Once a thing is forbidden it somehow or other acquires a new and a fatal fascination, and the law actually produces the desire to sin.⁵⁴⁵⁶ There is something in human nature which gives the forbidden thing a double attraction....It is precisely here that the weakness of the law in regard to sin emerges. Law has two defects. First it can define sin but it cannot cure it. It is like a doctor who can diagnose a disease but who is helpless to eradicate or even arrest it [the Law is not a perfecter, neither can it be]. Second, it is the odd and fatal fact that simply by forbidding a thing the law makes the thing attractive. There is an inextricable connection between hamartia and nomos, 'sin' and 'law.'⁵⁴⁵⁷

The difficulty with this restricted definition is that it does not and cannot fully explain the meaning of the tract in which the cited text appears.⁵⁴⁵⁸ In fact, it barely broaches the subject. '*Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit*' is cited as being of paramount seriousness by Christ, for although He says that '*all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven men*,' even to, '*those speaking a word against the Son of man*,' '*blasphemy against the Holy Spirit....shall not be forgiven....neither in this world, neither in the world to come*.'⁵⁴⁵⁹

⁵⁴⁵¹ Rom 7:17,20

⁵⁴⁵² John 8:34; Rom 6:6,17,20

⁵⁴⁵³ Rom 3:20

⁵⁴⁵⁴ Rom 5:13

⁵⁴⁵⁵ other than conscience, of course, q.v. sup.

⁵⁴⁵⁶ Rom 7:8-11

⁵⁴⁵⁷ Barclay, William, *A New Testament Word Book*, pp.48-50 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁵⁴⁵⁸ Mat 12:22-37

⁵⁴⁵⁹ Mat 12:31,32; actual meaning of the Greek translated '*all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven men*' in the K.J.V. is discussed inf.

In order to fully understand the depth and intensity of what is meant by Christ in the words, '*blasphemy against the Holy Spirit*,' or '*blasphemy of the Spirit*,' not only is it necessary to put His words in the context of the situation He was addressing, it is also necessary to know of the specific form of evil He was encountering when He spoke these words to the Pharisees.

The first point to note in this verse is the opening phrase, commencing with '*wherefore*.' That links the verse to Christ's topic and words in the preceding verses,⁵⁴⁶⁰ which together with a following section⁵⁴⁶¹ deal with demon possession, the power to cast out demons, and the sources of that power, all in the context of blasphemy, especially that against the Holy Spirit. Essentially, the subject matter of the entire is blasphemy, and not the full range of all conceivable sin committed by man. The subsequent phrase, '*all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men*,' is an attempted exposition rather than a strict translation. The words '*manner of*' do not appear in the original Greek. The Greek pas, meaning '*each*,' and '*every*,' translated '*of*' in the K.J.V., is linked to harmatia, meaning '*mistake*,' or '*wandering*,' which by extension means '*sin*.' The Greek kai, translated '*and*,' linking harmatia to blasphemia, also means '*even*,' and '*also*.' So a more correct and literal translation would read: '*every mistake, even blasphemy, shall be forgiven unto men*.'

The Pharisees, for their part, were occult-driven practitioners of the Babylonian form of monotheism, dedicated to the worship of the single god-being they had encountered while the Jews were in captivity in that land. Part of the ritual of initiation into the inner circle of Pharisaism appears to have involved the taking of an oath to that god. An extreme irony, therefore, lay in the fact that while the Pharisees were adepts in the occult arts, had taken an oath of allegiance to the Babylonian monotheistic god Satan, and were ascribing Christ's powers to that god, they were hypocritically criticising and denigrating God's Holy Spirit—the Power of God. They knew perfectly well that Jesus was not one of them, and had already taken '*council among them[selves], how they might destroy Him*,'⁵⁴⁶² and that His power was not from the same source as their lesser occult powers. In falsely ascribing those higher powers to Beelzebub,^{5463 5464} they made a deliberate and studied insult to God, an insult delivered by the sons of Satan who had given their all, by oath, to him.

⁵⁴⁶⁰ Mat 12:20-22

⁵⁴⁶¹ Mat 12:31-37

⁵⁴⁶² Mat 12:14 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets), full text: '*Then the Pharisees went out, and held a council against him, how they might destroy him*.' Cp. Mat 22:15,16, where the Pharisees take council with the Herodians, not their natural allies, but to the effect '*how they might entangle him in his talk*,' v.15b.

⁵⁴⁶³ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol.1, pp.382,383:

'Mat 10:24,25, '*The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord. It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household?*'

The word that is used for '*the members of his household*' is the one Greek word oikiakoi. This word has a technical use; it means the members of the household of a government official; that is to say, the official's staff.'

⁵⁴⁶⁴ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol.2, p.21 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'In Mat 12:22-32, the story of how the orthodox leaders charged Jesus with healing by the power of the Devil [Satan; q.v. Mat 12:24], and of how He spoke to them of the sin which had no forgiveness, we see the story of deliberate and prejudiced blindness. From that time on, nothing that Jesus could ever do would be right in the eyes of these men. They

But Satan has a further, unique characteristic (also found in a more diluted form among his demons and his human followers, the adepts): he arrogates or assumes to himself the rights and qualities of God, and that is blasphemy against the dyadic God and the Holy Spirit. *'And when he saw their faith, he said unto him, Man, thy sins are forgiven thee. And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, Who is this which speaketh blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, but God alone?'*⁵⁴⁶⁵ and, *'I and my Father are one. Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him. Jesus answered them, Many good works have I shewed you from my father; for which of those works do ye stone me? The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God.'*⁵⁴⁶⁶

It is precisely here that the core of *'blasphemy against the Spirit'* lies exposed, and there are certain conditions precedent. It has to be done knowingly and without any intention of repentance, for under the Law non-wilful sin can be repented of and forgiven, as can immediately repented wilful sin generally, but not in this instance of the unforgivable. It has to be done as a specific and intended insult to God the Father or God the Son, with that sense of inclusive duality coming through the Holy Spirit, the Power of God. That is why Jesus said that *'speaking a word against the Son of man,'*⁵⁴⁶⁷ could be forgiven, for that would be against God incarnate, God in His voluntarily-assumed and condescended state of humility: God in the person of man. While that could be forgiven, an intentional, occult- and satanically-driven insult to God, against the two spirit-beings of the Godhead, delivered with the intention of simultaneously wounding, denigrating, and misleading others, together with the arrogant assumption of the rights or qualities of God, could never be forgiven, neither in this world, nor in the world to come.

Paul's warnings⁵⁴⁶⁸

Paul also delivers a warning in Corinthians, *'But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat.'*⁵⁴⁶⁹ The reason is given in the following chapter: *'Know we not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor*

had so shut their eyes to God that they were completely incapable of ever seeing His beauty and His truth. Their prejudiced blindness had launched them on a path from which they were quite incapable of ever turning back [their sin was, after all, unforgivable, q.v.].'

By way of an analogy, Marquis, Doc, *The Arrival of Antichrist*, Part 1, notes that during the Illuminati initiation ceremony, each initiate must sign their given occult name in their own blood in what the Illuminati call *The Book of the Dead*, a book covered in lamb's hide. Wilful indeed!

⁵⁴⁶⁵ Luke 5:20,21

⁵⁴⁶⁶ John 10:30-33

⁵⁴⁶⁷ Mat 12:32

⁵⁴⁶⁸ reproduced from 'Wilful Sin.'

⁵⁴⁶⁹ I Cor 5:11

*revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.*⁵⁴⁷⁰ It is impossible for a man to be a brother, a member of the 'elect,' and retain and nurture all or any of these fatal deficiencies. And where can one find an appalling litany of acts against the brethren perpetrated through such means as fornication, incest, child abuse, drunkenness, extortion, and the like?⁵⁴⁷¹

'Again it must be remembered that [Paul] is here assessing a lifestyle rather than an occasional or isolated instance of sin. It is a matter of interest that the list generally deals with those things which are inimical to a social relationship. The covetous feels an inordinate desire for what belongs to another. A railer reviles in harsh, abusive language, and thus destroys the peace and dignity of another. A drunkard makes himself obnoxious by his irrationality which destroys communion with others. An extortioner obtains by force, illegality or ingenuity the property of another.

The attitude enjoined by Jesus is summed up in the admonition to do unto others as you would have them do unto you. In the community of the saints, each must esteem others better than himself, in honour preferring one another. It is obvious that the body cannot exist if the members destroy one another for selfish ends. Such a course is not only inimical to the congregation but destructive of the divine purpose.⁵⁴⁷²

The sin of incest, and its ramifications, is mentioned by Paul, again in Corinthians: *'It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife. And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you....To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. Your glorying [boast] is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?'*⁵⁴⁷³

Most expositors here have Satan 'doing the work of God,' by destroying the flesh, 'the first death,' and having some strange part in the saving of the breath, 'the second death.' This is illogical, incongruous in the extreme, and a wholly incorrect conclusion to draw from the context. There is no mention in the latter of any repentance on the part of the perpetrator, or his forgiveness by God, for pummelling by the Devil unto death can import neither. Taking these two 'referrals' to Satan, and allowing for Greek grammatical construction, the appropriate meanings are:

1. For blasphemy, the divine protection over the 'elect' is withdrawn, and the blasphemer is left unprotected against the wiles of the Devil; all this is for the purpose of punishment, repentance, and eventual reinstatement; but,

⁵⁴⁷⁰ I Cor 6:9,10

⁵⁴⁷¹ e.g., in the so-called Worldwide Church of God.

⁵⁴⁷² Ketcherside, W. Carl, *The Twisted Scriptures* (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁵⁴⁷³ in I Cor 5:1,2,5,6 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

2. For incest, patently a premeditated, wilful sin on the part of the perpetrator (presumably one who was baptised for he is noted as being a member of the church), upon receipt, Satan is allowed to influence the person in question in ways leading to the destruction of the body, that is, death. However, this actually refers to the 'Devil's damnation,' often referred to as the 'second death.' Given that there is no forgiveness noted in the Scriptures for unrepented or repeated wilful sin after baptism, the saving of the '*spirit*,' from the Greek meaning '*breath*,'⁵⁴⁷⁴ can only refer to those who were boastful of their own self-righteous position, who tolerated the perpetrator in their midst, and who did not seek that he be taken away from amongst them. Once the perpetrator was '*delivered to Satan*' he would no longer be able to influence the '*whole lump*' of the church, and, in such a case, the '*lump*' would be a deal more likely to be preserved '*in the day of the Lord Jesus*,' that is, The Day of Judgement. Once the delivery were accomplished, the result would be the purifying described in, '*Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened*,'⁵⁴⁷⁵ and the complete annihilation of he who had committed incest, through the first death and, later, through the second, the latter in the lake of fire.

Paul exposes another wanting in a flawed congregation, in the words, '*But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain. A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject; Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself*.'⁵⁴⁷⁶ This requires some explanation in its details, as it can be difficult to grasp all of the meaning at first sight. The contentions and strivings over foolish questions and the Law, which were so very characteristic of the Pharisees and Jewish religious rulers of the time, have no place in Judæo-Christian belief and conduct. Vanity was a strong element in such Jewish disputing, as philosophising proponents vied for the attention and admiration of their peers, while treating competing views with scorn and derision. The word '*heretick*'⁵⁴⁷⁷ comes from the Greek meaning '*to choose*,' '*prefer*,' or '*to take for oneself*.' It imports the idea of choosing to believe what one wants, in spite of what God says. It also conveys the concept of those erroneous additions and further revelations that have erupted from time to time down through the ages after completion of the New Testament canon. Such a person holding these aberrant views is termed '*subverted*,'⁵⁴⁷⁸ from the Greek meaning '*twisted*.' By dint of his own contentions, the subverted condemns himself. Again, this is continuing and sinful subversion, as can be seen from the complete disregard of '*the first and second admonition*' delivered by the 'elect.'

⁵⁴⁷⁴ Greek: pneuma.

⁵⁴⁷⁵ I Cor 5:7

⁵⁴⁷⁶ Titus 3:9-11

⁵⁴⁷⁷ Greek: hairetikos.

⁵⁴⁷⁸ Greek: ektrepo.

Correction and recovery is possible, under certain circumstances, outlined by Paul: *'But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness. If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work. Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart. But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do generate strifes. And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.'*⁵⁴⁷⁹ It should be noticed that the 'elect' are to point out and expose the errors of the fallen concerning the truth, but that it is God who gives 'repentance.'⁵⁴⁸⁰ Repentance is not sorrow for sin—that is contrition—but that heartfelt sorrow which leads to repentance, *'Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing. For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death.'*⁵⁴⁸¹ God, in his infinite wisdom, grants correction and recovery for those who might be termed 'the elect, temporarily fallen, contrite, and, by the grace of God, repentant.' The rest stand condemned in their own sinful lusts and subversions.

Those in positions of service⁵⁴⁸² in the church, such as elders, are to police among themselves, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit: *'Against an elder receive not accusation, but before two or three witnesses. Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear. I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality.'*⁵⁴⁸³ 'Accusation,'⁵⁴⁸⁴ was the word used in formal charges before a court. If found guilty, an elder must be rebuked publicly, *'before all,'* and the entire must be done in a proper and orderly manner, with complete impartiality. In all cases, however, nowhere is there found in the Bible a mechanism for the forgiveness of repeated, unrepented, wilful sin after baptism.⁵⁴⁸⁵

Laodicean

This compares glaringly with the basic premise underlying the system of a didactic ministry, formal ordination, and centralised headquarters, which is simply one of control and manipulation. The actual operation of

⁵⁴⁷⁹ II Tim 2:16;21-26

⁵⁴⁸⁰ Greek: metanoia.

⁵⁴⁸¹ II Cor 7:9,10

⁵⁴⁸² using the word service, as in servants.

⁵⁴⁸³ I Tim 5:19-21

⁵⁴⁸⁴ Greek: kategoria.

⁵⁴⁸⁵ foregoing section reproduced from 'Disfellowshipping.'

this system is based on discipline: man's discipline. The creation of a somewhat complex hierarchy, by definition, of itself demands modes of discipline. In these circumstances, the tighter the control desired by man, then, necessarily, the stricter the discipline.

In the Laodicean era of the church, this discipline extended to enforcing what was, variously and at any time, deemed by central headquarters to be 'the truth,' or, indeed, in patently oxymoronic form: 'the new truth.' How often it is that the worldly hierarchy view themselves as the sole possessors and keepers of the 'true and sound doctrine,' irrespective of whatever little validity it may have, and irrespective of how many changes and mutations it has suffered at their hands. Following on from this was the Laodicean perception that those in authority in the church had the power to ostracise and eject from God's church those unfit to wear the Christian mantle, as they termed and perceived it: the lukewarm deeming themselves judge, in their own eyes, of those they deemed unfit to be Christians.⁵⁴⁸⁶ How can vomit, for this is Christ's description of them, judge anything? It cannot even discern itself for what it is!

The accuracy of the description of their actions, contained in Ezekiel, is simply beyond dispute: *'Seemeth it a small thing unto you to have eaten up the good pasture, but ye must tread down with your feet the residue of your pastures? and to have drunk of the deep waters, but ye must foul the residue with your feet? And as for my flock, they eat that which ye have trodden with your feet; and they drink that which ye have fouled with your feet. Therefore thus saith the Lord God unto them; Behold, I, even I, will judge between the fat cattle and the lean cattle. Because ye have thrust with side and with shoulder, and pushed all the diseased with your horns, till ye have scattered them abroad; Therefore will I save my flock, and they shall no more be a prey; and I will judge between cattle and cattle.'*⁵⁴⁸⁷ It is Christ who, *'will judge between the fat cattle and the lean cattle.... Therefore will I save my flock, and they shall no more be a prey; and I will judge between cattle and cattle.'*

The foolish shepherds⁵⁴⁸⁸ foul everything they touch: they are vomit. The vile Laodicean leaders—self-appointed, for God does not appoint vomit—actively persecuted the very people of God, thrusting them out of what they perceived to be the church, actually terming them 'abortions,' to quote Herbert Armstrong. In so doing, they took upon themselves the role of the fat cattle, outside the true church, and doomed to their fate. They will not be saved; neither can they be. Their deeds are those of the Pharisees, described thus by Christ, *'But woe unto you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in.'*⁵⁴⁸⁹

The condition of the saved of the church is described by Ezekiel: *'Therefore, O ye shepherds, hear the word of the Lord; As I live saith the Lord God, surely because my flock became a prey, and my flock became meat to every beast of the field, because there was no shepherd, neither did my shepherds search for my flock,*

⁵⁴⁸⁶ actually W.C.G. policy.

⁵⁴⁸⁷ Ezek 34:18-22

⁵⁴⁸⁸ Ezek 34:1-10

⁵⁴⁸⁹ Mat 23:13

*but the shepherds fed themselves, and fed not my flock; Therefore, O ye shepherds, hear the word of the Lord; Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I am against the shepherds; and I will require my flock at their hand, and cause them to cease from feeding the flock; neither shall the shepherds feed themselves any more; for I will deliver my flock from their mouth, that they may not be meat for them. For thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I, even I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out. As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day. And I will bring them out from the people, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land, and feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the rivers, and in all the inhabited places of the country. I will feed them in a good pasture, and upon the high mountains of Israel shall their fold be: there shall they lie in a good fold, and in a fat pasture shall they feed upon the mountains of Israel. I will feed my flock, and I will cause them to lie down, saith the Lord God. I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick: but I will destroy the fat and the strong; I will feed them with judgment. And as for you, O my flock, thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I judge between cattle and cattle, between the rams and the he goats.'*⁵⁴⁹⁰

Christ will 'bring again that which was driven away,' 'seek that which was lost,' and, 'gather them from the countries.' The shepherds, on the other hand, 'fed themselves, and fed not my flock.' They lorded over their charges, and brought a heavy yoke to bear upon them.⁵⁴⁹¹

⁵⁴⁹⁰ Ezek: 34:7-17

⁵⁴⁹¹ foregoing section reproduced from 'Disfellowshipping.'

Chapter 74

Church: History & Contrasts

'The apostolic preaching made no mention of a church, but men who believed that Jesus was both Messiah and Lord of necessity believed something distinctive about themselves also. They were the new Israel. This belief is assumed by all New Testament writers,⁵⁴⁹² and can be traced back to Jesus Himself. His appointment of the Twelve and His solemn inauguration of the new covenant are adequate indications of His intention to bring into being a new people of God, continuous indeed with the old Israel, but cleansed by the remission of sins.....The new Israel was a community belonging essentially to the world to come, which in the ministry of Jesus had irrupted into the present age.'⁵⁴⁹³

The word translated '*church*' in Matthew⁵⁴⁹⁴ literally means '*a chosen or called assembly*.' It is closely related to the '*elect*,'⁵⁴⁹⁵ having a common root. The church, therefore, can be viewed as the collective noun for the '*elect*.' Thus the use of the word as a technical term for an assembly or group of believers in Christ was quite natural. It was not viewed as an external organisation, denomination, or hierarchical system. The New Testament church, therefore, was a local assembly or congregation of believers, along somewhat similar lines to the synagogues of the time, with the apostles over them. In the Old Testament, the Hebrew⁵⁴⁹⁶ is translated

⁵⁴⁹² Gal 6:16; Rom 9:6; James 1:1; I Peter 1:1,2:9; Heb 12:22-24; Rev 7:4f.; John 15:1-8

⁵⁴⁹³ Caird, G. B., *The Apostolic Age*, p.45 (sublinear emphasis added); New Covenant inaugurated by Christ, reaching it's final consummation with the end of the Millennium of rest and The Great White Throne Judgement, q.v. sup.

⁵⁴⁹⁴ Mat 16:18; Greek: ekklesia.

⁵⁴⁹⁵ Greek: ekkletos.

⁵⁴⁹⁶ Hebrew: qahal.

'congregation,' indicating or pointing to the local function of the Jewish synagogue and consequent upon the above, that of the early Christian church.

Some claim that the early church was democratic in its local congregation or assembly, by reference to a system which can be seen in operation in Corinthians, *'but who was also chosen of the churches to travel with us with this grace,'*⁵⁴⁹⁷ where *'chosen'*⁵⁴⁹⁸ means *'on a show of hands.'* It should be noted, however, that this was in respect of a matter concerning who should accompany Paul and Titus to Corinth, in other words, a matter of organisation and logistics, and most certainly not a matter of doctrine or belief, on which there is never even a suggestion of a 'democratic vote' in the New Testament.

To those who would claim that the Christian church, as a latter form of Israel, should be, like they assume Israel was, hierarchical, it can be demonstrated readily that Israel was patriarchal, being organised on a family basis. When Moses hearkened to the voice of his father-in-law, Jethro,⁵⁴⁹⁹ and appointed rulers over the people in denominations of thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens,⁵⁵⁰⁰ it was nothing other than contrary to the will of God. In this, he merely succeeded in introducing a wholly inappropriate hierarchical system involving some one hundred and thirty-one rulers over each group of one thousand people, with each and every minor ruler or intermediary appointed from the top: a hierarchy. This was not God's will; it was merely wrought on Jethro's ill-founded suggestion. The passage⁵⁵⁰¹ is frequently taken out of context to justify hierarchical contentions. The nation Israel chose its elders, however, and not Moses: *'Take you wise men, and understanding, and known among your tribes, and I will make them rulers over you, And ye answered me, and said, The thing that thou hast spoken is good for us to do.'*⁵⁵⁰² Moses would only have had any selection role if more wise men were selected by the people than were actually needed.

At that time, as throughout the current interadventual period, God was calling out individual followers, into His 'congregation,' His church. Gentile converts, through Christ, were adopted into Israel by this means, as the church is God's earthly and visible modus for overcoming the long-standing and underlying breach of the Old Covenant. The true Israel, therefore, comprises those who are 'called' from this materialistic, heathen world, by God, and into the Judæo-Christian church. The true children of Abraham are those to whom faith is counted for righteousness, regardless of their national background. This is confirmed by Paul, *'Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles? As he saith also in Osee,'*⁵⁵⁰³ *I will call them my people, which were not my people; and her beloved, which were not beloved. And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people; there shall they be called the children of the living*

⁵⁴⁹⁷ II Cor 8:19a

⁵⁴⁹⁸ Greek: cheirotoneo.

⁵⁴⁹⁹ Ex 18:24

⁵⁵⁰⁰ Ex 18:13-27

⁵⁵⁰¹ Ex 18:13-26

⁵⁵⁰² Deut 1:13,14 (sublinear emphasis added)

⁵⁵⁰³ viz., Hosea.

God.⁵⁵⁰⁴ This is also stated by James in Acts: *'And after they had held their peace, James answered, saying, Men and brethren, hearken unto me: Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things. Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world. Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble them not, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God.'*

5505

This great 'elect' church, the true Israel, termed a 'commonwealth' by Paul, no longer has any artificial man-contrived demarcations: *'Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenant of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition⁵⁵⁰⁶ between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby.'*⁵⁵⁰⁷

The breach in the covenant was through disobedience, and this will be made good with the New Covenant, in the Millennium at the wedding of Christ and his Bride, the Israelite church: *'For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I have made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws in their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest.'*⁵⁵⁰⁸ This process will complete by the time of The Great White Throne Judgement, with the resurrected masses entering the kingdom of God.

The form and constitution of the nascent church, the church of the apostolic era, can be gleaned from MacDonald: 'The first century AD Council of Jerusalem might appear at first sight to be a sort of denominational supreme court. But the facts are otherwise.

⁵⁵⁰⁴ Rom 9:24-26

⁵⁵⁰⁵ Acts 15:13-19 (sublinear emphasis added)

⁵⁵⁰⁶ viz., the soreq, q.v. inf.

⁵⁵⁰⁷ Eph 2:11-16

⁵⁵⁰⁸ Heb 8:8-11

Every local assembly in the early days of Christianity was autonomous—that is, it was self-governing. There was no federation of churches with a centralised authority over them. There were no denominations and therefore no denominational headquarters. Each local church was directly responsible to the Lord Jesus. This is pictured in Revelation⁵⁵⁰⁹ where the Lord is seen standing in the middle of the seven golden lampstands. These of course represent the seven churches of Asia [sic]. The point is that there was no governing agency between the individual churches and the great Head of the church Himself. Each was governed directly by Him.

Why is this an important feature? First of all, it hinders the spread of error. When churches are linked together under common control, the forces of liberalism, rationalism, and apostasy can capture the entire group simply by seizing the central headquarters. Where assemblies are independent, the struggle must be waged by the enemy against a host of separate units.

Secondly, the autonomy of the local church is an important protection when a hostile government is in power. When assemblies are federated, a totalitarian government can control them all by controlling the few leaders at headquarters. When assemblies refuse to recognise any centralized authority, they can more readily go underground in times of oppression.

Most governments today, whether democratic or dictatorial, try to bring about the union of small, independent churches. They say they do not want to deal with a large number of local units but with a central committee representing them all. Free governments try to bring about this union by the offer of certain favours and benefits. Other governments try to force this union by edict. In either case, the churches which yield to the pressure lose their scriptural character as well as their ability to resist modernism and to carry on secretly in time of persecution.

Some may object that the churches in Acts did have a central authority, namely, the council in Jerusalem which we have just considered. However, a careful study of the passage will show that this was not an official body with regulatory powers. It was simply an informal gathering of apostles and elders who were acting in an advisory capacity.

The council did not summon the men to come from Antioch; the latter decided to consult the men in Jerusalem. The decision of the council was not binding on the churches; it was simply offered as the combined judgement of the group.

The history of the church speaks for itself. Wherever there has been federation under a central organisation, there has been an acceleration of decline. The purest testimony for God has been maintained by churches which are free from outside human domination.

Any consideration of the structure of the church must investigate the sub-apostolic era, after the death of the apostles, as it is this that causes the greatest dispute and controversy in the matter. For it is on the basis

⁵⁵⁰⁹ Rev 1:13

of this organisation that many found the completely centralised and codified system so frequently found in professing Christianity today. The religious hierarchy; the Pope, the cardinals, the bishops, the priests; all look to the sub-apostolic era of the church for organisational succour and comfort. But is such a hope well founded? Or is it, like so much else besides, merely the result of wholesale importation of extraneous, man-devised organizational structures, masquerading as divine ordinance?

That a wholly centralised church would fly contrary to the apostolic form is abundantly clear. So either God changed the structure in an absolutely wholesale manner, presumably to suit changing circumstances, and naturally this would be the claim of the 'centralists,' or some other form, and that still decentralised, obtained. For, if nothing else, the church had lost the apostles, mainly through martyrdom.

The Head of the Christian church is Christ. Since Pentecost AD33 [sic!]⁵⁵¹⁰ and the formation of the Christian church, Christ always has been this Head; and Christ always will be. We have no intermediary, no Pope, no vicar of Christ (as one vicariously in the place of Christ, a title claimed by the Roman Catholic Pope); indeed, no formal hierarchy.⁵⁵¹¹ These are the organisational structures of man;⁵⁵¹² not of God. For the structures devised by man are set to define, control, and exploit, all in the name of prestige, power, and financial gain. But Christ has no truck with any of this.⁵⁵¹³

The six points of the early apostolic church's faith are listed by Caird: 'It was from Jesus that His disciples learnt to see in the life, death, and resurrection of their Master, the Gospel of God. Dodd⁵⁵¹⁴ has shown us how the content of this early preaching⁵⁵¹⁵ may be recovered from the New Testament.

A comparative study of [the Acts and the epistles] yields a standard apostolic sermon with six heads:

1. The prophecies of the Old Testament have now been fulfilled [save the end-time prophecies];
2. This has happened in the ministry, death, and resurrection of Jesus;

⁵⁵¹⁰ should read 30AD.

⁵⁵¹¹ Barclay, William, *Ethics in a Permissive Society*, p.181:

'Here in the Scottish tradition is the complete independence of the church. It is not rebellion or revolution; it comes from the highest kind of loyalty, but it comes from the conviction that the differences are gone when men stand in the presence of God, and that God's man must speak no matter who is listening. King, queen, and commoner are all subjects of God.'

⁵⁵¹² Bush, Richard C., *Religion in Communist China*, pp.15-22, cited by Barclay, William, *Ethics in a Permissive Society*, p.182:

'Article 88 of the Constitution of the People's Republic of China states: 'Citizens....of China enjoy freedom of religious belief.' That means exactly what it says. There is no freedom to meet, to worship, to preach, to attempt to initiate any activity or to criticise any policy. So long as belief remains a purely internal thing which has no effect on conduct or relationships with other people or relationships with the state, there is freedom of belief. But if belief threatens to become action, then it is quickly strangled.'

⁵⁵¹³ MacDonald, William, *The Acts: Dynamic Christianity*, pp.165,166

⁵⁵¹⁴ Dodd, C. H., *The Apostolic Preaching and its Development*

⁵⁵¹⁵ Greek: kerygma.

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3. He has now been exalted to God's right hand as Messiah and Lord;
 4. This belief has been confirmed by the gift of the Holy Spirit;
 5. Jesus will return [to earth] to bring God's purposes to their consummation;
 6. Meanwhile men have an opportunity to repent and to receive forgiveness and the gift of the Holy Spirit.⁵⁵¹⁶

The church at the time of Polycarp demonstrates the sub-apostolic form admirably. Here we find the church still in localised form. There was no central council in the sub-apostolic Christian church; no court of appeal; no formal, rigid hierarchy; no man-made appointments; no subterfuges; no deceit; no lies; no twisting of scriptural truth; no fiats; no dictats; no thundered anathemata; and no bloody purges. Polycarp was an elder, and leader, of the church at Smyrna. He did not represent, or lead, any of the other churches extant at that time, whether in the Province of Asia, or, indeed, elsewhere. His leadership was localised, and certainly not universal, and he was so as a result of having been selected by God, as evidenced by his outstanding abilities in matters of doctrine and like matters spiritual; gifts of the Holy Spirit. By dint of this, the elders had been selected, and through this system, from within the group of elders, a senior elder would emerge. Thus it was with leaders of localised church communities in the sub-apostolic era.

Polycarp had another outstanding virtue: he had been taught at the side of John, the last of the apostles to die. As a result, he maintained an unique continuity through that time when the sub-apostolic era was beginning, and it was the amalgamation of all of these virtues and abilities that brought him to a position of relative prominence, but still without the powers of a hierarchical head. In other words, Polycarp could meet, consult, advise, and dispute, but never compel.

The dispute⁵⁵¹⁷ with the bishop of Rome over the Quatrodeciman Controversy is a case in point, and illustrates the matter admirably. Also referred to by the revisionists as the Quatrodeciman Obstinacy, this was over the date on which Christians were to observe the death of Christ. Polycarp, following the doctrine and observance of the apostles, and indeed the words and instructions of Christ at The Last Supper, kept the Passover, the evening of the fourteenth day of the first month.⁵⁵¹⁸ This same dispute arose again in more heated form between Polycrates, a student of Polycarp, and Victor, the bishop of Rome.⁵⁵¹⁹

⁵⁵¹⁶ Caird, G. B., *The Apostolic Age*, pp.37,38 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁵⁵¹⁷ c.155AD

⁵⁵¹⁸ with the entire day comprising an evening and a day, so the observance was the preceding evening, at dusk, q.v.

sup.

⁵⁵¹⁹ c.195AD

Quatrodeciman controversy

Anicetus, the bishop of Rome, and head of a localised part of the sub-apostolic church which had rapidly gone largely apostate, desired to keep the feast called Easter, and this on the first Sunday following the vernal equinox, which was held by them to celebrate Christ's resurrection. In the event, neither would yield, and neither could convince the other. The result was a sharp and final division between Passover-keeping Judæo-Christians and the apostate observers of Easter, and much else pagan besides.

This equinox-related practice was especially strong, at the time, in North Africa and in southern and western Europe. It also imported the practice which became known as Lent,⁵⁵²⁰ beginning on Ash Wednesday, another pagan ritual. Lent seems to have been an indispensable preliminary to the great annual festival in commemoration of the death and resurrection of Tammuz, the pagan Babylonian messiah. The month of June was named in honour of this false being, and for forty days preceding the feast of Tammuz, usually held in June, the pagans held their Lenten season. Ezekiel describes it thus: *'He said also unto me, Turn thee yet again, and thou shalt see greater abominations than they do. Then he brought me to the door of the gate of the Lord's house which was toward the north; and, behold, there sat women weeping for Tammuz.'*⁵⁵²¹ They wept for Tammuz, the false-messiah of the pagans, because he had died. Tammuz is simply another name for Nimrod, as pointed out by Hislop.⁵⁵²² Maimonides describes the matter: 'When the false prophet named Thammuz preached to a certain king that he should worship the seven stars and the twelve signs of the Zodiac, that king ordered him to be put to a terrible death. On the night of his death all the images assembled from the ends of the earth into the temple of Babylon, to the great golden image of the Sun, which was suspended between heaven and earth. That image prostrated itself in the midst of the temple, and so did all the images around it, while it related to them all that had happened to Thammuz. The images wept and lamented all the night long, and then in the morning they flew away, each to his own temple again, to the ends of the earth. And hence arose the custom every year, on the first day of the month Thammuz, to mourn and weep for Thammuz.'

This weeping, joined with fasting for a period of forty days, preceded the pagan festival in honour of the supposed resurrection of Tammuz. The period of weeping and fasting fell in late spring and Lent is a continuation of the pagan springtime custom of abstaining from certain foods just before celebrating the fake resurrection. God calls Lent an abomination.

The pagan worship of the pagan god Tammuz is shown in the book of Jeremiah, where women were seen weeping for Tammuz at the Temple in Jerusalem. What is less well known is the fact that the forty days of

⁵⁵²⁰ the word Lent comes from the Old English Lencten, referring to the spring of the year, and is mentioned through its pagan observance in the Old Testament, in connection with Tammuz, q.v. inf.

⁵⁵²¹ Ezek 8:13,14

⁵⁵²² Hislop, Alexander, *The Two Babylons*, p.62

pagan Lent appears in transmuted form in Judaism, where Rosh hashanah—Jewish 1 Tishri⁵⁵²³—is seen as a yearly day of judgement when God passes sentence on all mankind for the following year, as to whether he or she is worthy of life and peace, or death and affliction. This sentence is deferred in terms of crystallisation until the day of Atonement, to allow for repentance and betterment. Religious Jews, however, start their repentance on the first day of the preceding month, Elul. As the Jewish Day of Atonement is on their 10 Tishri, and as there are thirty days in Elul on the schematic Judaic calendar, the total number of days of repentance is thus forty.

Jesus Christ and the New Testament church never observed any of that. Paul forbade Christians to observe any pagan days or seasons: *'But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage? Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years.'*⁵⁵²⁴

Ezekiel pronounces God's judgement on those so erring: *'Then he said unto me, Hast thou see this, O son of man? Is it a light thing in the house of Judah that they commit the abominations which they commit here? for they have filled the land with violence, and have returned to provoke me to anger: and, lo, they put the branch to their nose. Therefore I will also deal in fury: mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity; and though they cry in mine ears with a loud voice, yet will I not hear them.'*⁵⁵²⁵

Long ago, God warned His people not to adopt heathen customs: *'Take heed to thyself that thou be not snared by following them, after that they be destroyed from before thee; and that thou inquire not after their gods, saying, How did these nations serve their gods? even so will I do likewise. Thou shalt not do so unto the Lord thy God; for every abomination to the Lord, which he hateth, have they done unto their gods; for even their sons and their daughters they have burnt in the fire to their gods.'*⁵⁵²⁶ Jeremiah warned Israel similarly: *'Thus saith the Lord, Learn not the way of the heathen, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven; for the heathen are dismayed at them. For the customs of the people are vain.'*⁵⁵²⁷

Whatsoever the individual thinks has no standing: what matters is what God thinks and wills. This is encapsulated in, *'What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it.'*⁵⁵²⁸ Man has to do as he is commanded. God calls pagan Easter and Lenten customs, and all the rest of pagan belief and ritual, an abomination before Him, to be utterly shunned. And the apostles most certainly did not teach the early church to observe any of these abominable customs.

⁵⁵²³ 1 Tishri, the Jewish Rosh hashanah, imports the custom of Hatarat nedarim (literally, 'untying the vows'). It is common, on the eve of Rosh hashanah, to gather a mini-court of three men and declare in their presence one's desire to be free of all personal vows undertaken during the previous year.

⁵⁵²⁴ Gal 4:9,10

⁵⁵²⁵ Ezek 8:17,18

⁵⁵²⁶ Deut 12:30,31

⁵⁵²⁷ Jer 10:2,3

⁵⁵²⁸ Deut 12:32

Despite all, the Quatrodeciman Controversy arose, but neither party could convince the other, and they parted, each to his own belief. The matter remained 'unresolved' to the mind of man until the Council of Nicæa.⁵⁵²⁹ By the time the fourth-century had come round, apostasy had taken a firm hold of the name of Christianity. A counterfeit Christianity, allied with the greatest temporal power in the then world, issued the Nicene Creed which forbade 'Christians' to celebrate the New Testament Passover signifying and remembering the death of the Saviour. The first Sunday after the vernal equinox now became the 'legal' day for the celebration of His resurrection: the festival which later became known in north-western Europe as 'Easter.'

Sabbath to Sunday⁵⁵³⁰

Worse was to follow for the true church. In the fourth-century, the pagan Roman emperor Constantine inaugurated an apparently simple transposition of the Sabbath, on the seventh-day, to the day which was dedicated to the sun-god, apparently on an astrological basis. The reasoning behind this manoeuvre, however, is a little more complex than that. What Constantine succeeded in doing was to divorce, completely wittingly and wilfully, what thence became so-called Christian worship from the 'marker' or 'sign' of God's people: the Sabbath. In order to graft Sabbath-keeping peoples into this pagan 'supplanting system,' Constantine had to inaugurate a seven-day week throughout the Roman Empire, with worship and, eventually, rest, on a Sunday: something very novel to his pagan Roman Empire. The result was that his new worship system became the state religion. The day chosen by Constantine, however, did have obvious, direct, previous linkages to pagan sun-worship. Ignatius of Antioch describes his readers as: '[N]o longer sabbatizing, that is, observing the Jewish [sic] Sabbath, but living in our observance of the Lord's Day,⁵⁵³¹ on which also our life [that is, Christ; sic] sprang up again.'⁵⁵³²

From this and other references, such as the Didaché,⁵⁵³³ it is clear that Sunday worship, and other closely related and fundamental apostatising, was a remarkably common feature of the second- and third-centuries among many so-called Christians. This seems to have come about through a form of reversion to pagan Babylonian beliefs in worshipping the resurrection of the Messiah, just as the ancient pagans worshipped the resurrection of their false-messiah. Given that these early 'church apostates' believed, aberrantly, that Christ rose on Sunday morning,⁵⁵³⁴ they venerated Sunday, and so they worshipped on that day, rather than on the weekly Sabbath. In this manner, pagan beliefs flooded into the very heartland of the early church, and many were

⁵⁵²⁹ 325AD

⁵⁵³⁰ reproduced in its early part from 'Sabbath to Sunday?' sup.

⁵⁵³¹ i.e., pagan Lord's Day, Sunday, honouring Nimrod.

⁵⁵³² Ignatius of Antioch, *Epistle to the Magnesians*, chpt. 9, written c.110AD (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁵⁵³³ an anonymous, and spuriously 'Christian' manual, fully entitled: *The Lord's Teaching through the Twelve Apostles to the Gentiles*, probably written in Syria, and commonly assigned to the period 100–150AD.

⁵⁵³⁴ He rose just before or actually at the end of the weekly Sabbath.

turned away from the truth, adhering to many apostasies, mostly imported directly from paganism with nothing more than an occasional name change to disguise the fact.

The formal change commanded by Constantine was backed by the force of the Roman State to confiscate the property and ruin the lives of any true Christian who obeyed the commandments of God rather than the dictates of an apostate and repressive regime. The Council of Nicæa⁵⁵³⁵ ordered all churches to observe on each and every Sunday the annual Paschal memorial of the death of Christ. A little later, the force of the Roman church was brought to bear directly on this matter, when the Roman-dominated Council of Laodicea⁵⁵³⁶ wrote in one of its most famous canons: 'Christians must not judaize by resting on the Sabbath, but must work on that day, rather, honouring the Lord's Day. But if any man shall be found to be judaizers, let them be anathema from Christ.'

By this means the Sabbath was declared a 'non-day.'⁵⁵³⁷ This was a virtual sentence of torture and death, as true Christians were anathematised for keeping the Sabbath. Those followers of the sub-apostolic church who would not conform to the council's decree fled to the wilderness regions of Armenia, out of sight beyond the mountains and beyond the boundaries of the Roman Empire. By this time, Polycarp, Polycrates, and others had died: most being martyred; some not. The true church was going into hiding, beyond the hills, and beyond the confines of the Roman Empire, for the purposes of its very survival, for the time, times, and half a time equating with one thousand, two hundred and sixty years.⁵⁵³⁸ In the intervening period, only slight signs and brief outcrops occurred, to indicate that it even existed at all. But one thing can be certain: it did exist, even though frequently in fragmented, scattered, and rather disparate forms, even unknown to one another, for Christ promised never to leave His church: *'Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.'*⁵⁵³⁹

'As the [visible, so-called] Christian church grew stronger, Jewish communities suffered from violent outbursts of persecution. The feeling behind these attacks is known today as anti-semitism, and it arose from several different causes. Foremost among them in Christian and Islamic countries was religious prejudice. People felt that the Jews were an alien influence, liable to introduce new ideas and lead members of other faiths astray. In addition to this fear of heresy, the inhabitants of European and Asian towns and cities resented the fact that the Jews kept themselves to themselves. Though they settled in a certain country for generations they remained apart, preserving their age-old faith intact.

⁵⁵³⁵ 325AD

⁵⁵³⁶ c.365AD

⁵⁵³⁷ Latin: dies non.

⁵⁵³⁸ Rev 12:6

⁵⁵³⁹ Mat 28:20

As public opinion turned against the Jews they were segregated by law in ghettos, or Jewish districts, surrounded by walls and locked in at night. They were deprived of legal rights and ordered to wear special yellow badges, Stars of David,⁵⁵⁴⁰ to distinguish them from the rest of the population.

Wherever Jews settled they were always a minority, outnumbered by peoples of other faiths. Again and again they found themselves used as scapegoats and blamed for disasters over which they had no possible control. The Black Death struck Europe,⁵⁵⁴¹ probably carried by travelling merchants from the East. In the dirt and lack of hygiene of medieval cities the plague spread like wildfire, and it is estimated that in two years a quarter of the entire population of Europe died. In a wild panic of hysterical fear, bands of Christians slaughtered whole Jewish communities, whom they accused of spreading the plague to destroy the church of Rome. Since cleanliness plays an important part in Jewish religious discipline, conditions in the ghettos were generally better than those in the Christian quarters of the same cities, and the death rate from disease was not so high. This comparative immunity made the Jews more than ever suspect, and they had no way of proving that they did not protect themselves against the plague by witchcraft.⁵⁵⁴²

Despite everything, there were certain characteristics of organisation and funding which remained constant throughout the apostolic and early sub-apostolic era, and this has given rise to its description of 'household church.'

'The church in the Book of Acts and in the rest of the New Testament was what might be called a household church. The early Christians met in houses rather than in special ecclesiastical buildings. It has been said that religion was loosed from specially sacred places and centred in that universal place of living, the home. Unger says that homes continued to serve as places of Christian assembly for two centuries.⁵⁵⁴³

It might be easy for us to think that the use of private homes was forced by economic necessity rather than being the result of spiritual considerations. We have become so accustomed to church buildings and chapels that we think they are God's ideal. However, there is strong reason to believe that the first century believers might have been wiser than we are.

First of all, it is inconsistent with the Christian faith and its emphasis on love to spend thousands of dollars on luxurious buildings when there is such appalling need throughout the world. In that connection, Jones wrote: 'I looked on the Bambino, the child Christ in the Cathedral at Rome, laden with expensive jewels, and then walked out and looked upon the countenance of hungry children and wondered whether Christ, in view of this hunger, was enjoying his jewels. And the thought persisted that if he was, then I could no longer enjoy the thought of Christ. That bejewelled Bambino and the hungry children are a symbol of what we have done in put-

⁵⁵⁴⁰ actually the star of Remphan or Saturn, q.v. sup.

⁵⁵⁴¹ in 1349AD

⁵⁵⁴² Savage, Katherine, *The History of World Religions*, pp.169-171 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁵⁵⁴³ *Unger's Bible Handbook*, p.586

ting around Christ the expensive livery of stately cathedrals and churches while leaving untouched the fundamental wrongs in human society whereby Christ is left hungry in the unemployed and the dispossessed.⁵⁵⁴⁴

Not only is it inhumane; it is also uneconomical to spend money on costly buildings that are used for no more than three, four, or five hours during the week. How have we ever allowed ourselves to drift into this unthinkable dream world where we are willing to spend so much in order to get so little usage in return?

Our modern building programs have been one of the biggest hindrances to the expansion of the church. Heavy payments on principal and interest cause church leaders to resist any efforts to hive off and form new assemblies. Any loss of members would jeopardize the income needed to pay for the building and its upkeep. An unborn generation is saddled with debt, and any hope of church reproduction is stifled.

It is often argued that we must have pretentious buildings in order to attract the unchurched to our services. Aside from being a carnal way of thinking, this quite overlooks the New Testament pattern. The meetings of the early church were predominantly for believers. The Christians assembled for the apostle's teaching, fellowship, breaking of bread, and prayer.⁵⁵⁴⁵ They did not do their evangelizing by inviting people to meetings on Sunday [sic] but by witnessing to those with whom they came into contact throughout the week. When people did get converted, they were then brought into the fellowship and warmth of the household church to be fed and encouraged.

It is becoming increasingly difficult to get people to attend services in dignified church buildings. There is a strong reaction against formalism. Also there is a fear of being solicited for funds. "All the church wants is your money," is a common complaint.

Yet many of these same people are willing to attend a conversational Bible class in a home. There they do not have to be style-conscious, and they enjoy the informal, unprofessional atmosphere.

Actually, the household church is ideal for every culture and every country. And probably if we could look over the entire world, we would see more churches meeting in homes than in any other way.⁵⁵⁴⁶

Early church worship is only once described in any detail: *'How is it then brethren? When ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying.'*⁵⁵⁴⁷ Although somewhat adumbrated, the dynamic is evident.

Early church organisation & funding

In a way, this leads to the question of the financing of the Christian church: 'A sense of reverential awe came upon the people. The mighty power of the Holy Spirit was so evident that hearts were hushed and

⁵⁵⁴⁴ Jones, E. Stanley, *Christ's Alternative to Communism*, p.78

⁵⁵⁴⁵ Acts 2:42

⁵⁵⁴⁶ MacDonald, William, *The Acts: Dynamic Christianity*, pp.46-49

⁵⁵⁴⁷ I Cor 14:26

subdued. Astonishment filled their [minds] as they saw the apostles performing many miracles. (Wonders were miracles that astonished excitement and amazement. Signs were miracles that were designed to convey instruction. A miracle could be both a wonder and a sign).

The believers continually assembled together and held their possessions in a common trust. So mightily was the love of God shed about in their hearts that they did not look upon their material possessions as their own, as is clear from Acts, *'And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things that he possessed was his own; but they had all things common.'*⁵⁵⁴⁸ Whenever there was a genuine case of need in the fellowship, they sold personal property and distributed the proceeds. So there was an equality.⁵⁵⁴⁹

The early church organisation has been admirably described by Jones: "Let none," says Dr. Mosheim, alluding to the first and second centuries, "confound the bishops of this primitive and golden period of the church, with those of whom we read in the following ages. For though they were both designated by the same name, yet they differed extremely, in many respects. A bishop, during the first and second centuries, was the person who had the care of one Christian assembly, which, at that time, was, generally speaking, small enough to be contained in a private house. In this assembly, he acted not so much with the authority of a master, as with the zeal and diligence of a faithful servant. The churches also, in those early times, were entirely independent; none of them subject to any foreign jurisdiction, but each one governed by its own rulers and its own laws. Nothing is more evident than the perfect equality that reigned among the primitive churches; nor does there ever appear, in the first century, the smallest trace of that association of provincial churches, from which councils and metropolitans derived their origin." To which we may add, that the first churches acknowledged no earthly potentate as their head. This had been expressly prohibited by their Divine Master. *"The kings of the Gentiles,"* said He, *"exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise an authority upon them are termed benefactors. But with you it shall not be so;—let him that is greatest among you be as the younger, and he that is chief, as he that doth serve."*....These divine maxims, which are in perfect unison with the whole tenor of the New Testament, were entirely disregarded by the ecclesiastics who undertook to new-model the constitution of the Christian church, under the auspices of Constantine, and whom, as a matter of courtesy, they condescended to make its earthly head.⁵⁵⁵⁰

According to Jones, the early Christians:

1. Claimed no earthly leaders;
2. Were not highly organised;

⁵⁵⁴⁸ Acts 4:32

⁵⁵⁴⁹ MacDonald, William, *The Acts: Dynamic Christianity*, pp.43-47 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁵⁵⁵⁰ Jones, William, *Church History*, pp.287,288

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3. Met in very small groups;
 4. Had local autonomy; and, as a result,
 5. Had some diversity of doctrines.

It should be appreciated, however, that the latter would be both limited and reduced by the continuing, purifying effect on doctrine of the action of the Holy Spirit. Paul wrote of this in Corinthians: *'Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you.'*⁵⁵⁵¹ From Scripture it is abundantly clear that our teacher is the Holy Spirit, *'These things have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you. But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.'*⁵⁵⁵²

As to the matter of the early church funding, Christ told his followers to go and sell all that they had and to give it to the poor. It is important to note that there was no admonition to give to the church. The same advice was given to the rich young man in Matthew.⁵⁵⁵³ The point is that by showing that they care nothing for this world and its money, and its comforts, Judæo-Christians are, in part, preaching the gospel, by showing that they are actively seeking a city that has foundations whose builder and maker is God. Instead of raising a paid ministry, comprising of 'hirelings,' who milk the sheep and then desert them at the first sign of adversity, God made every true convert an unpaid witness, responsible for showing forth the gospel to the world.

And so on the one hand there are the paid, unprofitable, and slothful servants, who hide their limited talent under the ground, who stand arguing who amongst them is the greatest, while the harvest rots in the field; and, on the other hand, there is a lively, unpaid, outgoing, diligent, and vigilant group, driven and powered by the Holy Spirit. The so-called 'expert' or 'professionally pious' is of little worth, for of these, two passed by the man lying dying and in need, before the Good Samaritan, from a despised group, took him in care. Sadly, the world today is like the dying man, and far too many wittingly pass by, unheeding of its need. Indeed, everyone who has the gift of the Holy Spirit, also has an individual responsibility to act like the Samaritan, to spread the gospel, and not to leave it to worthless leaders and their ilk to do. After all, as James admirably puts it, *'For as the body without the breath is dead, so faith without works is dead also.'*⁵⁵⁵⁴

⁵⁵⁵¹ I Cor 1:10,11
⁵⁵⁵² I John 2:26,27
⁵⁵⁵³ Mat 19:16-22
⁵⁵⁵⁴ James 2:26

Today's worldly organisations

The corporate churchly organisations of this world—frequently massive in terms of adherents, wealth, influence, and worldly power—are no more than an appendage of the Babylonian whorish system, and should be recognized as such. This damnably heresy is mentioned in the Bible as being the works of the Nicolaitans, meaning *'to conquer, the laity,*⁵⁵⁵⁵ or the common people, for indeed, this is what it does. It is mentioned early, being included in the message to the very first church, that at Ephesus: *'But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitanes, which I also hate.'*⁵⁵⁵⁶ Man's churchly organisational tendencies and predilections kicked in very early, and have been a constant threat ever since.

In bare etymology, the original word 'heresy' has its source in the Greek meaning *'a choice,'* or *'a school of thought.'*⁵⁵⁵⁷ In these two interpretations there is no suggestion, express or implied, that would automatically import the concept of error on the part of the person making the choice. It is a free choice, or the adoption of a school of thought. It might be right, or it might be wrong. It is neither judgmental, nor condemnatory. A Greek Orthodox definition of heresy, however, is useful to consider in this context: 'Heresy is the human attempt to correct the Divine Inspiration in the corpus of Christianity.'

This chilling definition, devoid as it is of even any hint of *'contending for the faith once delivered,'* appears eminently suited to the purposes of identifying those not conformed to the established, hierarchical, mainstream, dictated beliefs, and then branding them excommunicated.⁵⁵⁵⁸ As is common in corrupt, paganised religions, words are used in misleading ways, and in doubtful connotations. The view that man somehow 'evolves his own way of heretical thinking outside the body of Christendom' admits nothing of the preceptor, the Holy Spirit; nothing of growth in the faith; nothing of end-time understanding; but it does speak volumes for the self-same politically oppressive religious control regime that so hopelessly mired mankind in the Dark Ages. Huss, martyred for 'unrecanted heresy,' summed the rebuttal in his query: 'How can I be a heretic, by acting on the word of the Scriptures?'⁵⁵⁵⁹

Such an attitude to so-called 'heretics' is nothing new. Almost two thousand years ago Christ came proclaiming the kingdom of God, in all truth, but the spiritual leaders of the people, the scribes and Pharisees, branded Him an heretic. He knew them for what they were, and poured scorn and derision down on their heads, calling them hypocrites and blockers: *'But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in.'*⁵⁵⁶⁰ To these hypocrites, what Christ preached was merely a contrary and unorthodox opinion, lacking the

⁵⁵⁵⁵ Greek: nico, 'conquer'; laitanes, 'the laity.'

⁵⁵⁵⁶ Rev 2:6

⁵⁵⁵⁷ Greek: hairesis.

⁵⁵⁵⁸ Latin: excommunicate.

⁵⁵⁵⁹ Huss, John, martyred in 1415AD.

⁵⁵⁶⁰ Mat 23:13

sanction of the established religious authorities. As such, they considered His message to be a false doctrine, worthy of death if He would not be silenced. The first true Christian martyr was actually Jesus Christ.

But even within the suffocating strictures of a definition such as the Greek, and many akin, the universal hegemony has had to admit that without the stirrings of new learning, the exploring of the Scriptures, the introduction of what to them was mainly internalised 'heretical' belief and doctrine, the state of the medieval universal church, morally and politically corrupt as it was, would not have been altered in any tangible way whatsoever, for there would have been no 'Reformation,' and so no 'Counter-Reformation,' worldly though both were.

Far more importantly, if left to the established hierarchy, there would have been no general availability of the Scriptures in the languages of the people, something which enabled an escape from these strictures and a subsequent and widespread searching and contending for the faith once delivered. While this was a faltering, error-strewn attempt in many, if not most, cases, it did lead eventually to some securing at least a measure of the truth and the doctrine delivered to the early church. Certainly it has to be admitted by the fair minded that so-called 'heresy' has had its advantages.

Damnable heresy

The biblical view of heresy is a deal different, as it incorporates a modifier—'*damnable*'—seen in Peter: *'But there were false prophets also among the people even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought⁵⁵⁶¹ them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of.'*⁵⁵⁶² This is the correct usage, for it is only those '*choices*' or '*schools of thought*' which are damnable, namely, those leading to damnation, that bring down damnation on the heads of the perpetrators. The Greek here translated '*Lord*,'⁵⁵⁶³ is Our Lord and Master, Who is in the purview, their former Redeemer, Whom they now deny, preferring the ways of that despotic master who rules over the false prophets and false teachers: the Devil. It is the Devil who tells us, through his agents, that we can get away with doing or remaining in evil.⁵⁵⁶⁴

*'And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.'*⁵⁵⁶⁵ The Greek here translated '*covetousness*,'⁵⁵⁶⁶

⁵⁵⁶¹ Greek: agorazo, '*redeemed*.'

⁵⁵⁶² II Peter 2:1,2 (sublinear emphasis added); cp. Jude 4, '*For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old condemned to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.*'

⁵⁵⁶³ Greek: despotes, despoton, '*Master*.'

⁵⁵⁶⁴ plenary and other papal indulgences, the Jewish (and others') weird notion of weighing good and evil in the balance, with a '50% + 1' in the good scale being acceptable (an ancient pagan Egyptian belief), and so on, are good examples.

⁵⁵⁶⁵ II Peter 2:2,3

means 'avarice,' and that translated 'merchandise,'⁵⁵⁶⁷ means 'to travel as a peddler.' Strong commercialism and self-interest is evident in their devices. 'It is amazing to hear with what boldness and unsuspecting confidence men pronounce upon matters with which they have the most meagre acquaintance.'⁵⁵⁶⁸ It is the Devil (Satan), through his agents, who tells us that mankind can get away with doing evil, but the end of it is certain: perdition for all involved.

Early fervour & flavour

The true Christian church has always been in existence from 30AD, and in the '*congregation*' from Old Testament times, even though sometimes so small and so well hidden that it is difficult at this distance to even discern it. This true church has always had the Holy Spirit for its guidance and learning.

The fervour and flavour of the early church is ably described by Grant: 'Among those who believed was manifested a unity of heart and interest, in which the natural selfishness of the fallen condition was swallowed up in the fullness of a love which a sense of the divine love had begotten. They were together in such sort that all they had was held in common; not by any law or outward constraint, which would have spoiled it all, but in the consciousness of what they were all to Christ, and what Christ was to each and all of them. Enriched by Him with a blessing which nothing could diminish, but the more they ministered it, the more they had it, "*they sold their possessions and goods, and distributed them to all, as any one had need.*"'⁵⁵⁶⁹

Many argue today that we need not follow the early believers in this practice. One might just as well contend that we should not love our neighbours as ourselves. This sharing of all one's real estate and personal property, heritable and moveable assets, was the inevitable fruit of lives that were filled with the Holy Spirit. It has been suggested that this verse gives the effect of Pentecost on religious life and on home life.

As to religious life, we must remember that these early converts were of Jewish background. Although the church was now in existence, the ties with the Jewish Temple were not severed immediately [but the Temple had been cursed by Christ, and the veil rent on His death]. The process of throwing off the graveclothes of Judaism continued through the period of the Acts. And so the believers continued to attend the services in the Temple, where they heard the Old Testament read and expounded. In addition, of course, they met together in homes for the functions listed in Acts, '*And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.*'⁵⁵⁷⁰

⁵⁵⁶⁶ Greek: pleonexia.

⁵⁵⁶⁷ Greek: emporeuomai.

⁵⁵⁶⁸ Dods, Marcus, *The Parables of Our Lord, as recorded by St. Luke*, p.47

⁵⁵⁶⁹ Acts 2:45a,4:42c

⁵⁵⁷⁰ Acts 2:42

As to their home life, we read that they broke bread, taking their food with gladness and singleness of heart. Here it seems clear that the breaking of bread refers to the eating of regular meals. The joy of their salvation overflowed into every detail of life, gilding the mundane with the aura of glory.

Life became an anthem of praise and a psalm of thanksgiving for those who had been delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the Kingdom of the Son of God's love.

At the outset, the believers had favour with all the people. But this was not to last. The nature of the Christian faith is such that it inevitably stirs up the hatred and opposition of the human heart. The Saviour warned His disciples to beware of popularity, *'Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets,'*⁵⁵⁷¹ and promised them persecution and tribulation, *'And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved. But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another: for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come.'*⁵⁵⁷² So this favour was a momentary phase, soon to be replaced by unrelenting opposition. *'And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.'* If this translation is accepted, the verse emphasises the sovereign, electing grace of God in saving those who had been chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, *'According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love.'*⁵⁵⁷³

The American Standard Version says, *"And the Lord added to them day by day those that were [being] saved."*⁵⁵⁷⁴ This is a simple statement on the growth of the Christian fellowship by conversions each day.

In either case, those who heard the gospel were responsible to accept Jesus Christ by a definite act of their own free will. The doctrine of election does not rule out human responsibility.

In this chapter, then, we have had the account of the pouring out of the Holy Spirit....the conversion of a great multitude, and a brief description of life among the early believers. An excellent resume of the latter was as follows: 'The most notable thing about the life of the early Christians was their vivid sense of being a people of God, called and set apart.'⁵⁵⁷⁵ The Christian church in their thought was a divine, not a human, institution. It

⁵⁵⁷¹ Luke 6:26

⁵⁵⁷² Mat 10:22,23

⁵⁵⁷³ Eph 1:4

⁵⁵⁷⁴ Acts 2:47b (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁵⁵⁷⁵ Barclay, William, *The Letter to the Romans*, pp.2-4 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'Paul describes himself as *'set apart to serve the good news of God.'* Paul was conscious of a double setting apart in his life. Twice in Paul's life this very same word (Greek: aphorozein) is used of him:

(a) He was set apart *'by God.'* He thought of God as separating him for the task he was to do even before he was born (Gal 1:15). For every man God has a plan. No man's life is purposeless. God sent him into the world to do some definite thing.

(b) He was set apart *'by men.'* It is this very same word that is used in Acts 13:2 when [through the] Holy Spirit [God] told the leaders of the Church at Antioch to separate Paul and Barnabus for the special mission to the Gentiles. Paul was conscious of having a task to do for God and for the church of God....Paul knew himself to be chosen, not for special honour, but for special responsibility. He knew that God had set him apart, not for glory, but for

was founded and controlled by God, and even the world was created for its sake. This conception....controlled all the life of the early Christians, both individual and social. They regarded themselves as separate from the rest of the world and bound together with peculiar ties. Their citizenship was in heaven, not on earth, and the principles and laws by which they strove to govern themselves were from above. The present world was but temporary, and their true life was in the future. Christ was soon to return, and the employments and labours and pleasures of this age were of small concern....In the everyday life of Christians the Holy Spirit was present, and all the Christian graces were the fruits. A result of this belief was to give their lives a peculiar enthusiastic or inspirational character. Theirs was not the everyday experience of ordinary men, but of men lifted out of themselves and transported into a higher sphere.^{5576 5577}

A similar view is expressed by MacDonald: 'After reading the Book of Acts, it is a good thing to review the principles and practices of the early Christians. What characterised the individual believers and the local assemblies of which they were members?

First of all, it is obvious that the first century Christians lived first and foremost for the interests of the Lord Jesus. Their whole outlook was Christ-centred. The primary reason for their existence was to witness for the Saviour, and they gave themselves to this task with vigour. In a world which was engaged in a mad struggle for survival, there was a hard core of zealous Christian disciples who sought first the kingdom of God and His righteousness. To them, everything else was subordinated to this glorious calling.⁵⁵⁷⁸

'The disciples had been baptised with....the holy, glowing enthusiasm caught from the altar of God [but not with fire!].⁵⁵⁷⁹ They had this central fire, from which every other purpose and faculty in life gets its strength. The fire in the apostles' [mind] was like a furnace fire in a great liner, which drives her through the tempests and through the envious and engulfing deep. Nothing could stop these men! Nothing could hinder their going....A strong imperative rings throughout all their doings and all their speech. They have heat and they have light because they were baptised by the power of the Holy Ghost.⁵⁵⁸⁰

The message they preached centred around the resurrection and glory of the Lord Jesus Christ. They were witnesses to a risen Saviour. Men had slain the Messiah, but God had raised Him from among the dead and given Him the place of highest honour in heaven. Every knee must bow to Him—the glorified man at God's right hand. There is no other way of salvation.

toil....Christianity always separates us, not for privilege, and self-glory, and pride, but for service, and humility, and love for all men.'

⁵⁵⁷⁶ *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 13th edition, article 'Church History'

⁵⁵⁷⁷ Grant, F. W., *The Numerical Bible*, pp.25,26 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁵⁵⁷⁸ MacDonald, William, *The Acts: Dynamic Christianity*

⁵⁵⁷⁹ cf. 'Baptism of Fire,' sup.

⁵⁵⁸⁰ Jowett, J. H., *Things that Matter Most*, p.248

The route to salvation is described in Mark, *'He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned,'*⁵⁵⁸¹ expanded in, *'And one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that he had answered them well, asked him, Which is the first commandment of all? And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; the Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. This is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these. And the scribe said unto him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one God; and there is none other but he: And to love him with all the heart, and with all understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices. And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, he said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God. And no man after that durst ask him any question.'*⁵⁵⁸²

In an environment of hate and bitterness and greed, the disciples manifested love to all. They repaid persecution with kindness, and prayed for their assailants. Their love toward other Christians forced their enemies to exclaim, *"Behold how these Christians love one another."*

We get the distinct impression that they lived sacrificially for the spread of the gospel. They did not look upon material possessions as their own, but as a stewardship from God. Wherever there was genuine need, there was a prompt flow of funds to meet the need.

The weapons of their warfare were not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds.⁵⁵⁸³ They realised that they were not fighting against religious or political leaders, but rather against evil powers in heavenly places. So they went forth armed with faith, with prayer, and with the Word of God. Unlike Islam, Christianity did not grow through the use of force.

These early Christians lived in separation from the world. They were in it but not of it. They maintained active contact with unbelievers as far as their witness was concerned, but never compromised their loyalty to Christ by engaging in the world's sinful pleasures. As pilgrims and strangers, they travelled through a foreign land seeking to be a blessing to all without partaking of its defilement.

Did they engage in politics or seek to remedy the social evils of the day? Their outlook was that all the ills and abuses in the world arise from man's sinful nature. In order to remedy the evils, one must get at the cause. Political and social reforms treat the symptoms without affecting the disease itself. Only the gospel can get at the heart of the matter, changing man's evil nature. And so they were not distracted by second best

⁵⁵⁸¹ Mark 16:16

⁵⁵⁸² Mark 12:28-34

⁵⁵⁸³ this in the N.T. often related to Greek: katargeo and katarizo, importing the sense of 'repair' or 'restoration.'

remedies. They preached the gospel in season, out of season. Everywhere the gospel went, the festering sores were eliminated or reduced.

They were not surprised when they ran into persecution. They had been taught to expect it. Instead of retaliating or even vindicating themselves, they committed their cause to God who judges righteously. Instead of seeking escape from trials, they prayed for boldness to proclaim Christ to all with whom they came in contact.

The goal before the disciples was world evangelisation. To them there was no distinction between home and foreign missions. The field was the world.

Their evangelistic activity was not an end in itself, that is, they were not content to lead [people] to Christ and then let them flounder on by themselves [sic]. Rather, the converts were gathered into local Christian assemblies. Here they were taught the Word, nurtured in prayer, and otherwise strengthened in the faith. Then they were challenged to go forth with the message to others.

It was the establishment of local churches that gave permanence to the work and provided for evangelical outreach in the surrounding areas. These local churches were indigenous,⁵⁵⁸⁴ that is, they were self-governing, self-propagating, and self-financing. Each assembly was independent of other churches, yet there was the fellowship of the Spirit between them. Each assembly sought to reproduce other assemblies in adjacent territory. And each one was financed from within. There was no central treasury or parent organisation.

The assemblies were primarily spiritual havens for believers rather than centres for reaching the unsaved. Assembly activities included the breaking of bread, worship, prayer, Bible study, and fellowship. Gospel meetings were not held in the assemblies as such but rather there was opportunity to address the unsaved—in synagogues, in market places, on the streets, in prisons, and from house to house [sic].

The assemblies did not meet in special buildings erected for the purpose but in the homes of believers. This gave great mobility to the church in times of persecution, permitting it to "go underground" quickly and easily. At the outset, there were certainly no denominations. All believers were recognised as members of the body of Christ and all local assemblies as expressions of the church universal.

Neither was there a distinction between clergy and laity. No one man had exclusive rights in an assembly with regard to teaching, preaching, baptising, or administering the Lord's Supper [sic]. There was a recognition of the fact that every believer had some gift, and there was liberty for the exercise of that gift.

Those who were gifted as apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers did not seek to establish themselves as indispensable officials in a church. Their function was to build up the saints in the faith so that they, too, might be able to serve the Lord daily.

The gifted men of the New Testament period were equipped for their work by a special anointing of the Holy Spirit. This accounts for the way in which unlearned and homespun men exercised such an influence on

⁵⁵⁸⁴ or autochthonous.

their age. They were not "professional" in the sense of the term today, but lay preachers with unction from on high.

The proclamation of the message in the Book of Acts was often accompanied by miracles—signs and wonders and divers gifts of the Holy Spirit. While these miracles seemed to be more prominent in the early chapters, they continue to the end of the book.

After a local church was in operation, the apostles or their representatives appointed elders—men who were spiritual overseers [also elders came forth naturally, over the course of time]. These men shepherded the flock. There were several elders in each church.

The noun "deacon" is not applied specifically to anyone in the Book of Acts. However, other forms of the word are used to describe service carried out for the Lord, whether spiritual or temporal.

The early believers practised baptism by immersion. The general impression is that believers were baptised soon after their conversion. On the first day of the week the disciples gathered together to remember the Lord in the breaking of bread [sic!]. This service was probably not as formal as it is today. It seems to have been observed in connection with a common meal or a love feast [it should not be confused with the Sabbath].

The early church was addicted to prayer. It was the life-line with God. The prayers were earnest, believing, and fervent.

The disciples also fasted in order that all their powers might be concentrated on spiritual matters without distraction or drowsiness.

It was after prayer and fasting that the prophets and teachers at Antioch commended Barnabas and Saul to a special missionary programme. Both of these men had been serving the Lord for some time prior to this. The commendation was not an official ordination, therefore, but simply an acknowledgement by the leaders at Antioch that the Holy Spirit had really called them. It was also an expression of the whole-hearted fellowship of the assembly in the work which Barnabas and Saul were undertaking.

Those who went out in evangelistic service were not controlled by their home assembly in this service. They were apparently free to serve as the Holy Spirit guided them. But they did report back to their home church as to the blessing of God on their labours.

In this connection, the church was not a highly organised complex, but a living organism which moved in constant obedience to the leading of the Lord. The Head of the church, Christ in heaven, directed the members, and they sought to keep themselves teachable, mobile, and responsive. Thus instead of finding an inflexible pattern of service in the Book of Acts, we find a fluidity, a refreshing absence of rigidity. For instance, there was no hard and fast rule as to how long an apostle spent in one place. In Thessalonica Paul stayed two or three weeks, but in Ephesus he remained three years. It all depended on how long it took to build up the saints so that they could carry on the Christian ministry by themselves.

There are some who feel that the apostles concentrated their attention on the large cities, depending on the churches established there to fan out into the suburbs. But is this true? Did the apostles have any such fixed and finalised strategy? Or did they follow orders from the Lord from day to day—whether to important centres or to trivial hamlets?

Certainly one of the outstanding impressions we get from the Book of Acts is that the early believers expected and depended on the guidance of the Lord. They had forsaken all for Christ's sake. They had nothing and no one but the Lord Himself. So they looked to Him for daily directions and were not disappointed.

It seems to have been the practice for itinerant Christian workers to travel in pairs. Oftentimes the partner would be a younger worker who would thus serve his apprenticeship. The apostles were constantly looking for faithful young men whom they could disciple.

At times the Lord's servants were self-supporting, for example, Paul working as a tent maker. At other times they were supported by love gifts from individuals or assemblies.

Another notable impression is that those who were spiritual leaders were recognised as such by the saints who worked with them. It was the Holy Spirit [that] empowered them to speak with authority. And it was the same Holy Spirit [that] gave other believers the true spiritual instinct to submit to this authority.

The disciples obeyed human governments up to a point. That point was reached when they were forbidden to preach the gospel. Then they obeyed God rather than man. When punished by civil authorities, they bore it unresistingly, without ever conspiring against the government.

The gospel was preached first to the Jews, then after Israel's national refusal of the message, the Good News went out to the Gentiles. The command "*to the Jew first*"⁵⁵⁸⁵ was fulfilled historically in the Book of Acts; it is not a principle that applies in evangelism today. Jews now are on the same basis as Gentiles before God—there is no difference, for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.

There was tremendous power in connection with the ministry of the early church. Men did not lightly make professions of being Christian through fear of God's displeasure. Sin in the church came to light quickly and was severely punished by God in some cases, for example, Ananias and Sapphira.

A final and lasting conviction that flows from the study of the Book of Acts is this: If we were to follow the example of the early church in faith, in sacrifice, in devotedness, in tireless service, then the world could be evangelised in our generation [sic].⁵⁵⁸⁶

To read the two preceding excerpts is to realise in some way how far the church has drifted from its original vigour and solidarity.

⁵⁵⁸⁵ Rom 1:16,2:9,10

⁵⁵⁸⁶ MacDonald, William, *The Acts, Dynamic Christianity*, pp.264-271 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets; subscripted emphasis added)

Church expositions

Over the years, the church has been expressed in the early apostolic church based in Jerusalem; in the sub-apostolic churches in Asia Minor of Polycarp and Polycrates; and the church in Armenia after the flight.⁵⁵⁸⁷

The early churches adhered closely to biblical truth. Polycarp had studied under John the apostle, and Polycrates carried on the same doctrines. But later—and in the case of both branches of Ebionites, contemporaneously—some were heretical, departing far from biblical truth in many instances, while others sought to re-establish truths of the Bible no longer to be found in eastern or western 'mainstream Christianity.'

An eighth-century AD description of Christians has come down through the ages, through translations and differing routes: 'They know and trust in God, the Creator of heaven and earth, in whom and from whom are all things, to whom there is no other god as companion, from whom they received commandments which they engraved upon their minds, and observe in hope and expectation of the world which is to come. Wherefore they do not commit adultery, nor fornication, nor bear false witness, nor embezzle what is held in pledge, nor covet what is not theirs. They honour father and mother, and show kindness to those near to them, and whenever they are judges, they judge uprightly. They do not worship idols made in the image of man, and whatever they would not that others should do unto them, they do not to others, and of the food which is consecrated to idols they do not eat, for they are pure. And their oppressors they treat with kindness, and make them their friends; they do good to their enemies. And their women, O King, are pure as virgins, and their daughters are modest. And their men keep themselves from every unlawful union and from all uncleanness, in the hope of a recompense to come in the other world. Further, if one or other of them have bondmen and bondwomen or children, through love toward them they persuade them [sic] to become Christians, and when they have done so, they call them brethren without distinction. They do not worship strange gods, and they go their way in all modesty and cheerfulness. Falsehood is not found among them, and they love one another, and from widows they do not turn away their esteem, and they deliver the orphan from him who treats him harshly. And he who has gives to him who has not, without boasting. (And they do not proclaim in the ears of the multitude the kind deeds they do, but are careful that no one should notice them; and they conceal their giving just like one who finds a treasure and conceals it). And when they see a stranger, they take him into their homes, and rejoice over him as a very brother; for they do not call them brethren after the flesh, but brethren after the spirit and in God. And whenever one of their poor passes from the world, each one of them, according to his ability, gives heed to him,

⁵⁵⁸⁷ in 325AD and following; sketchily, unconvincingly, and usually erroneously in the Paulician of the ninth-century; the Bogomils in Bulgaria; in churches referred to by their enemies variously as Nazarenes, Ebionites, and Cathars (all three are false attributions, for those were not Judæo-Christian); Publicans; Catarenes; Sabbatini, who became known in southern France as the Albigenses, the main recipients of a popish crusade, suffering the Inquisition established by Gregory IX in 1233AD (again non Judæo-Christian); and similarly in the Passagini, and the Patarenes; though to quite differing extents having a grasp of biblical truth; in some instances very tenuous indeed, becoming almost entirely lost in apostasy, tending to naught.

and carefully sees to his burial. And if they hear that one of their number is imprisoned, or afflicted, on account of the name of their Messiah, all of them anxiously minister to his necessity, and if it is possible to redeem him, they set him free. And if there is any among them that is poor and needy, and they have no spare food, they fast two or three days, in order to supply to the needy their lack of food. They observe the precepts of their Messiah with much care, living justly and soberly, as the Lord their God commanded them. Every morning and every hour, they give thanks and praise to God for His loving kindness towards them, and for their food and for their drink they offer thanksgiving to Him. And if any righteous man among them passes from the world, they rejoice and offer thanks to God, and they escort his body as if he were setting out from one place to another near. And when a child has been born to one of them, they give thanks to God, and if, furthermore, it happen to die in childhood, they give thanks to God the more, as for one who has passed through the world without sins.⁵⁵⁸⁸ And further, if they see that any of them dies in his ungodliness, or in his sins, for him they grieve bitterly, and sorrow as for one who goes to meet his doom.⁵⁵⁸⁹

Excellent said indeed, but the facts were even better than the words. Christians could be readily identified by their open hand to the poor. An end to the world's constant '*turning of things upside down*' is seen in Isaiah: '*The vile person shall no more be called liberal, nor the churl said to be bountiful. For the vile person shall speak villany, and his heart will work iniquity, to practice hypocrisy, and to utter error against the Lord, to make empty the soul of the hungry; and he will cause the drink of the thirsty to fail. The instruments also of the churl are evil: he deviseth wicked devices to destroy the poor with lying words, even when the needy speaketh right. But the liberal deviseth liberal things; and by liberal things shall he stand.*'⁵⁵⁹⁰ Perhaps this can be understood more clearly when it is appreciated that '*liberal*' comes from the Greek meaning '*generous*,'⁵⁵⁹¹ and '*churl*' from the Greek meaning '*niggardly*.'⁵⁵⁹² Christians are not conformed to the ways of this world.

The early Christians were not a threat to any, save, of course, to the workers of iniquity, because for them the deeds and conversation of the early church members upbraided them to shame, and brought into their minds the worthlessness of their depraved existence. And for this they were not thankful in the least.

Vaguely seen

The Paulician beliefs included:

1. The baptism only of adults;
2. Only by total water immersion;

⁵⁵⁸⁸ cp. pagan belief of 'Original Sin,' sup.

⁵⁵⁸⁹ *Apology of Aristides of Athens.*

⁵⁵⁹⁰ Isa 32:5-8

⁵⁵⁹¹ Greek: nadiyb.

⁵⁵⁹² Greek: kiylay.

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3. The rejection of the adoration of the cross;
 4. The rejection of the perpetual virginity of Mary;
 5. Refuting Mary to be a mediatrix;
 6. The rejection of the Roman Catholic mass, communion⁵⁵⁹³ and confession;
 7. True repentance being a prerequisite for baptism;
 8. The church not a building, but a body of believers;
 9. Obedience to the ten commandments;
 10. Obedience to the commandments of Christ;
 11. Rejection of the Roman Catholic fast days of Wednesday and Friday;
 12. No special weekly observances on Sunday;
 13. Almost certainly they kept the Sabbath; and,
 14. The rejection of Christmas, Easter, the Annunciation, and other feasts associated with the Roman church.⁵⁵⁹⁴

In addition, there was even an element of the Paulicians that held that Melchisedek was the Messiah. These became known as the Melchisedekians. Conybeare says, 'that the general impression which the study of it leaves on us is that in it we have before us a form of church not very remote from the primitive Jewish Christianity of Palestine.'⁵⁵⁹⁵ Gibbon notes that, 'from the blood and ashes of the first victims, a succession of teachers and congregations repeatedly arose.'⁵⁵⁹⁶

By the arrival of the mid ninth-century, the Empress Theodora severely persecuted various Christian groups who came to bear the name Paulician. As many as one hundred thousand were martyred in two decades.⁵⁵⁹⁷ Seemingly, the Bogomils and the Patarenes observed the Law of Moses, except as to sacrifices, practised circumcision, kept the Sabbath and maintained distinctions between clean and unclean food.⁵⁵⁹⁸

However, not all persecutors and adversaries were of like mind and ilk. The early apostolic and sub-apostolic Christian church had rivals of a much different character. When the Word was made flesh, and began to make God known to men in a new and fuller light, the parable of the sower and the seeds given by Christ

⁵⁵⁹³ this view evident also in the much later and unrelated 'hocus pocus': 'a derisory (Protestant and others) take on the Romish 'hoc est corpus,' 'here is the body,' the opening line in Latin of the Catholic Eucharistic presentation to the laity.

⁵⁵⁹⁴ *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 11th. Ed.; Conybeare, F. C., *The Keys of Truth*

⁵⁵⁹⁵ Conybeare, F. C., *The Keys of Truth*, p.193

⁵⁵⁹⁶ Gibbon, Edward, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, chpt. 54

⁵⁵⁹⁷ 840–860AD

⁵⁵⁹⁸ Blunt, John Henry, *Dictionary of Sects, Heresies, Ecclesiastical Parties, and Schools of Religious Thought*, pp,408,409

soon came to have a particular reality. Waterman summarises the natural inclination of man to revelation and new ideas: 'When a new idea is presented to a man's mind, especially a religious idea, the man is not likely to receive it unless he can make it fit with what he has been in the habit of thinking, with what he has been particularly sure of and interested in, in the time past of his life. Most men's convictions cannot be changed rapidly, in any way that can be called profound, at least, because if God gives them any new revelation remote from the belief which they have formerly cherished, they will colour the new revelation very deeply from the hue of their former thoughts, and much reshape it by pouring it into the mould of their own prejudices. That is what happened with the Christian Gospel in many men's reception of it. It could not be otherwise.'⁵⁵⁹⁹

Jewish perversions

The Jewish perversion of Christianity took its name from the Hebrew word for 'poor'.⁵⁶⁰⁰ Later Christian explanations dwelt upon the 'poor' notions concerning our Lord which were entertained by Ebionite believers, and, to a lesser extent, on the origins of the name. Some among modern scholars have thought that the 'poor' might have been a contemptuous designation of early Christian believers generally extant in Jewish circles, the gospel making its way so much faster among the poor than among the rich as to give opportunity for such a sneer. However, there can be no reasonable doubt that this title was one that the members of the sect⁵⁶⁰¹ took upon themselves, as a word of pride of that very common kind, 'the pride which apes humility.'

The Old Testament writers and prophets dwell much on God's love and care for the poor. Psalm seventy-two, in part a splendid messianic prophecy, is concerned with the poor, the needy, and the oppressed. Nothing more natural, then, and nothing more arrogant, than for a little sect to take to themselves this really great title of 'God's poor.' These 'half-converts,' of the 'half-way house,' were ready to accept that Jesus Christ was the Messiah, but there was much dissemblage.

The Ebionites proper parted into two main branches. The earlier party was that which has come to be known as the Pharasaic Ebionites. These stumbled over the story of the virgin birth, and at the idea of our Lord's divinity from the beginning. To them, Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah, doubtless, but He was born like other men, and it was only at His baptism that He received an effusion of Divine Power which raised Him above the level of other servants of God. They had a short Hebrew gospel, expunging Paul's writings, and held a modified version of Matthew, which blasphemously added to the words from heaven in the story of the baptism the phrase: 'This day have I begotten thee.'⁵⁶⁰² The same apocryphal gospel contains the story that a fire appeared upon the waters of Jordan, when our Lord was baptised.

⁵⁵⁹⁹ Waterman, Lucius, *The Eras of the Christian Church, the Post-Apostolic Age*, p.175

⁵⁶⁰⁰ Hebrew: ebion.

⁵⁶⁰¹ viz., the Ebionites.

⁵⁶⁰² cp. Psa 2:7; Acts 13:33; Heb 1:5

Now, this additional phrase, planted into the gospel narrative of the baptism of our Lord, was intended to render as naught the divinity of Christ from the beginning, and so make the Messiah more conformed to the views of mainstream Judaism, not only in terms of a human, non-divine Messiah, but also to bolster the Judaic monotheistic view of a single entity in God. In other words, Pharasaic Ebionism represented the extreme refusal of any element of Judaism to accept anything beyond the bare acknowledgement that Jesus Christ was the promised Messiah. They denied that the Word was God, and, in so doing, and, for all time, turned their back on Judæo-Christianity.

The second branch of the Ebionites is called by scholars Gnostic Ebionism or Essenism. The very name Gnostic implies the presence in the system of some such elements drawn from heathen thought, as can be seen from the corrupted versions of pseudo-Christianity grouped under the heading of Gnosticism. Irenæus names Simon Magus, or Simon the sorcerer⁵⁶⁰³ as the founder of Gnosticism.⁵⁶⁰⁴ In the pseudo-Clementine works,⁵⁶⁰⁵ the legend of Simon's becoming the nemesis of Peter is greatly elaborated. Also, the apocryphal work allegedly associated with Peter⁵⁶⁰⁶ tells how the Judæo-Christians of Rome were corrupted by this man's false teachings. So bewitching was his sorcery that it was said of him, *'This man is the great power of God.'*⁵⁶⁰⁷

The name Essene is intended to suggest the probable origin of this sect from a peculiar, secret society, the Essenes or Essæans, which seem to have had place among the Jews for something like one hundred and fifty years before the coming of Christ. They seem to have been very rigid 'puritans,' reminiscent of the early Quakers in some of their habits, and of Shakers in others, for a great part of their society was bound to a celibate life. Several expositors have suggested the derivation of their name from the Hebrew word for 'outsiders.' Outsiders they were indeed, for although they kept the Law of Moses in strict mode, as they understood it, their understanding was far remote from the common one. They never attended the Temple worship, for they held it impossibly defiled, though they sometimes sent thank-offerings to be offered there. They never ate the Passover, for they were strict vegetarians. Neither would they consume wine. Everywhere they were marked for their white robes, the symbol of the purity for which they were eager, and in pursuit of such purity they held themselves aloof from all uninitiated persons. They lived in community, having no individual possessions, and they were bound by terrible oaths never to touch food that was not prepared by one of their own number and served at a meal which was a religious exercise. Excommunication was recognised in this system, but to the Essene, to be excommunicated from the brotherhood with its common table meant nothing less than death by starvation, as a deliverance of the purged soul from the offending body.

⁵⁶⁰³ Acts 8:9-24

⁵⁶⁰⁴ Irenæus, *Against the Heresies*

⁵⁶⁰⁵ pseudo-Clementine, *Recognitions, Homilies*

⁵⁶⁰⁶ *Acts of Peter*

⁵⁶⁰⁷ Acts 8:10

This small sect, a community of ascetics possibly numbering about four thousand by the time of Christ, seems to have taken hold of the teachings of our Lord, and to have seen in them both the opportunity of a large-scale religion and a purification of the then mainstream Judaism, while all the while saving their own monotheism, austere morality, and mores and rituals. This Essene root declared nearly all historic Judaism to be a mere corruption of the divine Law. It discarded all the Old Testament, save the Pentateuch, and even some portions of that, and it taught that animal sacrifices had been from the first a misunderstanding. It was also held that the Holy Spirit was a female power, something common among early heresies. Of baptism, they had many ceremonies and purification rituals. Later, as a result of the grafting of some quasi-Christian beliefs onto their strict Essene root, Gnostic Ebionites allowed and even commended marriage, and prohibited the taking of oaths.

Gnosticism

Ancient Gnosticism and its modern derivatives are described by McRoberts: 'The word "gnosticism" comes from the Greek meaning "knowledge."⁵⁶⁰⁸ This refers not to cognitive or intellectual knowledge, but to a special, revealed knowledge necessary for salvation.

This secret, higher knowledge was available only to an elite. The religion of Gnosticism was not, however, a monolithic system. Gnosticism rather embodied numerous exclusive groups. Although there was great diversity within the whole Gnosticism, virtually all Gnostics agreed in condemning matter as an evil illusion. The Gnostics did not believe that the supreme God (divine Mind) of pure spirit had anything to do with the illusory physical world. Many of the Gnostic systems assigned the creation of the physical world to a lesser god referred to as a Demiurge. The Demiurge is frequently identified as Yahweh, the God of the Old Testament, in Gnostic literature.

Brown notes that, "Gnosticism was a response to the widespread desire to understand the mystery of being: it offered detailed, secret knowledge of the whole order of reality, claiming to know and to be able to explain things of which ordinary, simple [sic] Christian faith was entirely ignorant."⁵⁶⁰⁹

The term "Gnosticism" is used with reference to the developed systems of Gnostic thought beginning in the second-century [AD]. Gnosticism was a significant influence between the second- and fifth-centuries. During this period, Gnosticism was a very formidable opponent of Christian orthodoxy [as, indeed, both were of Judæo-Christianity].

Several themes were foundational to Gnostic thought. Most outstanding among them was the Redeemer myth. This myth speaks of the pre-existence of human souls. The souls of humans were at home in the heav-

⁵⁶⁰⁸ Greek: gnosis.

⁵⁶⁰⁹ Brown, Harold O. J., *Heresies*, p.39

enlies. However, an unknown tragic event took place that resulted in the human souls falling from their heavenly estate to the earth where they became imprisoned within bodies. In this condition, the humans forgot that they had ever enjoyed a former heavenly status. A Gnostic Redeemer was sent by the good god to these fallen humans. The mission of the Gnostic Redeemer was to bring revelation of their former heavenly estate to the people. This was to be accomplished through the imparting of a special knowledge.

Other versions of this Gnostic myth include a Primal Man who is the embodiment of all light. Before the beginning of time, the Primal Man was overcome and destroyed by demonic powers. The evil demons tore the Primal Man into many pieces. Each piece was a separate light particle that the demons used to create a world for themselves out of the chaos of darkness. Some of the light particles were human souls. Because of their imprisonment within fleshly bodies, the demons were able to enslave the humans and make them forget their former heavenly estate. The Gnostic Redeemer then came in on behalf of the good god to illuminate the captive human souls, through [imparting] a special knowledge, to the realisation of their former celestial status. Following their death, these enlightened souls are able to return to the Redeemer.

Because the material world was considered to be the creation of the Demiurge, the good god was separated from the earthly habitat of man by a great expanse. Seven immense spheres of space separated the good god from earth-bound man. These spheres were inhabited by a great host of intermediary beings (often referred to as æons), who were emanations of the good god. Their role was to assist the Gnostic initiate in the reunion of his soul (the particle of divine light) to the transcendent domain of the good god.

Each of the spheres was under the control of a demonic ruler. This demon (often referred to as Archon, meaning ruler) sought to block the path of the human soul's return to the good god.

By the second-century [AD], Jesus Christ was introduced into the Gnostic myth as one of the intermediaries. Christ came to earth in order to assist man in his return to the good god. "Christ came into the world, not in order to suffer and die, but in order to release the divine spark of light imprisoned in matter."⁵⁶¹⁰ Jesus Christ was not a saviour in the Gnostic scheme, "...he was a revealer. He came for the express purpose of communicating his secret gnosis."⁵⁶¹¹ The secret gnosis of the Gnostic Christ was the realisation of the elite that they too were Christs. The Gnostic Jesus was not unique in his office as Christ.

The Gnostic could not conceive of Jesus Christ partaking of evil flesh; the incarnation was anathema in their thinking; therefore, he only appeared to be in bodily form. This belief is central to Docetic Gnosticism. Doceticism was widely propagated by Marcion, the first [sic] great heretic of the Christian church. The influence of Docetic thought, before it developed into a coherent system in the second-century, is evident in the first-century by allusions to its principal themes in the epistle of First John.

⁵⁶¹⁰ Brown, Harold O. J., *Heresies*, p.222

⁵⁶¹¹ Brown, Harold O. J., *Heresies*, p.222

A radical dualism further characterises Gnosticism. The many dualist themes of Gnosticism (the good god and the demon rulers, matter and spirit, the soul and the body, light and dark) are common to all versions of the Gnostic myth.

Brown summarises: "The Gnostic movement has two salient features that appeal to countless minds in every age, that is, the claim to present a secret lore, explaining otherwise incomprehensible mysteries, and the assertion that its secrets are accessible only to the elite—thus by implication defining as elite all who take an active interest in them." However, the Gnostic myth was merely "an elaborate and fanciful structure of doctrines and ideas for which there was no guarantee other than their own imagination."^{5612 5613}

Morphing: New Age

'The influence of the Gnostic myth upon the New Age is very evident. Popular New Age author and transpersonal psychologist, Wilber writes, "Human life is moving 'up' from Eden, not down. The Fall....was nothing less than the involuntary descent of God into matter—the creation of the universe itself....The universe is involved in a mighty drama of awakening and reunion....Salvation [represents] a progression to the transpersonal state—to awareness of our prior union with God."⁵⁶¹⁴

The New Age is an adulterated form of Gnosticism. The inclusion of other mystic motifs (for example, U.F.O.s, fascination with Stonehenge and Egyptian pyramids [and also runes, tarot, and aura-reading]) crowds Gnosticism into a corner of the New Age myth. Yet the Gnostic influence is, nonetheless, ever present in New Age thought.

In his search for cosmic consciousness, New Age man often makes contact with so-called spiritual "helpers," "guides," "allies," "guardians," or other spiritual intermediaries. In common with ancient Gnosticism, the New Ager seeks to become intuitively (mystically) aware of his own Christ-consciousness (synonym for cosmic consciousness) through contact with the divine mind (good god) and by the aid provided by intermediary spiritual beings. Spangler, a New Age author and lecturer, integrates the Gnostic world view in the New Age vision: 'This is the New Age vision: what man is capable of and what man will become because of his own self-initiated efforts in harmony with the aid that he is being given from other sources. A new age dawns upon the earth. The call goes forth above the clamour and battle sounds of Armageddon, that now there will be peace on earth and good will flowing between men, for now is the age of the birth of the Christ within the heart of humanity.'⁵⁶¹⁵

⁵⁶¹² Brown, Harold O. J., *Heresies*, p.222

⁵⁶¹³ McRoberts, Kerry D., *New Age or Old Lie?* pp.55-60 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁵⁶¹⁴ Lasch, Christopher, *Soul of a New Age*, p.85, quoting Wilbur, Ken (unattributed, with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁵⁶¹⁵ Spangler, David, *Revelation: The Birth of a New Age*, p.149

Astrology

'Astrology was important to much of Gnosticism. The Gnostics often turned to the counsel of the stars and planets in seeking means to escape the bondage of their earthly habitation.

For many, the idea of the New Age has come to them because of a modern resurgence in the interest of astrology. What is astrology? Basically, astrology contends that the position of the stars and planets at the time of people's birth has a direct influence upon their destiny. Horoscopes thus become a chart depicting someone's life in relationship to the heavenly bodies.

Astrologers are predicting the dawning of the Age of Aquarius. The Piscean Age (the dispensation [supposedly] aligned with Christianity) is coming to a close, which will place the world in a post-Christian era. Dowling, an esoteric version of the teachings of Jesus Christ, forecasts a spiritual age of universal "harmony and understanding": 'The Aquarian Age is pre-eminently a spiritual age, and the spiritual side of the great lessons that Jesus gave to the world may now be comprehended by multitudes of people, for the many are now coming in an advanced stage of spiritual consciousness.'⁵⁶¹⁶

The Age of Aquarius will usher in a new spiritual order that will feature man as "the Herald and Truth of the New Age." The consensus among astrologers for the dawning of the Age of Aquarius [was] 21 March, 2000.'⁵⁶¹⁷

New Age 'Christ'

'The Neo-Gnostic [New Age] view of atonement and salvation, channelled by an inner voice through a medium⁵⁶¹⁸ who identifies it as belonging to Jesus Christ, and exposed and highlighted in all its pagan drapery, is that: 'atonement is the correction of the false belief that we are sinners. Salvation results from our correction of the ego's illusion of separation....The Jesus of [Neo-Gnosticism] reintroduces the mythic motif of a Gnostic Redeemer by informing humanity of their 'true' identity as sinless extensions of God. As Christened beings, in the Gnostic tradition, we are able to absolve the guilt of others by refusing to project guilt upon them.'⁵⁶¹⁹

From this ancient Gnostic root there also sprung such beliefs as Arianism which, while professing to be the full flowering of truth, denied the divinity of Christ as being part of the Godhead, with some others denying that Christ had a real body of flesh, and was rather some form of intermediary between God and man. Both these and a variety of such like vain and worthless speculations held some sway in what are sometimes viewed

⁵⁶¹⁶ Dowling, Levi, *The Aquarian Gospel of Jesus the Christ*, pp.10,11 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁵⁶¹⁷ Spangler, David, *Revelation: The Birth of a New Age*, p.105 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁵⁶¹⁸ Schucman, Helen.

⁵⁶¹⁹ Halverson, Dean C., *Course in Miracles, Seeing Yourself as Sinless* (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

as the three main Gnostic sub-divisions, principally amongst a certain type of so-called intellectual, until the early part of the fifth-century AD.

Nazarenes, Mandæans, & Christians

Yet another group sprang up at or about the time of our Lord, and claim originally to have been a Christian party: the Nazarenes. But these passed over into the position of being a separate sect at last, and it is with this movement that they are to be connected. Beginning, possibly, at Jerusalem, it is claimed that they removed, according to our Lord's warning, when they saw '*Jerusalem compassed with armies*,' and took refuge in the little town of Pella, east of the River Jordan, although this is seriously questioned later. After the Bar Kochba revolt, they did not return to Jerusalem to what they regarded as being a church infused with Gentile elements, or to live in what was essentially a Gentile city. They proceeded to produce their own testaments, principally a curious book called 'The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs,' allegedly deathbed speeches put into the mouths of Jacob's sons, but, in reality, the apostate work of a Nazarene writer. This growth in the wrong direction led to their complete separation from the early Christian church, both spatial and doctrinal. They were never a numerous body, and never had any real influence on the growth of Judæo-Christianity.

What their descendants have come to be appears to be disputed, as some, based on the traditions of Assyrian 'Christians' known as Nestorians,⁵⁶²⁰ believe that the Nazarenes escaped the Roman Empire into the Parthian Empire located to the east, and were either assimilated into the Nestorian Church or wiped out by the rise of Islam, while others maintain that it still exists as a curious little sect in southern Babylonia, with a strange mixture of Christian, Jewish, and heathen notions, but with nothing left that could be at all described as true Christianity. The latter may be gleaned from: 'Nazarenes—a primitive Judeo-Christian [sic] sect, existing in the fourth-century, according to Epiphanius, and Jerome, around Pella, in Palestine. Information provided by Jerome indicates that they considered themselves Jews, but accepted the doctrines of the divinity of Christ and his supernatural birth. They have sometimes been identified with the Ebionites, but their beliefs were different in important respects. The Mandæans still call themselves Nasoraye.'

'Nazarene—[is] a term designating a native of Nazareth, particularly Jesus Christ. In Greek it appears as Nazarenos or Nazeraios. The nineteen occurrences in the New Testament are in the Authorised Version twice rendered as 'Nazarene,'⁵⁶²¹ and seventeen times by the words 'of Nazareth.' Those using it include the demoniac addressing Jesus in the synagogue at Capernaum;⁵⁶²² the people to Bartimæus;⁵⁶²³ the soldiers who

⁵⁶²⁰ doctrine advanced by Nestorius (386–450AD) which held, inter alia, that Christ had two loosely united natures: divine and human (dyophysitism).

⁵⁶²¹ Mat 2:23; Acts 24:5

⁵⁶²² Mark 1:24; Luke 4:34

⁵⁶²³ Mark 10:47; Luke 18:37

apprehended Jesus;⁵⁶²⁴ the servants at his trial;⁵⁶²⁵ and Pilate in the superscription⁵⁶²⁶ [meant in mockery, but hereafter to be verified in glory]. At first it was applied to Jesus as naturally indicating his birthplace [sic; it was Bethlehem] The Arabs use (note—present tense) the term as a general designation for those of the Christian faith.⁵⁶²⁷

'Mandæans—An ancient oriental religious sect of mixed Christian, Jewish and heathen elements. They are still found on the east shore of the Tigris, working as jewellers, blacksmiths, carpenters etc. Their religion is a kind of Gnosticism, retaining various Jewish and Parsee elements. They worship a number of personifications, particularly of the attributes or names of God. They publicly call themselves Sabians (Subba—baptists), thus professing to identify themselves with the Sabæans tolerated in the Koran. They were formerly called Christians of Saint John the Baptist from their habit of baptism or ablution. They have five important sacred books.⁵⁶²⁸ Mandæans have three degrees in their priesthood, with a supreme official⁵⁶²⁹ as the source of both civil and ecclesiastical authority. The priests officiate in white robes, bare-footed, and women may be admitted to their order.'⁵⁶³⁰

Differentiation between Nazarenes and Christians⁵⁶³¹ is identified by Gruber: 'The content of that "blessing" was not known for certain until "....1925[AD] when the question was settled by the discovery of Genizah fragments containing portions of the liturgy according to the ancient Palestinian rite. In these versions, Birkat ha-Minim reads like this: 'May the apostates have no hope, unless they return to Thy Torah, and may the Nazarenes and the Minim disappear in a moment. May they be erased from the book of life, and not be inscribed with the righteous'....The editor notes that his manuscript contains a marginal note: 'Birkat ha-Minim was introduced after Yeshua ben Pandera, when heretics became numerous.'⁵⁶³² ⁵⁶³³ The inference from the highlighted portion is that the Minim, the Judæo-Christians, were held to be separate, independently identifiable, or different, from the Nazarenes.

Despite all this evidence to the contrary, there is a commonly held belief⁵⁶³⁴ that Paul, on trial before Felix, and accused by Tertullius, who was acting as advocate on behalf of Ananias the high priest and certain elders, did not deny, and thus accepted by implication, the term and title of, '*a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes*,⁵⁶³⁵ and, further, and in natural course, the term 'Nazarene' for the early apostolic church.

⁵⁶²⁴ John 18:5-7

⁵⁶²⁵ Mat 26:71; Mark 14:67

⁵⁶²⁶ John 19:19

⁵⁶²⁷ *Encyclopedia Americana*, article 'Mandæans' (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁵⁶²⁸ viz., 'the great book' called 'Treasure'; 'Book of John'; 'Book of Hymns'; 'Book of Ritual'; 'Manual of Astrology.'

⁵⁶²⁹ called the Rish amma.

⁵⁶³⁰ *Encyclopedia Americana*, article 'Mandæans' (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁵⁶³¹ Minim, meaning 'twoers,' a reference to the dyadic Godhead of Judæo-Christianity, q.v. sup.

⁵⁶³² Gruber, Daniel, *Rabbi Akiba's Messiah: The Origins of Rabbinic Authority*, p.156 (sublinear emphasis added)

⁵⁶³³ Alon, Gedalia, *The Jews in their Land in the Talmudic Age*, Vol.1, pp.289-290 (sublinear emphasis added)

⁵⁶³⁴ Pritz, Ray A., *Nazarene Jewish Christianity*, p.14, para. 2

⁵⁶³⁵ Acts 24:5c

The word translated '*Nazarenes*' in Acts chapter twenty-four is the Greek meaning, literally, a Nazor-æan.⁵⁶³⁶ Thus it becomes Nazarene, and, again, literally, means one of Nazareth, or an inhabitant of Nazereth. If the Greek word, originally in the singular, was actually a reference to the home town of Christ,⁵⁶³⁷ by way of the sect of an inhabitant of Nazereth, then part of it becomes clear. Quite why the translators erroneously imported the plural, calling it Nazarenes, is unknown, unless it was as a result of the influence of the word 'sect,' allied to extraneous references about three centuries later to the Nazarenes.

It is held by some that the term 'Nazarene' was at times a term of derision used by Judæans against Galileans within the Jewish nation and, therefore, did not necessarily carry any spiritual or religious connotation in the time of Christ and Paul. This can be gleaned, perhaps, from, *'We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. And Nathaniel said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see,'*⁵⁶³⁸ when allied to: 'There is no precedent within the Scriptures for churches ever to call themselves by this term ('Nazarene'). 'Nazarene' was at times a term of derision used by Judæans against the Galileans within the Jewish nation and, therefore, did not necessarily carry a spiritual connotation.'⁵⁶³⁹

The phrase, '*a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes,*' of which Paul was accused, amongst other things, was that of being a standard bearer of the sect. It was utterly false that the early apostolic church was called or accused of being a sect, with or without a standard bearer. Now it was true that Paul was an active, leading person, propagating Judæo-Christianity among the Gentiles and, to a lesser extent, the Hellenistic Jews. But he did not draw people to a party or private opinion, nor did he make his own opinion their rule. It was God who drew people to the church, and it was the word of God that was preached to these people, and thus Christianity cannot be thought to have taken its rise from such narrow opinions and private interests as provide the origins of sects. To fulfil the Law and bring about the general availability of salvation is not a sectional or cultic activity, but, rather, the very core of God's will and purpose: to whit, the Judæo-Christian belief and conviction.

The proceedings in the trial of Paul are recorded in Acts, *'And after five days Ananias the high priest descended with the elders, and with a certain orator named Tertullus, who informed the governor against Paul. And when he was called forth, Tertullus began to accuse him, saying, Seeing that by thee we enjoy great quietness, and that very worthy deeds are done unto this nation by thy providence. We accept it always, and in all places, most noble Felix, with all thankfulness. Notwithstanding, that I be not tedious unto thee, I pray thee that wouldest hear us of thy clemency a few words. For we have found this man a pestilent fellow, and a mover of sedition among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes: Who also*

⁵⁶³⁶ Greek: Nazaraïos.

⁵⁶³⁷ although he was actually born in Bethlehem.

⁵⁶³⁸ John 1:45,46

⁵⁶³⁹ Nelson's Parallel Bible Commentary, p.2191

*hath gone about to profane the temple: whom we took and would have judged according to our law. But the chief captain Lysias came upon us, and with great violence took him away out of our hands, Commanding his accusers to come unto thee: by examining of whom thyself mayest take knowledge of all these things whereof we accuse him. And the Jews also assented, saying that these things were so. Then Paul, after that the governor had beckoned unto him to speak, answered, Forasmuch as I know that thou hast been of many years a judge unto this nation, I do the more cheerfully answer for myself: Because that thou mayest understand, that there are yet but twelve days since I went up to Jerusalem for to worship. And they neither found me in the temple disputing with any man, neither raising up the people, neither in the synagogues, nor in the city: Neither can they prove the things whereof they accuse me. But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the Law and in the Prophets: And have hope towards God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just, and the unjust. And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence towards God, and toward man. Now after many years I came to bring alms to my nation, and offerings, Whereupon certain Jews from Asia found me purified in the temple, neither with multitude, nor with tumult. Who ought to have been here before thee, and object, if they had ought against me. Or else, let these same here say, if they have found any evil doing in me, while I stood before the council. Except it be for this one voice, that I cried standing among them, Touching the resurrection of the dead I am called in question of you today....And when Felix heard these things, having more perfect knowledge of that way, he deferred them, and said, When Lysias the chief captain shall come down, I will know the uttermost of your matter.'*⁵⁶⁴⁰

Now the accusation, such as it was, is both recited and highlighted, as is Paul's denial to sedition and profaning the Temple. This then extends to denial of all of the accusations, including the Nazarene issue. Paul denied being a Nazarene. The only mention of a following or sect called Nazarene in the whole of the New Testament is in the accusation led by Tertullus, and it was immediately denied in rebuttal by the Apostle. Paul confesses to worshipping in the way which they call heresy. This is the early apostolic-era Christian belief and conviction, now known in these latter days as Judæo-Christian, for the faith, belief and conviction is the self-same. Most certainly this is not to be confused with those various apostate religions which today masquerade under the title 'Christian.' Finally there is confirmation that Felix knew more perfectly of the way than the others. The way is mentioned previously in Acts,⁵⁶⁴¹ where it is the term used by the early apostolic church of itself—The Way; and this became known, externally and internally, as Christian, and this first in Antioch.⁵⁶⁴² But, despite all, the proceedings got nowhere. Quite simply, the trial in Cæsarea was a farce.

⁵⁶⁴⁰ Acts 24:1-22

⁵⁶⁴¹ Acts 18:25,19:9,23

⁵⁶⁴² Acts 11:26

Years after this incident Ananias was assassinated and his son Jonathan became the high priest, and he was later assassinated by Felix. In the middle of all of the preparatory plotting and conspiracy, Paul was accused on the basis of purely trumped-up charges. All of the accusations were unsubstantiated, unproven and, ultimately, rejected. And this by Felix, a man not known for his fair-mindedness. Notwithstanding Paul being eventually found guiltless of these charges, as he had appealed to Cæsar on the grounds of being a Roman citizen, he was sent to Rome.

A sense of the general feeling of superiority on the part of the Judæans of the time can be gained from Edersheim: '[T]he Amharets ('country people,' plebians, in the Jewish sense of being unlearned) could not possess [knowledge, since they] had bartered away the highest crown for a spade with which to dig. And 'the school of Arum'—the sages—the 'great ones of the world,' had long settled it, that study was before works.'⁵⁶⁴³ And how could it be otherwise, since the studies, which engaged His chosen children on earth, equally occupied their Almighty Father in heaven?⁵⁶⁴⁴ Could anything, then, be higher than the peculiar calling of Israel, or better qualify them for being the sons of God? It is necessary to transport oneself into this atmosphere to understand the views entertained at the time of Jesus, or to form any conception of their infinite contrast in spirit to the new doctrine. The abhorrence, not unmingled with contempt, of all Gentile ways, thoughts, and associations; the worship of the letter of the Law [in reality, their own 'law']; the self-righteousness, and pride of descent, and still more of knowledge, became thus intelligible to us, and, equally so, the absolute antagonism to the claims of a Messiah so unlike themselves and their own ideal.'⁵⁶⁴⁵

Josephus used the term 'sect' to designate various parties and divisions in Judaism, indicating, probably, that at the time, the opposition to Judæo-Christianity still considered it as an unorthodox break with Judaism. As 'The Way' was considered by these opposing parties to be heresy, and as it had a part foundation in Judaism, it was probably inevitable that Christianity would be viewed by such opposition as an unorthodox sect.

However, none of this indicates whether there was a sect called the Nazarenes around at the time, or whether they formed later. Tertullus's reference at Cæsarea was to the sect of a singular Nazarene, namely, a person from Nazareth. In context, this does not provide uncontroversial proof of an extant Nazarene sect in the second quarter of the first-century. 'Quasi-Christian' literature first refers to them in writings dated to the latter part of the fourth-century.⁵⁶⁴⁶ The date range is interesting, as by the time these written references appear, the sub-apostolic church had fled beyond the mountains, and beyond the reach of the Roman Empire and its state church, the supplanting Roman-dominated church. Despite this, it has been claimed, by some—usually seeking

⁵⁶⁴³ q.v. Jer. Chag. 1, hal. 7, towards the end; Jer. Pes. 3.7

⁵⁶⁴⁴ Ab. Z. 3b

⁵⁶⁴⁵ Edersheim, Alfred, *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, pp.58,59 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁵⁶⁴⁶ c.370–375AD

to resurrect what are suspected to be the beliefs and doctrines of the Nazarenes, possibly inter-mixed with those of the early apostolic church with a change in nomenclature, as a form of Nazarene-Judaism—that an old but undated copy of the Jewish Birkat haMinim⁵⁶⁴⁷ found at the Cairo Genizah⁵⁶⁴⁸ makes reference to the Nazarenes by invoking God to blot them out. The origin of the Birkat haMinim is found in events in the late first-century,⁵⁶⁴⁹ but there is no way of knowing when the invocation first appeared, as it does not appear to be the original text.

The problem with the Nazarene records is that they are few and far between, and very incomplete, but, despite this, the few fragments available show their beliefs to have been very different in many key areas from the apostolic-era Christianity of the time. From this it can be safely concluded that they were not believers of the true Judæo-Christian doctrine, and not in the primitive Christian church. It follows that the comment, 'For one thing, in his reply, Paul seems to accept the title without hesitation and even to equate it with the honoured term, 'the Way,'"⁵⁶⁵⁰ is profoundly erroneous, and imports completely the wrong view. Again, the only mention of the term 'Nazarene' as a sect or following, in the entire New Testament, is where it is denied outright as being the 'Christian Way,' to amalgamate the two correct terms. Put quite simply, the Nazarenes were not of The Christian Way, and the term 'Nazerene' should never be attributed to Judæo-Christians, despite their possibly first-blooming at Jerusalem.

It is known that several late-blooming 'Jewish-Christian' hybrids based on some mutation or other of Christian teaching, usually associated with some free-thinking leader, did appear in the first-century or so after Christ, mainly but not exclusively after the flight to Pella, and out of one of these it is possible that what is termed the Nazerene belief sprung up. The non-appearance of the term 'Nazarene' in even quasi-Christian literature until the latter half of the fourth century⁵⁶⁵¹ tends towards the view of it being a late and mutant entry.

Montanism & Monarchism

Other competing beliefs and doctrines of the early centuries, emanating from Gnosticism, include:

1. Montanism—based on the Phrygian or Cataphrygian heresy⁵⁶⁵²—exemplified in ecstatic fanaticism, the so-called 'feeling' church, surprisingly closely related in many traits to certain modern African, pseudo-African, or similar revivalist religious eruptions wherein aberrant, hysterical, and possessed behaviour is positively encouraged, frequently under the guise of being 'slain for Jesus,' 'slain by the Spirit,' speaking in gibberish tongues,

⁵⁶⁴⁷ cited sup.

⁵⁶⁴⁸ in 1925AD

⁵⁶⁴⁹ 90AD

⁵⁶⁵⁰ Pritz, Ray A., *Nazarene Jewish Christianity*, p.14 para. 2

⁵⁶⁵¹ c.370–375AD

⁵⁶⁵² c.170AD

'glossolalia,' or, as evidenced at certain so-called 'tarry meetings,' in barking like dogs, roaring like lions, lengthy and uncontrollable laughter, and in seriously deluded women writhing about on the floor, claiming orgasm with the Holy Spirit, no less;

2. Monarchism Type 'A,' attributed to Theodotus in the last years of the second-century AD, which acknowledged the supernatural birth of Jesus, but refused to call him Lord; and,

3. Monarchism Type 'B,' a derivative of 'A,' but which held that God was three-in-one, and that God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost were differing names for the same personage. This was but yet another inclusive attempt, this time to reconcile the Jewish monotheistic view with that of the then emerging Roman Catholic one. It was later rather well described as 'banishing the Spirit, and crucifying the Father.' Obviously, it had the fatal flaw of being unable to show how Christ rose from the dead, as, if all had been 'three-in-one,' there would have none left in the Godhead to raise Him. This grossly erroneous doctrine, sometimes called the 'doctrine of the Modal Trinity,' has persisted through being nourished and sustained as a Roman 'mystery.'

Pagan confusion—old & new

The Christ of the New Age has many features common to some of the ancient beliefs. 'Spangler speaks of Christ in pagan-pantheistic terms: 'However, the Cosmic Christ did not come only for humanity, but in service to all evolving life streams of all the kingdoms of Nature upon the planet. Through the channel made for him by the human consciousness of Jesus, the Christ entered the very structure and life of earth and united with his counterpart within the earth logos.'⁵⁶⁵³

The Clare Prophets, of the Church Universal and Triumphant, are also representative of New Age thought's denial of the person of Jesus as Christ: 'The Master's greatest desire was that they should not mistake the son of Man (Jesus) for the Son of God (the Christ). Should confusion arise regarding the source of his humanity (in Christ) and the source of his divinity (in God), the Saviour knew that generations to come would not worship the Christ, but the man Jesus.'⁵⁶⁵⁴

Crème states that Jesus is divine "in exactly the sense that we are divine." Speaking of Jesus, Crème further asserts that "He is Divine, having perfected Himself and manifested the Divinity potential in each of us." MacLean goes way out on a limb in her proclamation concerning the Son of God: "Christ was the most advanced human ever to walk on this planet."^{5655 5656}

⁵⁶⁵³ Spangler, David, *Revelation: The Birth of a New Age*, p.121

⁵⁶⁵⁴ Clare Prophet, Mark and Elizabeth, of the Church Universal and Triumphant, *Climbing the Highest Mountain*, p.26

⁵⁶⁵⁵ Crème, Benjamin, *The Reappearance of the Christ and the Masters of Wisdom*, p.120

⁵⁶⁵⁶ MacLean, Shirley, *Out on a Limb*, p.91

Many pantheists deny that Jesus died on the cross: "Jesus did not sleep within the tomb." [This] describes the resurrection of Jesus Christ in the occult tradition as a transmutation from "carnal flesh and blood to flesh of God."⁵⁶⁵⁷

Occultists believe that Jesus went through degrees of initiation which are open to all men. Upon entering the world, Jesus was a third-degree "initiate." He became a fourth-degree "initiate" at his crucifixion and a fifth-degree "initiate" after his resurrection.'

[Another popular pseudo-god, human reasoning / humanism,⁵⁶⁵⁸ was given great credence in the time of the 'Enlightenment']. 'The eighteenth-century 'Enlightenment' was characterised, above all, by the exaltation of reason; man's reason. The inroads made into the formerly near-unassailable towers of the mainstream religions in that century and the one to follow by scientific discovery, thought and speculation, tore much of mainstream theology apart—and, in the eyes of many—leaving it largely dismembered and discarded by the wayside.

The researches and speculations of science, dealing, as it does, with the material world, had relegated God, at best, to the position of a divine 'First Cause'; One that had left man to sort out his own destiny. This is Deism.⁵⁶⁵⁹

The optimistic philosophical rationalism of the Enlightenment considered that all ills of man and society were capable of human remedy, needing only the application of appropriate medication to attain resolution and, hence, perfection. In such a purview, God had little to offer. Given that in line with their Deist definition, God did not intercede in human affairs, it was obvious that He could not affect such things as miracles, and was unable to intervene in and influence worldly events. To the 'enlightened,' God had been neutered.⁵⁶⁶⁰

⁵⁶⁵⁷ Dowling, Levi, *The Aquarian Gospel of Jesus the Christ*, pp.255,261

⁵⁶⁵⁸ Baer, Randall N., *Inside the New Age Nightmare*, p.147, citing Hunt, Dave, *The Seduction of Christianity*, p.249: "We must beware not to encourage the deadly delusion that there is any hope for peace except through transformation of the human heart through Christ. Indeed, if the world were seemingly able to solve all of its problems without embracing the true gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, that would be the greatest of all deceptions and precisely what Satan will seek to do through the Antichrist, whose world government will be a counterfeit of God's kingdom. Although they may not realize it, those who join, no matter how sincerely, in humanistic efforts to unite the world in a false peace are not furthering the cause of Christ, but in the long run the cause of the Antichrist."

⁵⁶⁵⁹ Gibbon, Edward, *Gibbon on Christianity*, Introduction by Rt. Hon. J.M. Robertson, pp.vii; xxi:

'A world only partially educated by deism to a naturalistic view of the world. A society largely permeated by deism.'

⁵⁶⁶⁰ that was soon to transmute in a predictable way. Cesarani, David, *Justice Delayed—How Britain Became a Refuge for Nazi War Criminals*, pp.37,38:

'Donald Cameron Watt, later a professor of international history at the London School of Economics, was a young sergeant in the British field security in 1945[AD] with the job of interrogating East Europeans and detecting suspicious cases. He recalled, "The problems in finding such people were enormous....They were not Germans and so not officially Nazis. They were unlikely to have any documented history that could be discovered....I would start my interrogation by asking their name, date of birth and religion. The last question could be a give-away because Nazis tended to say just, 'I believe in God.'"(Evening Standard, 3 March, 1987AD).'

Nazi atheists could say in all truth that they believed in god—their god, Satan. Neo-Nazis today can make the same claim.

Near the end of the European Enlightenment, Immanuel Kant in his book 'Critique of Pure Reason,' argued that knowledge was only attainable through human experience that was grounded in reason, and human experience was limited to the empirical world of sensibility, and therefore the metaphysical world was unintelligible and without meaning.⁵⁶⁶¹

The philosophical and underlying flaw in all of this, even apart from the biblical considerations, in large measure, is also demonstrated by McRoberts: 'The insidious relativism of atheistic secular humanism⁵⁶⁶² has decayed values, social structures and institutions in Western civilisation. Secular humanism has left Western culture⁵⁶⁶³ gasping for its last breath of meaning.

The pluralism that characterizes our culture has plunged the nation into a morass of religio-philosophical alternatives for the ailments of our society. In this "post-Christian era" in which we live, objective truth is rejected; truth is subjectivity. With no transcendent, absolute standard, people are blindly committing themselves to bizarre, shallow beliefs.

An occult tumult of unprecedented proportions has shaken Western civilisation. The pendulum of Western thought has swung from the exaltation of reason to the widespread rejection of reason, from rationalism to mysticism, from materialism to the occult....[The] people of twentieth-century America [are] transcending conventional categories in pursuit of a spiritual journey into New Age mysticism....[Inevitably, this has perilous ramifications].

If the universe is closed to God and His supernatural intervention, it is also closed to man's reordering of it. This results in a devaluation of man and renders freewill illusory. Man, to be able to reorder the world in which he lives, would necessarily have to transcend the natural order of cause and effect. The thinkers of the Enlightenment avoided such an assault to the dignity of man and continued to assume, as men will apart from reflection, that it was possible for them to maintain the hope of personal and social perfectibility.

As previously mentioned, the Enlightenment man believed that God was observable only in nature and, therefore, this was all that was needed to understand God. General revelation was then the basis for ethics; and since the world was not fallen, in the thinking of eighteenth-century man, then nature reveals whatever is right.

This view actually destroys ethics. If whatever is (in nature), is right, then evil is an illusion. Right and wrong, good and evil, are indistinguishable. This notion conflicts with man's own sense of justice and is therefore inconsistent with normal human experience....

⁵⁶⁶¹ McRoberts, Kerry D., *New Age or Old Lie*, pp.13,14 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁵⁶⁶² Dods, Marcus, *The Parables of Our Lord, as recorded by St. Luke*, pp.32,39 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'It is not always the relationship that gives the love, but the love that makes the relationship—that there is often a friend that sticketh closer than a brother—an outlaw from the faith that is more substantially helpful....and prompter in lending a hand, than one belonging [at least nominally] to the same "household of faith."' And this, as a modus: 'There is the forbearance of doing harm, speaking evil, inflicting injury....Love them first of all, and see what comes of it.'

⁵⁶⁶³ i.e., the root of how things are perceived.

The human dilemma decried by Kant....led to an emphasis upon human experience and feeling. Another by-product was a movement away from the extreme significance placed upon reason at the beginning of the Enlightenment. However, the thinking of man was still rationalistic, and spiritual realities were relegated to the realm of the non-rational....

With no infinite God for man to look to for final reality, man becomes ultimate in the quest for meaning in life. This is what we mean when we speak of secular (non-theistic) humanism. This understanding of secular humanism is adapted from the ancient Greek philosopher Protagoras, who said, "man is the measure of all things." Humanistic man is alone in his universe....

All events within a purely naturalistic world require a natural explanation. Kurtz suggests: 'Any account of nature should pass the tests of scientific evidence; in our judgement, the dogmas and myths of traditional religions do not do so....We find insufficient evidence for belief in the existence of a supernatural; it is either meaningless or irrelevant to the question of the survival and fulfilment of the human race. As non-theists, we begin with humans not God, nature not deity....No deity will save us; we must save ourselves.'⁵⁶⁶⁴

[In this distorted view], man is the accidental product of evolved non-intelligent mass and is reduced to machine, only one more part in the closed system of cause and effect. He is not a special creation as in the [Judæo-]Christian world view, but rather the accidental result of psychological and chemical conditioning. There is no overarching meaning and purpose to life in a determined universe. Indeed, free will is an illusion.

The rejection of reason in the twentieth-century as a basis for understanding spiritual realities contributed to opening the door to the irrational spirituality of the occult in the West.

Additionally, the rejection of the supernatural by theological liberalism has caused masses to seek elsewhere for spiritual fulfilment. The unfounded assaults upon biblical revelation by liberalism resulted in the loss of a critical standard by which to judge spiritual realities. This results in subjective experience as being the basis upon which to test spiritual phenomena. With no reliable, objective standard by which to judge spiritual phenomena, the occult is allowed to flourish unchecked. For many in the West, liberalism represents [Judæo-]Christianity as being lifeless, powerless, and meaningless.

The social chaos of the counterculture, associated with widespread drug use, resulted in the departure of many from former traditional values. A general uncertainty as to personal identity and purpose has gripped our culture. Eastern occult-mysticism offers spiritually hungry man in the West ultimate answers as to his identity and purpose for being. Under the aegis of renewed hope, the occult encourages man to look within and discover his true nature. As modern man looks within in his search for purpose and spiritual understanding, he ends in bowing his knee in worship to the image of God instead of the image's Creator, the Sovereign God.'⁵⁶⁶⁵

⁵⁶⁶⁴ Kurtz, Paul, *Humanist Manifesto I & II*, pp.15,16

⁵⁶⁶⁵ McRoberts, Kerry D., *New Age or Old Lie*, pp.22-26,35,36,63,64,66-68

Human potential

'The idolatry of modern man is seemingly endorsed by large segments of humanistic psychology. The human potential movement, represented by such notables as Maslow, Rogers, Yung, and Skinner⁵⁶⁶⁶ has sanctioned psychic and parapsychological research. Occult influence results in former concepts of human potential being perceived in infinite [human] terms.

Contemporary socio-political disenchantment and future fear, particularly the annihilation of the planet through nuclear holocaust, ecological collapse, or other catastrophic means have served as the impetus for modern New Age man to be the avant-garde into new spiritual frontiers that will be the gateway into the Aquarian Age of global peace and ultimate human fulfilment. As occult influences are secularised (this results in their being demystified) within our culture via the myth of the New Age, "Their underlying themes run through contemporary science, economics, politics, art, psychology, and religion."⁵⁶⁶⁷

These mythical threads run through the whole of New Age thought from politics to holistic health food centres. The mythical themes of the New Age inform its adherents of values critical to the realisation of its grand vision. Perhaps the supreme value emphasised within the New Age is survival. The struggle for survival is foundational to both evolutionary theories, either punctuationist or Darwinian gradualism.

The "grand myth" of evolution drives the New Age in its commitment to issues involving planetary and racial survival such as ecological concerns, the nuclear arms race, human rights violations, starvation, overpopulation, and political tensions. The New Age is committed to a planetary paradise ("planetisation") through its abiding trust in the unlimited potentialities of the human species. Accelerating the evolutionary process within the human species through the administration of the various psychospiritual technologies available within the movement will, according to New Age enthusiasts, insure global and racial survival. The mythical themes further inform the New Age advocate of the underlying interconnectedness of all reality. Ancient myths resurfacing in the New Age appear to validate its monistic world view, that all is One. The notion of mankind's ascent to godhood is drawn from this sense of oneness with all reality. Man then becomes the persona of the impersonal god of pantheism that imbues all of reality.

Since all of reality is interconnected, according to the New Age world view, then every individual entity affects the whole. A true sense of oneness then is integral to the ultimate socio-political vision of a unified planetary system. The concept of interconnectedness provides the ethical basis for this unprecedented magnitude of global co-operation.

The interconnectedness of all the systems of the universe, inclusive of man, is an axiom of New Age ideology. This concept, according to its proponents, is bedrock for the New Age hope. In seeking to integrate

⁵⁶⁶⁶ Maslow, Abraham; Rogers, Carl; Yung, Carl; Skinner, B. F.

⁵⁶⁶⁷ Alexander, Brooks, *Occult Philosophy and Mystical Experience*, p.14

their ideology within the mainstream of Western thought, New Agers, such as Capra, are endeavouring to wed science with Eastern mysticism: 'Thus, the awareness of the profound harmony between the world view of modern physics and the views of Eastern mysticism now appears as an integral part of a much larger transformation, leading to the emergence of a new vision of reality that will require a fundamental change in our thoughts, perceptions, and values....From this point of view, the connection between physics and mysticism is not only very interesting but also extremely important. It shows that the results of modern physics have opened up two very different paths for science to pursue. They may lead us—to put it in extreme terms—to the Buddha or to the Bomb, and it is up to each scientist to decide which path to take. It seems to me that at a time when close to half our scientists and engineers work for the military, wasting an enormous potential of human ingenuity and creativity by developing ever more sophisticated means of total destruction, the path of the Buddha, the "path with a heart," cannot be overemphasised.'⁵⁶⁶⁸

The mechanistic scientific model (Cartesian—Newtonian) is the focus of Capra's [pointed] indictment. Fragmentation, resulting from an overemphasis upon rationality, has created untold problems within the planetary culture, according to proponents of the new science.

Have we really come down to a choice between "Buddha and the Bomb?" Is our only means of survival to flee to the shrine of holistic thought, to consecrate ourselves to a world view of the interconnectedness of the systems of the universe, in effect, [to] embrace Eastern monism?

The issue at stake in this great debate is addressed by researcher Miller: "What is the primary 'cause' underlying the many symptoms of our global 'disease'?"⁵⁶⁶⁹ Davidson, a science writer quoted by Miller, is in essential agreement with Capra, "the fault....is not in our stars and not entirely in ourselves—but substantially in our systems."⁵⁶⁷⁰ Disagreeing with Davidson, Miller strikes at the heart of the issue: "To place the blame primarily on our systems rather than ourselves is to diagnose a symptom of the disease as its cause."⁵⁶⁷¹

Rather than withdrawing further into the depths of his own moral depravity through intuitive development, man needs a thorough change of heart. The New Age ignores man's sinful nature. By placing human consciousness on the throne of the universe, through the assumption of human perfectness, New Age man is actually glorifying the source of the human predicament.

The value of non-violence grows out of the New Age's emphasis upon survival and interconnectedness. Violence results in separation, the greatest evil in New Age thought, for it is counterproductive to its highest ideals.

Borrowing from Taoism, the New Age is devoted to the metaphysical concept of balance (the concept of yin and yang) between the microcosm (man) and the macrocosm (the universe). Proper balance creates the

⁵⁶⁶⁸ Capra, Frijof, *The Tao of Physics*, p.17

⁵⁶⁶⁹ Miller, Elliot, *The New Myth, A Critique of New Age Ideology*, p.25

⁵⁶⁷⁰ Davidson, Mark, *Uncommon Sense*, p.159

⁵⁶⁷¹ Miller, Elliot, *The New Myth, A Critique of New Age Ideology*, p.25

sense of perfect unity, contrary to the notion of separation, with the "universal life energy." New Age spiritual technologies serve to induce the sense of metaphysical balance centred in the human heart.

Human autonomy transcends all previous humanistic notions of the term in the New Age, taking on cosmic proportions. The mythic themes of the New Age inform the spiritual adventurer that there is no greater power beyond his own consciousness. The Self is ultimate reality as expressed by MacLean: "We already know everything. The knowingness of our divinity is the highest intelligence."⁵⁶⁷² Celebrated guru Swami Muktananda also echoes the mythic motifs of the New Age: "Kneel to your own self. Honour and worship your own being. God dwells in you as you."^{5673 5674}

Post-apostolic church

After exposure to such occultic drivel, there is need, perhaps, to return to tracing the Christian church, where it appears in a highly transitional state about the time of Irenæus.⁵⁶⁷⁵ This was the time of the adoption of a number of apostate beliefs, which came in but gradually, and were centred round the churches at Rome, Alexandria and Carthage, but principally Rome. Irenæus held to many correct and true doctrines, for, in fact, he had been taught by Polycarp, but amalgamated with these was a growing list of compromises with heretical beliefs, so departing from those of the apostolic and sub-apostolic church. These included:

1. The elevation and succession of Episcopalian bishops;
2. A hegemony based on Episcopalian principles;
3. Possibly the hegemony of Rome, although this is highly controversial and almost certainly erroneous, resting, as it does, on a very poor Latin translation of the lost Greek original section of Irenæus' five part work;⁵⁶⁷⁶
4. A belief in infant baptism;
5. The strange belief that Christ lived until he was fifty years old, apparently deriving from a too-hasty, aberrant reading of a verse in John,⁵⁶⁷⁷ and that in so doing he brought sanctification to all ages of man;
6. A passion for unity among widely disparate views; and,

⁵⁶⁷² Minnery, Tim, *Unplugging the New Age*, p.2; quoting Maclean, Shirley.

⁵⁶⁷³ Minnery, Tim, *Unplugging the New Age*, p.2

⁵⁶⁷⁴ McRoberts, Kerry D., *New Age or Old Lie*, pp.22-26,35,36,63,64,66-68

⁵⁶⁷⁵ c.180AD; whose name means 'Makepeace.'

⁵⁶⁷⁶ Irenæus, *The Refutation and Overthrow of Science So Called*, as can be seen when comparing the Edinburgh translation with that of Berington and Kirk.

⁵⁶⁷⁷ John 8:57

7. The mutation of the Agapé⁵⁶⁷⁸ into an early fore-runner of a type of 'Eucaryst,' involving bread and wine as symbols of Christ. Actually, the Agapé quickly became so raucous and riotous a full-scale feast, especially among the former Gentile members of the church, that it had to be curtailed, and it quickly fell out of use in the true church. Paul's admonition of such immoderate behaviour was actually issued in relation to the improper conduct of the Lord's Supper: *'When you come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's supper. For in eating everyone taketh before other his own supper: and one is hungry, and another is drunk. What? Have ye no houses to eat and drink in? or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that have not? Shall I praise you in this? I praise you not. Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord.'*⁵⁶⁷⁹ The first recorded direct connection of the 'Eucaryst' with the Lord's Supper, or Passover, does not appear until early in the fourth-century, and then only in the apostate church. It is also mentioned in the Didaché, generally assumed to be of second-century provenance.

A then broadly concurrent form of sacral meal is described by Golb: 'Similarities to early Christian practices and ceremonies were among the first features of the scrolls to gain wide attention. One of the most important of these is the sacral meal. Passages from two of the most important scrolls describe communal meals in detail, the first of these being in the 'Manual of Discipline.'⁵⁶⁸⁰ We will recall that, according to this passage, whenever ten men of the Council of the Yahad were to come together for a meal, they would all take their seats in their appointed rank. The priest officiating over the group was to pronounce blessings over bread and wine before anyone might eat. A similar passage appears in the so-called Messianic Rule, whose apocalyptic tenor is more pronounced. Here, the Messiah of Israel himself is depicted as being present at the meal; it is still, however, the priest who says the blessing over the bread and wine. In the New Testament a similar scene appears. According to passages in the three Synoptic Gospels, and one in the writings of Paul,⁵⁶⁸¹ Jesus took bread and wine at the Passover meal before his crucifixion and said a blessing, then distributed these items to his disciples with the command that they should *'do this as often as you come together, in remembrance of me.'*⁵⁶⁸² In the scrolls, it is the priest who presides over a communal meal (but not the Passover ceremony) and pronounces the blessings, while in the Gospels, it is Jesus (treated in Hebrews chapters five through seven as a priestly figure) who presides at a Passover meal.

While the similarities between the meals are worthy of attention, the differences are of course also important. The two Hebrew passages envision a well-ordered meal where a strict hierarchy is observed, where-

⁵⁶⁷⁸ a 'love feast' often but not always partaken of by the early church, especially in Gentile areas, and based on Godly love.

⁵⁶⁷⁹ I Cor 11:20-22,27

⁵⁶⁸⁰ *Manual of Discipline*, 6.2-8

⁵⁶⁸¹ I Cor 11:23-26

⁵⁶⁸² Luke 22:19 (better with omission of the comma, which does not appear in the original Greek); I Cor 11:24,25

as the New Testament passages have no such order in mind. The two scrolls present none of the symbolism of bread for flesh, or of wine for blood, that appears in the New Testament passages. On the other hand, one may only speculate about the degree of similarity of the meals of the Tannaitic purity-brethren, the friends,⁵⁶⁸³ to the one described in the 'Manual of Discipline'; there are, unfortunately, no rabbinical texts that actually divulge how these latter ceremonies were conducted.⁵⁶⁸⁴

Later groupings

'Meanwhile, the real Christian church, still alive in Asia Minor, but progressively more and more persecuted by the Roman Empire and its new state religion, fled into mountainous Armenia for its very preservation, where it surfaced under the name of the Paulicians, etc.

Much later came the era which comprises the Waldensians (Vallensians), admirably covered in two books.⁵⁶⁸⁵ From these and other writings, it is clear that the Waldensians, whose ancient motto was taken from *'the light shineth in darkness,'*⁵⁶⁸⁶ held to the following:

1. Claimed no earthly leaders;
2. The rejection of the ecumenical times to pray;
3. Prayers were considered more effective when in secret;
4. The rejection of all customs not ordained in the Scriptures;
5. The rejection of pilgrimages as useless;
6. Objection to ecclesiastical burials;
7. Rejection of the songs of the Roman Catholic Church;
8. The literal interpretation of the Sermon on the Mount;
9. Refusal to swear or bear arms;
10. A tenacious adherence to the ten commandments; leading to,

⁵⁶⁸³ or Hebrew: haberim.

⁵⁶⁸⁴ Golb, Norman, *Who Wrote the Dead Sea Scrolls?* p.371; a major difference not brought out clearly above is that the Passover is kept once a year, whereas the Tannaim meals were much more frequent. There may well be some confusion here between the weekly Agapé (outgoing love characteristic of God) feasts and the annual Passover on the part of Golb.

⁵⁶⁸⁵ Comba, Emelio, *History of the Waldenses in Italy from their Origin to the Reformation*; Jones, William, *The History of the Christian church, from the Birth of Christ to the XIII Century; Including the Very Interesting Account of the Waldenses and Albigenses*

⁵⁶⁸⁶ John 1:5; Latin: lux lucit in tenebris.

11. The refusal to make images; and,

12. The keeping of the Sabbath in the North Italian Alps.

As to the Cathars, the first point worthy of note is that the word 'Cathar' is largely generic, meaning 'pure,' and so can cover a remarkably wide range of beliefs. Those known to history as the Cathars were extremely ascetic and dedicated, living mainly in the Languedoc region of France. They were poor, weak, humble, and suffered the hatred of the world because they believed the Roman Catholic Church was in league with the Devil. They also had links to the Albigenses based around the town of Albi. Their detractors, in the Roman Catholic Church, labelled them as 'heretics,' and, seeking to circumscribe the alleged 'heresy' in a simple description, usually decreed it to be a form of 'Gnostic dualism.' In the thus ascribed heretical 'dualistic' belief, there are said to be two gods: one good; one bad. The good god created the soul and things heavenly; the bad god, the Devil, a physical god, created the earth and things temporal. In addition, Gnosticism, in its various manifestations, held that there was a 'spark' of divine gnosis in some people. To the Romans this was elitist, running contrary to a universal church which claimed control of the keys of heaven. After an unsuccessful attempt at persuasion,⁵⁶⁸⁷ allied to the threat of excommunication and an 'after-life in hell,' and following upon the murder of a papal legate to the Cathars,⁵⁶⁸⁸ Pope Innocent III decreed that that these perverse and wicked people had to be crushed. The pope's view was expressed in the terms that Catharism was an ingrained corruption of a damnable heresy, and, like ulcers which do not respond to treatment with dressing, must be cut out with a knife. There then followed the inevitable persecution and crusade, resulting in what can only be described as a 'bonfire of the heretics,' where the recusant Cathars went into the flames joyfully.

From this distance in time, the actual beliefs of the Languedoc Cathars are difficult to discern in detail, but, on balance, they do seem to have had some form of apostate root in Gnostic and Manichæan concepts. How much this had influenced their eventual beliefs is less than moot, however, and they should not be confused with the Waldensians, or others of the same general period, and their virulent opposition to the established universal church should not be seen as importing doctrinal purity, and neither should their joyfully walking into the flames. Even the deluded and apostate so-called Christians from North Africa, holding a mix of pagan and Christian beliefs, faced death in the Roman circuses in a similar vein. Apparently, Catharism had mystery at its core,⁵⁶⁸⁹ for the 'inner circle' to whom these secrets were revealed was termed perfecti, while the mass of their followers were termed credentes, the faithful vulgar. This structure, and its attendant beliefs, is described in the following terms: 'For not only were the sects styled Cathari (including a host of offshoots of eastern Manichæism), heretics, and reformers, but in their inner circles, dualists, believers in the existence of two supreme principles, the one a good principle, God, and the other an evil principle, the creator of the material world. But

⁵⁶⁸⁷ in 1204AD

⁵⁶⁸⁸ in 1208AD

⁵⁶⁸⁹ reported by *The Encyclopedia Americana*.

open profession was not made of this tenet; it was communicated only to the inner circle in the several Manichæan sects....to outsiders the adepts of the arcana of Catharism made profession of being strictly reformers of a corrupt ecclesiastical system, and of profound regard for the letter and spirit of the moral law as taught in the apostolic writings. As already said, they enthroned the evil principle of creator of the physical universe; they believed in the divine mission of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, that is, of the good principle; but with the Docetæ they denied that the Son of God had assumed human nature really, and held that his humanity was phantasmal only. In conformity with their tenet of a supreme principle of good and a supreme principle of evil, the initiates condemned as works of the flesh the sacraments of the church as a whole, and looked on the contract of marriage as sinful. They held absolute predestination: that all men belonged to one or other of two classes, those who will infallibly be saved, and those who cannot possibly attain holiness: hence their doctrine that an infant dying immediately after birth, if it belongs to the class of those predestined to be lost, is punished as is Judas in hell.⁵⁶⁹⁰

If even a mere fraction of this represents an accurate record of the beliefs of Catharism and related groups, then it was most certainly not Judæo-Christian. However, this be as it may, the problem for the established church was that such an onslaught failed to diminish or root out any of the variegated so-called heresy, for crusades invariably fail against 'heretics,' even when backed by papal plenary indulgences^{5691 5692} for the encouragement and 'protection' of active perpetrators. Only when the Dominican order, started with the express purpose of achieving this aim, was brought to bear, and allied to the Inquisition, was the ultimate objective of crushing the Cathars and others finally secured. This bloody crusade and its aftermath lasted, by all accounts, two decades,⁵⁶⁹³ and ended with the Cathars being completely wiped out. Others survived, such as the Waldenses, by fleeing to what appeared to be safe havens. In the instance of the Waldenses, they later entered into religious communion with the Calvinists, and suffered the onslaught of the established church against the Protestant reformers. They were extirpated in France, but managed to survive elsewhere. However, the protracted persecution led to the loss of almost all of their original beliefs and doctrines, and the more or less complete adoption of Calvinism.

Enigma

Looking at the bloody history of the Roman universal church, it is difficult to comprehend, in rational terms, why such unorthodox beliefs held by so few are perceived as being so threatening to a church which

⁵⁶⁹⁰ *The Encyclopedia Americana*, article 'Cathars.'

⁵⁶⁹¹ sale of indulgences: the pope is the supposed guardian of the 'celestial treasury' of the saints who have lived before and whose meritorious works are ready to be dispensed to earnest Roman Catholics. Later, it was decided to sell indulgences for pecuniary gain.

⁵⁶⁹² a much more recent example being the *Enchiridion of Indulgences*, 1968.

⁵⁶⁹³ 1209–29

considers itself the sole holder and possessor of the 'truth.' However, for an established, universal church, heresy is often seen as a threat, presumably in part because it is held to negate the claim to homogeneous universality. Viewed from the heights of the ruling establishment, a heretic potentially infects everyone he meets, and so something has to be done to remove the threat, irrespective of its specific taxonomy, and any inherent worth it may hold. And this is before any consideration is given to the underlying driver of the views and the power of the established church.

Roman Catholic Canon Law⁵⁶⁹⁴ imports the conflation of error and heresy, codifying what has long been a fundamental confusion in the Roman church's view of Judæo-Christianity and all other beliefs deemed inimical to the Roman. The phraseology used by Pius XII gives a measure of the depth of the malaise evident in this cauldron of intrigue, apostasy, and damnable heresy: 'Flee also those errors which more or less approach heresy....keep also the constitutions and decrees by which such evil opinions are proscribed and forbidden by the Holy See.'

The frequent charge of 'elitism' made against those whom Rome viewed as heretical sectarians, especially from a universal church which considers itself the sole holder and possessor of the 'truth,' is incongruent. The pressing desire to control and hold captive as a ransom the only means of salvation is driven by man's insatiable lust for power. The financial and temporal 'keys to the kingdom' are much coveted. In these circumstances, any rival 'elitism,' irrespective of whether perceived or real, is taken as a serious threat. Elitism, however, is found in virtually every religious belief and creed, and lies at the very core of the world's continuing religious strife. It is the 'unique selling proposition' of many religious sects and cults, where promises of divine protection while on earth, release from 'bondage under God's Law,' the certainty of eternal life, and many such similar things are held to be for the benefit only of those few granted 'enlightenment'—the fortunate members of the clique.

Such false assurance and security, wherein the 'elite' or the 'elect' are encouraged to view themselves as saved and protected, usually irrespective of belief and conduct, or largely so, while the vast bulk of mankind is considered to be left with the terrifying prospect of exhibiting at the last only a certain calorific value, propagates a control regime every bit as oppressive as the dogmas and fulminations of the universal church which 'the enlightenment' so derided and sought to replace. In fact, the cults do nothing other than replicate the great whore; a whore that has proved to be a very popular mould. Irrespective of flavour, all forms of man's organised religion are fearfully oppressive.

⁵⁶⁹⁴ Latin: Codex Juris Canonici, 1917AD; Canon 1324

Renaissance & Reformation

'This historical account now leads to the Pre-Reformation period, when the Bible started to become much more widely available through the printing press,⁵⁶⁹⁵ and to become so in the languages of the people. John Wycliffe,⁵⁶⁹⁶ a noted English scholar, was the first to translate the Bible into the English language. Jan Hus⁵⁶⁹⁷ in Prague was greatly influenced by the work of Wycliffe and his work led to the establishment of a group of Sabbath-keepers in eastern Europe. Like so many taking thought in the past, Hus was excommunicated from the Roman church and subsequently executed.⁵⁶⁹⁸ The work of Wycliffe and Hus laid part of the foundations leading to the outbreaks of Sabbath-keeping and adherence to literal biblical truth from the fourteenth-century onwards. The influence of a group known as the Lollards, formed in Germany, eventually brought the Word of God to the British Isles in the language of the populace, and in relatively wide-scale form in comparison with former times.

Elsewhere, and much later, *The Jewish Quarterly Review* contained a review article discussing the part the seventh-day Sabbath plays in different religions: 'The celebration of the Sabbath is as much a common religious institution, as one of the most obvious marks of distinction between Judaism and Christianity. On the one hand, the whole Christian world observes each seventh day as a hallowed day of rest, thus to some extent pointing from week to week in the most solemn and in the most general and public manner, to the origin of Christianity: on the other hand, it is just by means of this Sabbath celebration—by ordaining that the Sabbath should be observed on a different day from that on which the people of Israel and the founders of Christianity themselves kept it—that Christianity has set itself in conscious and intentional opposition to the first possessors and inheritors of this great institution. Thus what was the mark of uniformity became a mark of diversity, and the separate observance of the seventh day developed into the most effective cause of separation between the Christian community and the adherents of the Jewish faith.'⁵⁶⁹⁹

The same review article then discusses some Christian people in Poland and Russia in the sixteenth-century who kept the Sabbath: 'people called the Subotniki or Sabbotniki; all of these sects belonged to the Russian sect, Molokani or milk drinkers, and all of these sects displayed a Judaising tendency.' Chief Rabbi Kohn, of Hungary, says of the Puritans: 'Several leaders and preachers of the Puritans have re-transferred the rest day from Sunday to Saturday.'⁵⁷⁰⁰ And of the Bohemians and the English: 'In Bohemia Sabbatarians sprung up as early as 1520. Such Sabbatarians, or similar sects, we meet about 1545 among the Quakers in England.'

⁵⁶⁹⁵ e.g., Gutenberg Press, 1450AD

⁵⁶⁹⁶ 1320–84AD

⁵⁶⁹⁷ Huss, John.

⁵⁶⁹⁸ burnt at the stake, 1415AD.

⁵⁶⁹⁹ *The Jewish Quarterly Review*, July 1890 edition; review article by Abrahams and Montefiori.

⁵⁷⁰⁰ Kohn, Chief Rabbi of Hungary, *Sabbatarians in Transylvania*, p.38, 1894AD edition; in 1534AD

All of these people, generically called Sabbatarians, spread their faith through preaching and, in many cases, song. From their hymns it has been found that they not only kept the Sabbath but also the annual holy days of the Bible. They also helped feed the poor and believed in moderate living. [Allegedly,] they sang with joy of their anticipation of the Second Coming and the millennial reign of Christ on earth. [How much of this actually accords with Judæo-Christianity, of course, is difficult to discern at this distance].

The Renaissance had ushered in a yearning for learning and a zeal for questioning formerly held positions, free the coercion of the Roman church. The continually changing world of the Reformation and Post-Reformation period opened up opportunities for the true Christian church to flourish, firstly in England, and then in America. Churchill said: 'New ideas were in debate, not only on religious doctrine and church government, but on the very nature and foundations of political power. In the great turmoil of Europe, silence was impossible. Men talked: secretly to one another, openly in their writings, which were now printed in a thousand copies, kindling excitement and curiosity wherever they were carried. Even if it were granted that Affairs of State could only be lawfully debated by those called thereto, common men could still search the Scriptures, and try the doctrines of the church, its government, its rites and ceremonies, by the words of the Evangelist and the Apostles.'⁵⁷⁰¹

The England of Henry VIII and Elizabeth I provided a limited but stable haven for the propagation of the true faith, always assuming, of course, that it did not at any time threaten the established church or the English crown. The dispute between Henry VIII and the pontiff over the need or otherwise for his consent to Henry's divorce and remarriage led to a serious rift with Rome. The miraculous escape of Britain from the Armada of Philip II of Spain⁵⁷⁰² and the destruction of the core of his one thousand-ship fleet brought about a feeling of renewed reliance on God. One of the medals struck to commemorate the great victory bears the inscription, 'God blew and they were scattered.'⁵⁷⁰³ It was in these peculiar precursory circumstances that the conditions necessary for the propagation of the true faith came to be evident.

About this time, a number of people began to write and campaign in favour of the Sabbath and on the duty of the State to impose nothing contrary to the Word of God. Among these people was John Traske. Another, Theophilus Brabourne, wrote a book where he argued: 'That the Lord's Day (Sunday) is not the Sabbath Day by Divine Institution' but 'That the seventh day Sabbath is now in force.'⁵⁷⁰⁴

⁵⁷⁰¹ Churchill, Winston, *History of the English Speaking Peoples*, Vol. 2, 'The New World,' pp.105,106

⁵⁷⁰² in 1588AD

⁵⁷⁰³ Latin: Afflavit Deus et Dissipantur.

⁵⁷⁰⁴ in 1628AD; Brabourne, Theophilus, later wrote, *A Defense of that Most Ancient and Sacred Ordinance of God, the Sabbath Day*.

America

However, by the latter half of the seventeenth-century,⁵⁷⁰⁵ a new wave of religious persecution had begun with John James being hanged, drawn, and quartered for his preaching the observance of the seventh-day. Freedom to openly worship on the Sabbath was only just beginning in seventeenth-century England, with progress seeming so slow that it appeared all but intractable, so it was clear that questioning people would have to find a safer haven, a place where they could grow and prosper without harassment; this despite the Magna Carta.

Roger Williams had gone to the Massachusetts Bay Colony of the New World.⁵⁷⁰⁶ While he was excited by the 'wonderful, searching, disputing and dissenting times' in which he lived,⁵⁷⁰⁷ he soon found himself in profound disagreement with the leaders of the Puritan-governed colony who held that the civil government had a divinely ordained prerogative to impose its religious views on the people. Williams recognised the right of the duly constituted state to enforce public morality under the last six commandments of the Decalogue but maintained the right of absolute freedom for religious conscience. And while he had strong personal convictions, he did not believe that any group had a monopoly of the truth.

Williams was banished for his non-conformist ideas, and formed in Rhode Island a small and liberal state allowing religious freedom.⁵⁷⁰⁸ At that time people predicted only a short existence for such experiments in democracy as universal suffrage, universal eligibility to office, annual change of rulers, and full religious freedom. 'But not only have these ideas and these forms of government maintained themselves here, but precisely from this little State have they extended themselves throughout the United States.'⁵⁷⁰⁹

Williams sailed to England⁵⁷¹⁰ to obtain a formal charter for a new colony. As a direct result of this important document, Rhode Island attracted two of the most persecuted groups: Quakers and Baptists. In the surrounding colonies, they were treated with the intolerance from which they had sought escape when in England: floggings, imprisonment, and even hangings, but here it was different. Rhode Island also attracted others, being the only New England colony of the seventeenth-century to tolerate a permanent Jewish community, the community which built the very first synagogue in North America.⁵⁷¹¹

Around that time laws had been enacted in England making it illegal to hold religious gatherings on the seventh-day, and thus it was to this tiny but potentially fertile field of religious freedom that a representative of

⁵⁷⁰⁵ principally the AD1660s.

⁵⁷⁰⁶ in 1631AD

⁵⁷⁰⁷ Morgan, Edmund S., *The Church and the State*, p.3

⁵⁷⁰⁸ in 1636AD

⁵⁷⁰⁹ Gervinus, *An Introduction to the History of the Nineteenth Century*; quoted by Belcher, *Religious Denominations*, p.153

⁵⁷¹⁰ in 1643AD

⁵⁷¹¹ in 1658AD

the beleaguered Sabbatarian churches of England came Stephen Mumford.⁵⁷¹² Both he and his wife Ann had been converted to the seventh-day Sabbath in Tewkesbury, England,⁵⁷¹³ where they had been members of the Baptist church. Although Baptists of the seventeenth-century shared many beliefs with the Sabbatarians, a notable difference was the Sabbath, with Baptists overwhelmingly adhering to the commonly accepted practice of worshipping on the first day of the week.⁵⁷¹⁴

According to McGeachy⁵⁷¹⁵ Stephen Mumford had become a member of Bell Lane Sabbatarian Church in Tewkesbury, and remained so until he left for America. Based on the available evidence, the Mumfords were among the first Christian Sabbath-keepers to arrive in America.⁵⁷¹⁶

There were two established churches in Newport, Rhode Island at that time: the Quaker church on Farewell Street and the First Baptist church, which overlooked the harbour. Having been involved with the Baptist church for most of their lives, the Mumfords began fellowshiping with the Baptists in Newport, although they continued to observe the Sabbath in their home. Within a few years, nine members of the Baptist church had begun to observe the Sabbath. This upset the Baptist ministers, who preached that the Sabbath-keepers 'had gone back to Moses.' Four of the nine Sabbath-keepers were persuaded to return to Sunday worship.

This created an immediate dilemma for the fledgling group of Sabbath-keepers, and so they withdrew from fellowship with the Baptist church on the grounds that true fellowship with those who had rejected the Sabbath was completely impossible to countenance. Several letters were written to the group by the Sabbatarian church in England, among which was the following, excerpted from a letter: 'My dear friends, As for those that have drawn back from the Sabbath to profaneness, after light and establishment therein, yourselves must not take pleasure in them, but must withdraw yourselves from them as sinful and disorderly persons; and if the church will hold communion with those apostates from the truth, you ought then to desire to be fairly dismissed from the church; which, if the church refuse, you ought to withdraw yourselves pure, with all humility, meekness, and brokenness of heart.'⁵⁷¹⁷

In the latter part of the seventeenth-century,⁵⁷¹⁸ seven people entered into a covenant to form a new church in America. A plaque in the old Sabbatarian meeting house in Newport honouring this event, says, in part: 'To the memory of William Hiscox, Stephen Mumford, Samuel Hubbard, Roger Baster, Sister Hubbard, Sister Mumford, Sister Rachel Langworthy. Who for greater freedom in the exercise of religious faith in the observance of God's Holy Sabbath—the Seventh Day of the week—reluctantly severed their connection with

⁵⁷¹² in 1664AD

⁵⁷¹³ c.1660AD

⁵⁷¹⁴ a sub-division is called the Seventh-Day Baptists.

⁵⁷¹⁵ McGeachy, James, *The Times of Stephen Mumford*, published by the Seventh-Day Baptist Historical Society, 1964AD.

⁵⁷¹⁶ Mumford's house still stands in Newport to this day, and is called the Wanton-Lyman-Hazard house.

⁵⁷¹⁷ letter by Stennet, Edward, dated 6 March, 1670AD, cited by Backus, Isaac, *The History of the Baptists and The Seventh Day Baptist Memorial*, Vol. I, pp.27,28

⁵⁷¹⁸ Dec., 1671AD

the parent church, the First Baptist church of Newport, and entered into a church covenant, the twenty-third day of December, 1671[AD].⁵⁷¹⁹ William Hiscox became the first minister of the new church. Burdick says: 'The church had neither official name nor articles of faith other than the Bible.'⁵⁷¹⁹

There are several references in the old minutes to the generic name church of God, although they were most commonly called 'The Church of Jesus Christ Keeping the Commandments.' They maintained a strong belief in water baptism for adults and did not baptise children. They accepted the doctrine of the 'laying on of hands'⁵⁷²⁰—a matter over which the Baptists in Rhode Island were divided.

Clarke claims that they were strictly non-Trinitarian, rejecting the popular viewpoint of that day: 'I conclude that they all believe in one God, the Father and maker of all things [sic], sin excepted, and in one Lord Jesus Christ, that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and also in the Holy Ghost, as the operative power or spirit of God. But there are few, if any, of this denomination, as I conceive, who believe that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are three absolute distinct persons, coequal, coessential, and coeternal gods, and yet but one God; as such an idea would be in the face of Scripture, and repugnant to right reason.'⁵⁷²¹ They also refused to use the title 'Reverend' for their ministers, since they observed that the Scriptures show that only one God is Reverend.

Supportive accounts of the early American Sabbath-keepers, differing only slightly from that above, are given by such as Sprague,⁵⁷²² a colleague of Dugger,⁵⁷²³ who claimed to have been directly descended from the Pilgrims of the Mayflower, and that he well knew their religious beliefs. He claimed that they were strict Sabbath-keepers on the seventh-day of the week, rather than on Sunday.

'Just when or how the Sabbath truth first came to America from England was not known. We have learned, however, since that was written, that there were Sabbath-keepers among the [early] Pilgrims.'⁵⁷²⁴ Doctor Main also stated that early [on]⁵⁷²⁵ it was the occasion of much earnest discussion in New England. Just who, may we ask, were the folk who at that time engaged in much earnest Sabbath discussion? Were they not the Puritan Sabbath-keepers?

This dates Sabbath agitation about eighteen years prior to the London Seventh Day Baptist's sending of Stephen Mumford to America. He arrived at Newport, Rhode Island,⁵⁷²⁶ and through his teaching a number of first-day Baptists embraced his sentiments, and accordingly, they covenanted together in a Sabbatarian church organisation [as has been seen].⁵⁷²⁷ This group later, when the Seventh-Day Baptists organised their general

⁵⁷¹⁹ Burdick, William Lewis, *Bi-Centennial Celebration*; written in 1908AD for the 200th anniversary of the Hopkinton church.

⁵⁷²⁰ presumably for healing, and not for ordination, for the latter would be in doctrinal error.

⁵⁷²¹ Clarke, Henry, *History of the Sabbatarians or Seventh-Day Baptists in America*, published 1811AD

⁵⁷²² Sprague, Hugh.

⁵⁷²³ q.v. inf.

⁵⁷²⁴ in 1620AD

⁵⁷²⁵ as early as 1646AD

⁵⁷²⁶ in 1664AD

⁵⁷²⁷ in 1671AD

conference,⁵⁷²⁸ was considered a definite part of it. Some of this history may also be ascertained from Felt.⁵⁷²⁹
5730

With the arrival of William Gibson from the Sabbatarian church in England to become the second pastor after the death of William Hiscox,⁵⁷³¹ the linkage between the Sabbatarian church of the Old World and that of the New World was completed. The church in Hopkinton, considered a part of the Newport congregation until the start of the eighteenth-century,⁵⁷³² grew to become one of the then largest in America, with over one thousand baptised members.⁵⁷³³

In the early decades of the nineteenth-century, a definite pattern of movement of Sabbath-keepers occurred with the advancing frontier. Many people were moving west either as a result of adverse conditions at home, as was the case of Sabbath-keepers, or the lure of the region ahead. The newcomers, comprising of all denominations, flowed into the southern counties of Michigan and Wisconsin, the northern counties of Illinois, and parts of the northern and central areas of Indiana.

The American War of Independence brought with it special trials and tribulations for those who did not subscribe to warfare and bloodshed, but, surprisingly, an even greater threat was to emerge shortly after the cessation of hostilities. The clergy of many faiths began to sound an alarm about the increase in immorality and godlessness that had developed during the war years. As a consequence, Sabbatarians, along with other clergy, supported a bill, one of its provisions stated that it is, 'Peculiarly necessary to make some effectual provision for the orderly and religious observance of the Lord's-day: for the prevention and punishment of the profanation of the name of God, and every species of impious imprecation.'⁵⁷³⁴

These churches of south-eastern Pennsylvania comprehended too late the threat to seventh-day observance. Over much protest, even from some of other faiths, the 'Blue Law'⁵⁷³⁵ was set in motion. Pfeffer, a noted constitutional lawyer, wrote: 'Enforcing Sunday laws against those observing Saturday....would seem clearly to be discriminatory and inconsistent with the American tradition of fair play. Moreover, it seems as clearly to restrict the religious liberty of one whose conscience requires him to observe a day other than Sunday as holy time; and it is hardly a sufficient answer to say—as some courts have—that the law does not compel him to violate his conscience by working on Saturday.'⁵⁷³⁶ Subsequent restrictive 'Blue Laws' constantly harassed Sabbath-keeping churches as they spread inland from the eastern seaboard.

⁵⁷²⁸ in 1802AD

⁵⁷²⁹ Felt, Joseph Barlow, *Ecclesiastical History of New England*, Vol. 1., p.593

⁵⁷³⁰ Main, Arthur Elwell, *Seventh-Day Baptists in Europe and America*, Vol. 1 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁵⁷³¹ in 1704AD

⁵⁷³² in 1707AD

⁵⁷³³ by 1816AD

⁵⁷³⁴ *Suppression of Vice and Immorality*, before the Pennsylvania legislature.

⁵⁷³⁵ of 1794AD

⁵⁷³⁶ Pfeffer, Leo, *Church, State, and Freedom*, p.235

Division & apostasy

In 1831[AD], William Miller, by dint of his study of the Scriptures, and armed with a small amount of prophetic knowledge, vigorously preached from the books of Daniel and Revelation 'the soon-coming Second Advent.' Between the years of 1833 and 1844[AD], Miller, a student of prophecy, who received his licence to preach from a Baptist church, stirred many thousands into believing that the Lord would return to earth in 1843–44[AD]. His conclusions were largely based on an erroneous importation of meaning into Daniel⁵⁷³⁷ respecting the two-thousand, three hundred days,⁵⁷³⁸ which he believed were symbolic and stood for years, counted from a set historical date instead of literal days, with a secondary meaning. He believed the earth was the sanctuary, and that it would be cleansed by fire when Christ returned. The inevitable disappointment⁵⁷³⁹ was great, and caused much consternation.

Miller, after the disappointment, honestly admitted that he had made a mistake, but there were others who had heard him preach and who believed that he was right with his figures. Thereupon they made a special study of the sanctuary question, comparing the earthly with the heavenly, and decided, wholly erroneously, that Jesus at His ascension to heaven did not sit down at the right hand of God in the Most Holy Apartment, but entered and remained in the first or Holy Place until that year,⁵⁷⁴⁰ when He entered the Most Holy, there to cleanse the sanctuary, blot out sins, make a final atonement, and start the investigative judgement. These still are, in general, the beliefs of those who shortly after were to become known as Seventh-Day Adventists.

In addition, while it can be said that when the date he predicted came and went without the Second Coming, and many became discouraged, there were those who listened and believed in the pre-millennial return of Christ, and became Sabbatharians during or after that time.⁵⁷⁴¹

Over this period, a young woman named Ellen G. Harmon White had begun to influence many Sabbatharians in the 'Advent' movement. A large number of Miller's followers accepted her visions as inspiration from God; visions she had while in prayer. Her visions firmly convinced the remaining Adventists that their movement was God's end-time remnant. She also confirmed Edson's⁵⁷⁴² interpretation because of a vision she had had.⁵⁷⁴³ In time, White was proclaimed a prophetess whose Unitarian revelations were held to be equal with Scripture.

White also claimed that the time of the current dispensation closed in 1844[AD], and that thereafter there was no more access to the kingdom of heaven, save for those included in what was to become the

⁵⁷³⁷ Dan 8:13,14

⁵⁷³⁸ 'evening-mornings.'

⁵⁷³⁹ in 1844AD

⁵⁷⁴⁰ 1844AD

⁵⁷⁴¹ in 1845AD

⁵⁷⁴² viz., another expositor.

⁵⁷⁴³ in Feb., 1845AD

Adventist sect. She was also responsible for a substantial part of the development of the apostate doctrine of the 'secret or clandestine rapture to heaven' which has so pervaded the so-called 'born again Christian' movement ever since.⁵⁷⁴⁴

As a result of this, amongst those who lived around the middle of the nineteenth-century, and who believed in the Second Coming, there began what was to be called the Seventh-Day Adventists. In one of her visions, Mrs. White finally asserted that the name 'church of God' was no longer to be used. Rather, she proclaimed that the name Seventh-Day Adventists carried the true features of the faith she espoused.⁵⁷⁴⁵

In response to this reasoning, Waterman Phelps, an advocate of the name church of God, was quoted⁵⁷⁴⁶ and reported by Kiesz: 'I think it not difficult to determine what name they will have, when we consult: *'Having his father's name in their foreheads'*⁵⁷⁴⁷ and, *'I will write upon them the name of my God.'*⁵⁷⁴⁸ And with this agrees the apostle in all his epistles. They are addressed to the church of God.⁵⁷⁴⁹ Now if we have the right to depart from the simplicity [sic] of the gospel in one instance, have we not in another?'⁵⁷⁵⁰

A brief resume of some of White's wilder claims and pronouncements will give some flavour of the particular apostasy introduced by that woman:

1. Claimed angelic visitations;
2. Claimed transits to the new Jerusalem;
3. Claimed views of God, Christ, and Satan;
4. The statement that God has rejected all the wicked, and it is now (in 1847AD) not possible for them to be saved;
5. The time for salvation of sinners passed in 1844AD—this marked the introduction of her 'shut door' doctrine;
6. As a result, conversions subsequent to 1844AD were deemed spurious;
7. The Tribulation had actually started in 1849AD;
8. Eternal life can cease, or waste away;

⁵⁷⁴⁴ surprisingly, it appears that as early as 373AD Ephraem the Syrian had a version of the doctrine of a clandestine rapture to heaven, prior to and avoiding the Great Tribulation.

⁵⁷⁴⁵ White, Ellen G., *Testimonies of the Church*, pp.223,224

⁵⁷⁴⁶ *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*

⁵⁷⁴⁷ Rev 14:1

⁵⁷⁴⁸ Rev 3:12

⁵⁷⁴⁹ Acts 20:28; I Cor 1:2,10:32,11:22; Gal 1:13; I Tim 3:5

⁵⁷⁵⁰ Kiesz, John, *A History of the Church of God (Seventh Day)*, pp.13,14

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9. The Sabbath was not a marker or test of God's people before 1844AD;
 10. Eating swine's flesh is not against God's will;
 11. Surprisingly, in light of the last, preaching against the consuming of flesh-meats, butter, spices, rich cakes, mince pies, all exciting substances used as articles of food, tea, coffee, and large amounts of salt, and also such things as snuff, spirituous liquors, and tobacco. Flesh-meat eating was revived, however, once it became clear that the general health of their community was suffering badly from what was, essentially, owing to an impoverished vegetable diet;
 12. That to speak against her visions was to speak against the Holy Ghost;
 13. Her visions, and not an appeal to Scripture, settled doctrinal and related matters which were in contention; and that,
 14. An ancient union of men with animals, which she termed 'amalgamation,' resulted in the production of certain lower races of men; for example, the bushmen of Africa, and the 'greater darkey.'

White's irrational and bizarre behaviour resulted in her departure from the written and authoritative word of Scripture and her replacement of same by trust in impulses, impressions on the imagination, immediate suggestions, dreams, or supposed visions. In short, she thought herself divinely inspired. Not surprisingly for one labouring under such a burden of self-delusion and self-conceit,⁵⁷⁵¹ White's 'inspired' prophecies floundered in rapid order, as can be seen from this amazingly unsuccessful series of predictions of the Parousia:

1. The return of Christ in June, 1845AD, and when this failed to materialise;
2. The return of Christ in September, 1845AD, and when this failed to materialise;
3. Subsequent upon the arrival of a local pestilence in 1849AD, and when this failed to materialise;
4. Shortly after June, 1850AD, and, when this failed to materialise;

⁵⁷⁵¹ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol.1, p.245 (but the reader must substitute the feminine for the masculine in this instance):

'Self-conceit doubly affects a man's vision, for it renders him incapable of seeing himself as he really is, and incapable of seeing others as they really are. If a man is convinced of his own surpassing wisdom, he will never be able to realise his own foolishness; and if he is blind to everything except his own virtues, he will never be aware of his own faults. Whenever he compares himself with others, he will do so to his own advantage, and to their disadvantage. He will be forever incapable of self-criticism, and therefore forever incapable of self-improvement. The light in which he should see himself and see others will be darkness.'

5. Shortly after the conference in 1856AD, the last time-specific prediction she made in this regard: it failed too.

Certainly there is a consistency here, with many drawn to: *'When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him.'*⁵⁷⁵² By this time White's claims of doctrinal and prophetic infallibility simply lay in shreds.

Allied to this strange cult-of-the-false-visionary was the formation of the customary hierarchical form of organisation, where the top echelons were held to be above criticism. Their wrongs and shortcomings were to be for God alone to correct, for they were just too holy for ordinary men and women to have any involvement with them or in such high matters. The same appears to have extended to White's visionary failures.

'A crisis developed over the question of White's visions,⁵⁷⁵³ for many were troubled over what to make of them. To this was added dissatisfaction over her changing stand on the 'shut-door' policy and many other concerns. Non-believers frequently charged that her visions were being elevated above Scripture, and being made a test of doctrinal correctness and orthodoxy. In light of this, her husband, James, decided to cease printing her visions and pronouncements⁵⁷⁵⁴ and, as a result, Ellen White became a virtual recluse for a period of four years. During this time, which God had given her to repent, *'And I gave her space to repent of her fornication: and she repented not,'*⁵⁷⁵⁵ she certainly became discouraged: but not contrite, nor repentant.

Without the headline-grabbing visions, the movement stalled, and James White was replaced by Uriah Smith,⁵⁷⁵⁶ and his stand on the visions repudiated. Immediately, White rose to the opportunity, and the visions regained their former place: the prophetic role was secure. At any time thereafter, if questions arose as to the efficacy or validity of her visions, White had a ready-made rebuttal: the visions would be withdrawn if not heeded. Throughout the remainder of her life, Adventist leaders coveted her approval and submitted, in public at least, to the authority of her testimonies. Despite her occasional inconsistency and insensitivity, most members clung to the belief that she represented a divine channel of communication. To them, dramatic visions, supernatural healings, and revelations of secret sins were persuasive evidences of a true prophet.⁵⁷⁵⁷

Articles appearing in *The Review and Herald* of the time show that by the time the name of Seventh-Day Adventist was chosen for the organisation,⁵⁷⁵⁸ the name of the 'Church of God' had become a bone of contention, and the claimed 'visions' of Ellen G. White were being openly discussed and debated. When the Whites travelled over the country to recruit and organise, they found many independent Sabbath-keepers. Some of the

⁵⁷⁵² Deut 18:22

⁵⁷⁵³ in 1851AD

⁵⁷⁵⁴ in *The Review and Herald*.

⁵⁷⁵⁵ Rev 2:21

⁵⁷⁵⁶ in 1855AD

⁵⁷⁵⁷ Numbers, Ronald L., *Prophetess of Health: A Study of Ellen G. White*, pp.27-30 (slightly paraphrased for brevity)

⁵⁷⁵⁸ 1860AD

disappointment of the Whites lay in the refusal of numbers of local groups to join them, because of the church name, because of the 'visions,' and because some believed in no general conference at all. Of these scattered Sabbath-keepers, some later became known as the 'Church of God' in various localities, while some groups remained independent of all general organisations.

In 1886[AD], White wrote a book,⁵⁷⁵⁹ first copyrighted in 1888[AD]. While she claimed that it was by the grace of 'Divine revelation,' her book was later seen to be little more than an extensive copy of a book published ten years earlier.⁵⁷⁶⁰ Not only had she copied the text, she had even copied the illustrations, although in later editions, these were omitted, together with some of the more blatant textual cribbing. Under such plagiaristic circumstances, it comes as no surprise to find that no accreditation was ever afforded by White to the original author.

Accusations of gross plagiarism against White were by no means new, however, as, indeed, were those of multiple authorship and non-divine sourcing. Rea gives the breadth and depth of the malaise: 'From 1860[AD] onwards, some of her manuscripts for publication were claimed to be no more than copy produced by family members and close associates. J. N. Andrews, whose work also found its way into White's developing theology, noted its close correlation with parts of Milton's 'Paradise Lost.' John Harvey Kellogg, a long-time friend of the Whites, stated in connection with the common saying 'The Lord hath spoken,' uttered to bolster various and inconsistent doctrines and prophecies: 'I know that is fraud, that that is taking unfair advantage of people's minds and people's consciences....and I have no sympathy with that thing, and I told W. C. White so long ago.'

George W. Amadon, a friend of White and who was with the Review and Herald Publishing Association, stated in relation to White's *'How to Live'*: 'I know a large share of it was borrowed.'

W. W. Prescott, a great Adventist educator, founder of two colleges, and president of three, came out with the following damning statement: 'It seems to me that a large responsibility rests upon those of us who know that there are serious errors in our authorised books and yet make no special effort to correct them. The people and our average ministers trust us to furnish them with reliable statements, and they use our books with sufficient authority in their sermons, but we let them go on year after year asserting things which we know to be untrue.'⁵⁷⁶¹

Many were hounded out of the church over expressing their views on the wanting in White's writings. They were not allowed to speak: they left, or were driven from the church because of their knowledge and willingness to share it. Most of the 'bright lights' in the Adventist movement were ejected or withdrew themselves

⁵⁷⁵⁹ White, Ellen G., *The Great Controversy*

⁵⁷⁶⁰ Wylie, J. A., *The History of Protestantism*

⁵⁷⁶¹ Rea, T., *The White Lie!* chpt. 11 (slightly paraphrased for the sake of brevity)

over the question of the standing of White, and that of her Unitarian and other doctrines. Adventism is now Trinitarian.

It is significant that White suffered recurring illnesses almost throughout the length of her adult life. In the winter of 1853[AD] she suffered miserably from a variety of complaints including heart problems, inability to breathe while lying down, recurring fainting spells, and an inflammation of her left eyelid. Early in the following year she visited an itinerant doctor, as recorded by Numbers: 'The doctor was most discouraging: within three weeks, he predicted, she would suffer paralysis and then apoplexy. His prognosis was not far off the mark. In about three weeks she fainted and was unconscious for a day and a half. A week later an apparent stroke left the left side of her body paralysed, her head cold and numb, and her speech impaired.'⁵⁷⁶²

White suffered from a wide range of medical problems, starting with a childhood injury and extending throughout the rest of her life. She was subject to physical seizures that often accompanied what her followers came to call her open visions. At least five times she was stricken with paralysis, and many times she felt as if she was going to die. Under these physical conditions, especially during her earlier years, her mind was often in the same condition as her body, at times in the quicksand of despair and at times on the mountaintop of glory.

The physician Dr. William Russell, of Battle Creek Health Institute, who wrote expressing doubts as to the divine inspiration of her visions, concluded that the reason behind her claims was that: 'Mrs. White's visions are the result of diseased organisation or condition of the brain or nervous system.'

After the [AD]1850s, Ellen White no longer followed her former practice of calling in the brethren to pray for her recovery from illness, because she found that she was never healed outright as a result of such prayers. The reason is not hard to find. It is contained in Revelation: '*Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds. And I will kill her children with death.*'⁵⁷⁶³

In 1860[AD] White had a difficult delivery in the birth of her fourth child. This left her with a weak back and lame legs. By 1863[AD] her familiar fainting spells were recurring once or twice a day, and she suffered from a continual headache which usually restricted her sleep to about two hours per night. She continued to have periodic 'shocks of paralysis' along with 'dropsy and heart disease' which abated somewhat in 1864[AD]. Her lungs started to give cause for concern in 1869[AD]. She continued to have frequent illnesses until her death in 1915[AD]. According to Numbers: 'After a lifetime of illness and frequent brushes with death she finally succumbed to chronic myocarditis, complicated by arteriosclerosis and asthenia resulting from her hip injury.'

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⁵⁷⁶² Numbers, Ronald L., *Prophetess of Health: A Study of Ellen G. White*, p.36

⁵⁷⁶³ Rev 2:22,23

⁵⁷⁶⁴ Numbers, Ronald L., *Prophetess of Health: A Study of Ellen G. White*, p.200

Thus ended Ellen G. White, the 'Jezebel'⁵⁷⁶⁵ of Revelation, '*which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols.*'⁵⁷⁶⁶

Pollock comments in point, and sums the matter as follows: 'A woman taking the lead in divine things is very generally a sign of evil,⁵⁷⁶⁷ and it is significant that women have been notorious for this. Take the case of Mrs. White, a neurotic, hysterical woman, who was the chief prophetess of Seventh-Day Adventism; of Mrs. Eddy, likewise neurotic, hysterical, and a spiritualistic medium, the founder of Christian Science; of Mrs. Blavatsky, a spiritualist medium, the introducer of modern Theosophy; of Mrs. Besant, the erstwhile infidel, her successor; of Ann Lee, of Shaker fame, etc., etc.'⁵⁷⁶⁸

Nineteenth-century divisions

Other groups were spawned by Miller's teachings, maintaining a belief in the return of Christ, but having different theological viewpoints they chose to observe Sunday. The grouping known as the Russellites⁵⁷⁶⁹ which latterly fell under the influence of Rutherford, and which adopted the name 'Jehovah's Witnesses,'⁵⁷⁷⁰ had various beliefs over this period, but after the death of Russell,⁵⁷⁷¹ many doctrinal changes were introduced, throwing the organisation into turmoil and resulting in the formation of a number of large splinter groups. The splinter groups generally clung to Russell's doctrine of the mortality of the soul, but the rump demurred, forming the Jehovah's Witnesses, with many divergent or disparate doctrines, including that of the 'born again Christian' ultimately residing in heaven.

The basic divergence on the binding nature of the scriptural texts identifying the Sabbath marked the beginning of two separate organisations proclaiming significantly different messages in the middle of the nineteenth-century. The Church of God established headquarters in Stanberry, Missouri.⁵⁷⁷² A foundational leader, Elder Gilbert Cranmer, started a publication named, *The Hope of Israel*. Cranmer⁵⁷⁷³ was formerly one of those falsely claiming to have seen 'the falling of the stars,'⁵⁷⁷⁴ this deriving from quite woeful errors in interpretation with regard to, '*And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as the sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; And the stars of heaven fell unto*

⁵⁷⁶⁵ 'Jezebel' means 'Bel / Baal lives.'

⁵⁷⁶⁶ Rev 2:20; White's family lair, in Battlecreek, Michigan, U.S.A., where both she and her husband are buried, features a large stone pagan obelisk at its centre. Obelisks honour the sun-god Bel / Baal.

⁵⁷⁶⁷ Semiramis, a woman, started the panoply of mystery religions.

⁵⁷⁶⁸ Pollock, Algernon J., *Things which must Shortly Come to Pass*, p.49

⁵⁷⁶⁹ in 1844AD

⁵⁷⁷⁰ in 1931AD

⁵⁷⁷¹ in 1916AD

⁵⁷⁷² in 1862AAD

⁵⁷⁷³ 1814–1904AD

⁵⁷⁷⁴ in 1833AD

*the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain island were moved out of their places.*⁵⁷⁷⁵

Cranmer received light on the Sabbath question in 1843[AD], and heard the preaching of William Miller about that time. He believed the message, including the setting of the date for the Lord's coming in 1844[AD]. After the 'great disappointment,' he fully accepted the keeping of the Sabbath, learned of the 'visions,' and, for a while, worked with those who were later to become the Seventh-Day Adventists. However, because Cranmer could no longer endorse the 'shut door' message, nor the 'visions' teachings, and for other sound reasons, he severed his connection with the embryonic Seventh-Day Adventists. Thereafter, he preached 'as he felt that the Spirit directed.' The first issue of *The Hope of Israel*,⁵⁷⁷⁶ ran the following letter from Samuel Davidson: 'The account you gave of the churches of God in Michigan looking for the appearance of the Lord is to us very grateful information. We have often felt like Elijah when he made complaint against Israel, saying, *'I, even I only am left; and they seek my life to take it away.'*⁵⁷⁷⁷ We hope that it may prove now, as then, that the Lord hath reserved unto himself seven thousand in Israel; names that have not bowed the knee to Baal, and every mouth which has not kissed his image. It is very encouraging for us to find, that unknown to each other, there are now found to be bands of brethren and sisters, and many individuals, isolated from each other, in several different states, who have believed the same things, taken the same position, set out to seek the same objects, by the same means, and, so far as now appears, filled with the same spirit, and having the same hope of inheriting the kingdom of God; looking for it as nigh at hand.'⁵⁷⁷⁸

As to doctrine, the various churches of God of the time held that the Ten Commandments were in force, they rejected the immortality of the soul, they believed in the visible and personal Second Coming of Christ, and that Christ would reign on earth and not in heaven for the one thousand year period known as the Millennium of rest. They believed that the earth, rather than being desolate, would be restored to Edenic beauty. They also rejected the doctrine of the Trinity.

During the years of the American Civil War, there was an editorial consensus that it was wrong to kill one's fellow man. *The Hope of Israel*⁵⁷⁷⁹ reflected such in its comment on the tragic death of President Lincoln: 'We thank God that President Lincoln, kind and feeling as he was, and pious too, according to his idea of piety, did cause to be made such laws as would deliver God's saints from participating in war. To this end let us pray for our future rulers, a law-abiding and devoted people, to the end that we may be able to live quiet and peaceable lives in His honour and glory.'⁵⁷⁸⁰

⁵⁷⁷⁵ Rev 6:12-14 (sublinear emphasis added)

⁵⁷⁷⁶ dated 10 August, 1863AD

⁵⁷⁷⁷ I Kings 19:10,14

⁵⁷⁷⁸ *History of the Church (Seventh Day)*, pp.25,26

⁵⁷⁷⁹ 23 April, 1865AD issue.

⁵⁷⁸⁰ *History of the Church (Seventh Day)*, p.84

As time went by, an increasing organisational unity developed. A General Conference of the Church of God was formed,⁵⁷⁸¹ mainly from membership in Missouri, Iowa and Michigan. In its Constitution, this body stated as its purpose: 'To unite the different state conferences, to take general oversight over the wants of the cause, and supply the same; to secure unity of action and belief, so that we may be of one mind and one spirit.' In 1899[AD], in its annual meeting, the General Conference incorporated in the state of Missouri.

Twentieth-century developments

By the turn of the century, *The Hope of Israel* had been renamed *The Bible Advocate*. The church continued in general unity until 1931[AD] when growing dissatisfaction with Andrew N. Dugger, then leader,⁵⁷⁸² and his statement of official teachings of the church of God, led to various conferences becoming essentially autonomous.

Out of this came Herbert Armstrong with the Radio Church of God, who started broadcasting in Eugene, Oregon, in January, 1934[AD]. In the formative years he was closely tied to The Church of God (Seventh Day), actually continuing as an ordained minister until 1938[AD]. While early growth was sporadic, his work eventually prospered and grew like none before it, with *The Plain Truth* and *The Good News* publications, a plethora of booklets, and a lengthy correspondence course. As for Europe, Armstrong broadcast very forcefully on Radio Luxembourg, commencing in 1953[AD], and later, in the [AD]1960s, to the United Kingdom on the 'pirate' radio stations, Radio Caroline North, and Radio Caroline South. Three campuses were established: Pasadena in California, Big Sandy in Texas, and Brickett Wood in St. Albans, England. The latter was closed in the [AD]1970s, and the others in the [AD]1990s.⁵⁷⁸³

Linkage

The route and linkage between the 'elect' of the Thyatira era⁵⁷⁸⁴ that is, those who did not become inveigled in the seductions of the woman referred to as '*Jezebel*',⁵⁷⁸⁵ and those coming later in subsequent eras of the church, can be seen from the following: 'While, in general, Seventh-Day Adventists, representing the rump of the Thyatira era, did not keep God's annual holy days, there were some that did. 'Greenbury G. Rupert,⁵⁷⁸⁶ was a Seventh-Day Adventist for thirty years, and President of the Oklahoma Seventh-Day Adventist

⁵⁷⁸¹ in 1884

⁵⁷⁸² son of Andrew F. Dugger.

⁵⁷⁸³ This tract largely written around an error-strewn and tendentious tract by Herman Hoeh trying to show apostolic succession the church of God, no less!....with corrections, additions, and clarifications as necessary; other contributors as footnoted.

⁵⁷⁸⁴ Thyatira means '*ruled by a woman*.'

⁵⁷⁸⁵ Rev 2:18-29, esp. vv.20-23.

⁵⁷⁸⁶ 1847–1922AD

Conference, covering five states in the U.S.A, at the time he left the Adventists.⁵⁷⁸⁷ He had known Ellen G. White[—identified herein as that 'Jezebel'—]for forty years, but was forced to leave when he published books contrary to mainstream Seventh-Day Adventist belief and teaching. Rupert observed the annual holy days; eschewed unclean meats; held to the church name of 'The Church of God';⁵⁷⁸⁸ proposed local autonomy for church governance; believed in tithing; in church eras; emphasised biblical prophecy in his preaching; and also believed that the U.S.A. was part of Israel. He rejected Christmas, Easter, and other pagan holidays, and also the Trinity, although his understanding of prophecy appears to have gone wildly astray.⁵⁷⁸⁹

This listing, while by no means exhaustive, is clear evidence of a continuing doctrinal flow from the latter part of the nineteenth-century to the present day, for G. G. Rupert⁵⁷⁹⁰ also wrote articles for *The Bible Advocate*, the magazine published by the Sardis era, the Church of God Seventh-Day. Indeed, prior to 1923[AD], it had been known as The Church of God (Adventist), again reflecting its roots in the previous era.

Dugger,⁵⁷⁹¹ editor of *The Bible Advocate*, and Dodd co-authored *A History of the True Religion*, first published in its present form in 1936[AD], which identified the formation of the church of God in the [AD]1860s. Both Dugger and, later, Herbert Armstrong, were heavily influenced by the teachings and doctrines of G. G. Rupert, and much of Rupert can be seen in the early beliefs of The Radio Church of God.⁵⁷⁹²

Eclectic doctrine

The early beliefs of this exposition of the church of God were largely a composite of those preceding it, augmented by a marginally deeper understanding of a limited number of prophetic passages and, to an extent, God's annual holy days, although this was riven with the most fundamental and calamitous calendar errors and other omissions. There were further serious deficiencies. The method of calculating the date of Pentecost then always alighted on a Monday, and this was not remedied until 1974AD, despite the deficiency being known to the leadership as early as 1961AD.⁵⁷⁹³ Sometime around the middle of AD1950s the doctrine of a 'rapture of the elect' to an earthly place of safety was added, where it had been eschewed theretofore. In addition, the com-

⁵⁷⁸⁷ in or around 1902AD

⁵⁷⁸⁸ specifically changed by Ellen G. White as a result of a claimed 'revelation' from God.

⁵⁷⁸⁹ Rupert had but an extremely tenuous hold on Judæo-Christianity and adhered to much apostasy, and his eschatological work was extremely poor. It is claimed by some that he had rediscovered the sacred calendar from scripture but this is untrue; come 1931AD the Seventh-Day Adventist church had adopted the Triune pagan belief. Indeed, since then, the Seventh-Day Adventist church has also come to adopt much of the range of pagan holidays, including Christmas and Easter.

⁵⁷⁹⁰ later: Independent Church of God (Seventh Day).

⁵⁷⁹¹ 1886–1975AD

⁵⁷⁹² partially written around a brief excerpt from a work by Edwards, Norman.

⁵⁷⁹³ Ernest L. Martin, instructor of Theology at Ambassador College, Bricket Wood, St. Albans, England, presented a well documented paper on the subject to The Doctrinal Review Board, but its content was angrily dismissed by Herbert Armstrong for thirteen years before it was adopted—cf. McNair, Marion J., *Armstrongism: Religion or Rip-off?* pp.250,251.

mandment in Deuteronomy regarding the presentation of males before the Lord in Jerusalem three times a year was transmuted to attendance at revenue-generating convocation sites selected by the church throughout the U.S.A., and at other locations around the world. Related to this, through a fundamental misunderstanding or, more likely, wilful misinterpretation of Hebrews chapter eight, God's tithes were diverted to funding church activities, assets, and hierarchical lifestyles, and were not rendered to God's commanded recipients.

Over time, as things careered out of control, Armstrong came to think of himself to be the one coming in the spirit of Elijah, warning the evil world of the coming of Christ: "I am Elijah." This belief is externally traceable to as early as 1967AD, although some maintain that it actually originated sometime in the AD1950s, but was suppressed. He also termed himself "God's only apostle in the time of the end." His attendant penchant for predicting the date of the return of Christ, and then moving it as it became obvious that the last prediction was coming into serious jeopardy, left many wondering about this and other church pronouncements and statements on other biblical prophecies.

Through time, Armstrong claimed, or was accredited by others as having, a number of other titles or identities, amongst which were:

1. The watchman of Ezekiel;
2. The man dressed in linen with the inkhorn;⁵⁷⁹⁴
3. Zerrubabel;
4. The more senior of the two witnesses of Revelation;⁵⁷⁹⁵
5. The modern John the Baptist;
6. The head of all of the 'elect';
7. The second Elijah, who is supposed to come before the return of Christ;
8. One who appeared as Elijah in the Transfiguration with Christ;
9. Moses;
10. A future counsel to God, as one to whom God would turn for advice;
11. The keeper of the keys of heaven;⁵⁷⁹⁶
12. The saviour of the 'elect';⁵⁷⁹⁷

⁵⁷⁹⁴ Ezek 9:1-11

⁵⁷⁹⁵ the junior one being his son, Garner Ted Armstrong, until his father disfellowshipped him four times over.

⁵⁷⁹⁶ Mat 16:19a

⁵⁷⁹⁷ at Petra.

13. God's 'only end-time Apostle'; and,

14. One having the right to change God's laws at his personal whim as often as he pleased.

A widely held belief within this church, that it had entered the Philadelphian era, led to a general expectation of continuous and meteoric growth. The Radio church saw itself in: *'And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things say he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth; I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name. Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews,⁵⁷⁹⁸ and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship⁵⁷⁹⁹ before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee. Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown. Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: And I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.'*⁵⁸⁰⁰

'Executive Order' regimes

Despite their own widely held view, the most recent exfoliation of the church, indeed, the last in the current dispensation, is the Laodicean, amply described, excoriated, and rejected in Revelation chapter three.⁵⁸⁰¹ The organisational system adopted by the last-in-line church is different from that described as pertaining to the primitive church era. Although nominally professing Christ as the Head of the church, the Laodicean era denies the power thereof: it is lukewarm. The most significant differences introduced by the Laodiceans were:

1. The systemised ordination of ministers, through conferring diplomas and degrees, after the candidates had graduated from the Laodicean school of theology / liberal arts college;
2. The establishment of an imposing, indeed, sumptuous, fully-staffed, world headquarters to control and administer the organisation;

⁵⁷⁹⁸ Greek: ioudaios, correctly 'Judæan' or 'of Judah.'

⁵⁷⁹⁹ Greek: proskuneo, 'prostrate themselves.'

⁵⁸⁰⁰ Rev 3:7-13

⁵⁸⁰¹ Rev 3:14-22

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3. The assumption of an 'executive order' regime, whereby God's commands could be varied at the whim of the leader;
 4. Who appointed himself God's apostle;
 5. Who regarded himself as the second Elijah; and,
 6. Who would live to witness the return of the Messiah.

It is patent that those who work at purposefully deceiving others are completely unable to preach or teach the truth, because truth and deception are incompatible. In fact, they are mutually repugnant. Clearly it was a false and reprobate priesthood. The framework supporting it, where whim and fancy had ascendancy over truth, was the Executive Order regime, the template for which can be seen reflected in the following by Cook: 'Executive Orders give the President of the United States of America the ability to declare a state of emergency, martial law, and a suspension of all constitutional rights, in essence converting our democratic form of government into a total dictatorship with merely the stroke of a pen. Congress subsequently can accept these Executive Orders, publish them in the Federal Register, and establish them as laws of the land. These can be implemented at the whim of the current President on a moment's notice just by declaring a state of emergency.'⁵⁸⁰²

The ultimate 'Executive Order' religious regime is doubtless that operated by the Roman Catholic Church in relation to ex cathedra and similar dictats and commands uttered by the pope, who, in the stated and settled belief of the Roman church, can, by his sole decree, and, apparently, on a whim, over-rule the Holy Scriptures.

In contrast, the 'elect' and their ways are referred to and described by Peter: '*Ye also, as lively stones, are built upon a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.*'⁵⁸⁰³ Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Peter wrote that Christians are a priesthood. The statement on teaching reveals the teacher: '*But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.*'⁵⁸⁰⁴

⁵⁸⁰² Cook, Terry L., *The Mark of the New World Order*, p.70

⁵⁸⁰³ I Peter 2:5,9

⁵⁸⁰⁴ I John 2:27

A link between the old congregation, the children of Israel in the Old Testament and the church in the New Testament is seen by comparing Exodus with Peter.⁵⁸⁰⁵ While both speak of '*a royal priesthood, a holy nation*,' the former of the nation Israel, the latter of the true Christian church, it is the latter, however, that is the only one acceptable to God: '*Ye also as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ*.'⁵⁸⁰⁶ The divorcing of Israel and the subsequent rejection of Judah resulted in cutting the people off from God and prohibiting their entry into the '*holy nation, an royal priesthood*:' this being offered under both the Old Covenant and, once rejected by the children of Israel, under the New Covenant. The Laodicean regime, spewed out by God, cannot and does not form part of the New Covenant's '*royal priesthood, a holy nation*.'

Toward downfall & disintegration

What little of worth existed in the formative stages of the final Laodicean era was rapidly to dissolve. "*He that is not with me is against me, and he who gathereth not with me scattereth abroad*."⁵⁸⁰⁷ In this one piercing sentence Jesus lays down the impossibility of neutrality. "In this war against Satan's strongholds there are only two sides, for Christ or against Him, gathering with Him or scattering with Satan."⁵⁸⁰⁸

There are three things which make a man seek this impossible neutrality:

1. There is the sheer inertia of human nature. It is true of so many people that the only thing they desire is to be left alone. They automatically shrink away from anything that is disturbing, and even choice is a disturbance;
2. There is the natural cowardice of human nature. Many a man refuses the way of Christ, because in his heart of hearts he is afraid to take the stand which Christianity demands; and,
3. There is the sheer flabbiness of human nature. Most people would rather have security than adventure, and the older they grow the more that is so. Christ comes to us with a challenge, and so often we would rather have the comfort of selfish inaction than the adventure of action for Christ.⁵⁸⁰⁹

There are instances where those elevated to the 'elect' later wittingly and wilfully revert to their former self, a dreaded route ably described by Peter, '*For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of right-*

⁵⁸⁰⁵ Ex 20:6 compared with I Peter 2:9

⁵⁸⁰⁶ I Peter 2:5 (sublinear emphasis added)

⁵⁸⁰⁷ Mat 12:30

⁵⁸⁰⁸ Allen, W. C.

⁵⁸⁰⁹ Barclay, William, *Gospel of Matthew*, Part 1

eousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.'

'A much better way to state this is to say, the advocacy of doctrines which separate from God.' Such doctrines are humanly contrived systems of philosophy which overtly or covertly deny the faith....The term 'false teacher,'⁵⁸¹⁰ occurs only once in the New Testament scriptures. It occurs then as a description of a certain type of character. False teachers were those who denied the Lord that bought them, secretly brought in damnable heresies, and caused the truth to be blasphemed.^{5811 5812}

Blasphemy became commonplace. Blasphemers are particularly insidious; for they call something holy that is not, and call that which is, unholy. As a result, they completely confuse and mislead the 'gullible,' of which there is no shortage in the Laodicean era. Paul delivered Hymenæus and Alexander unto Satan for blasphemy,⁵⁸¹³ *'Holding faith and a good conscience: which some have put away concerning faith have made shipwreck: Of whom is Hymenæus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme.'*⁵⁸¹⁴ Hymenæus is also mentioned later, *'And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenæus and Philetus; Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some.'*⁵⁸¹⁵

Here arrogance, self-satisfaction, and indifference abounds, with respect for God's Law collapsed and the power of the Holy Spirit denied. All clamour with itching ears to hear what they want to hear: an easy, compliant, undemanding religion, without struggle and overcoming. Sin, in such circumstances, becomes all-gripping. The last-in-line church era was quickly becoming irreversibly mired in sin.

Do as we say!

The final 'claim to superiority' made by some rests on the words of Christ in Matthew: *'Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples, Saying, The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: All therefore whatsoever they bid you to observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not.'*⁵⁸¹⁶ Mad has been the scramble for custody and occupation of Moses' seat, either figuratively or

⁵⁸¹⁰ Greek: didaskelos.

⁵⁸¹¹ II Peter 2:17-19

⁵⁸¹² Ketcherside, W. Carl, *The Twisted Scriptures*.

⁵⁸¹³ Barclay, William, *A New Testament Word Book*, p.51:

'Hamartia, 'sin,' is connected with blasphemia, 'blasphemy' (Mat 12:31). The basic meaning of blasphemia is insult. Sin is then 'an insult' to God. It insults God by flouting His commandments, by putting self in the place which He ought to occupy, and above all, by grieving His love.'

⁵⁸¹⁴ I Tim 1:17,18

⁵⁸¹⁵ II Tim 2:17,18

⁵⁸¹⁶ Mat 23:1-3 (sublinear emphasis added)

literally, and for the peculiar type of power and authority deemed vested in it by the aspirants. The problem with all such gambits lies in what Christ was not referring to: it was not any authority to change the Laws and commandments of God. The people were to closely '*observe and do*' that which they were bid, but in light of the content of the following verses,⁵⁸¹⁷ the scope of valid '*bid[ding] to observe*' is heavily prescribed. All these 'claims to superiority' lie in utter confusion. It is not the work of God, '*For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.*'⁵⁸¹⁸

Happily, the end of all of these dissembling, self-aggrandising 'false shepherds' and 'false teachers,' together with their fawning followers, is predicted by Paul, '*Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with diverse lusts. Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith. But they shall proceed no further: for their folly shall be manifest unto all men, as theirs also was.*'⁵⁸¹⁹

'A-fleecing we will go'

Many false teachers have come in the name of Christ, seeking funding first, especially tithes, and then, if indeed at all, the kingdom. But Christ did not say, seek ye first the funding, and the kingdom of God shall be added unto you. Rather, Christ instructs, '*But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.*'⁵⁸²⁰

Christian churches, so-called, that teach that they are the legitimate recipients of tithes and offerings, find themselves in conflict with Scripture. '*Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? And your labour for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David.*'⁵⁸²¹ The indication of such futile funding efforts is given in Micah: '*They build up Zion with blood, and Jerusalem with iniquity. The heads thereof judge for reward, and the priests thereof teach for hire, and the*

⁵⁸¹⁷ Mat 23:4-39; and Christ's excoriation of the customs and traditions of the scribes and Pharisees, and similar in relation to the customs of the elders, Mat 15:1-20.

⁵⁸¹⁸ I Cor 14:33

⁵⁸¹⁹ II Tim 3:5-9 (sublinear emphasis added)

⁵⁸²⁰ Mat 6:33

⁵⁸²¹ Isa 55:1-3

*prophets thereof divine for money: yet will they lean upon the Lord, and say, Is not the Lord among us? None evil can come upon us.*⁵⁸²²

A major difference between the correct *modus* and man's self-seeking funding perversion, as far as shepherding of the flock is concerned, is given in John: *'I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. But he that is a hireling and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep...there shall be one fold,*⁵⁸²³ *and one shepherd.'*⁵⁸²⁴ The false shepherds, the hirelings and the wicked, have a *modus operandi* described in Galatians: *'They zealously affect you, but not well; yea, they would exclude you, that ye might affect them.'*⁵⁸²⁵ Or as otherwise translated in the N.I.V.: *'Those people are zealous to win you over, but for no good. What they want is to alienate you, so that you may be zealous for them.'* Christ describes them in the following terms: *'Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. Every tree that bringeth forth not good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits shall ye know them.'*⁵⁸²⁶

*'For among my people are found wicked men: they lay in wait, as he that setteth snares; they set a trap, they catch men. As a cage is full of birds, so are their houses full of deceit: therefore they are become great, and waxen rich. They are waxen fat, they shine: yea, they overpass the deeds of the wicked; they judge not the cause of the fatherless, yet they prosper; and the right of the needy do they not judge.'*⁵⁸²⁷ *'A wonderful and horrible thing is committed in the land; The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so: and what will ye do in the end thereof.'*⁵⁸²⁸ *'O generation of vipers, how long can ye, being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.'*⁵⁸²⁹ *'Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity. Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?'*⁵⁸³⁰ And with particular reference to that vile scoundrel Armstrong, *'and hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars.'*⁵⁸³¹

⁵⁸²² Micah 3:10,11

⁵⁸²³ Greek: poimne, 'flock.'

⁵⁸²⁴ John 10:11-13,16

⁵⁸²⁵ Gal 4:17,18

⁵⁸²⁶ Mat 7:15-20

⁵⁸²⁷ Jer 5:26-28

⁵⁸²⁸ Jer 5:30,31

⁵⁸²⁹ Mat 12:34

⁵⁸³⁰ Mat 23:27,28,33

⁵⁸³¹ Rev 2:2c

The so-called '*shepherds*' of the Laodicean era had the executive lifestyle, executive jets, and executive mansions. In their sumptuous corporate headquarters they had 'The House of God' or 'The House for God' as the sumptuous Auditorium to the Performing Arts in Pasadena, California was blasphemously called. And it was those same '*shepherds*' who ripped out and misappropriated God's tithes from the people, and used a sizeable proportion of it to the furtherance of their own gracious living. The head of all of this spew or vomit, the vain or '*idol shepherd*,' and his fate, has already been identified in this work.

Terminal collapse

Sadly, any remote connection that the careering Laodicean church ever had with the much vaunted and acclaimed Philadelphian era which preceded and paralleled it had long gone. The fundamental nature of all the accreted shortcomings, doctrinal errors and apostasies, allied to a major family feud and a protracted law suite, which rocked the entire organisation to its core,⁵⁸³² led to a gradual decline in tithe and freewill revenues, notwithstanding remedial financial targeting centred on the identification, mollification, and praise of heavy tithers, blasphemously equating the magnitude of financial donations with the sign of possessing the gift of the Holy Spirit.

After the death of Herbert Armstrong,⁵⁸³³ the situation rapidly became more and more serious in the face of constant inflation and moribund receipts.⁵⁸³⁴ In an attempt to restore balanced finances, the new leader, Joseph Tkach Snr., systematically curtailed the activities of the church and revised doctrine to include such apostate but, in the U.S.A. at any rate, potentially lucrative beliefs as 'born again Christianity.' The corporate financial backbone, the tithing imperative, was ameliorated,⁵⁸³⁵ but this merely succeeded in turning a decline into a near-total collapse, with church finances heavily haemorrhaging, alongside the declension and corrosion of doctrine and practice. Like an elderly and decaying empire, suffering of over-comfortable centralisation but with no outward activity of merit, the centre tried to hold the line, in denial adhering to the former lifestyle and conduct as if nothing were amiss, other than the need to complete a realignment with main-stream evangelistic Protestantism, while, one after another, operations were first rescheduled, then trimmed, then terminated. After the death of Tkach Snr.,⁵⁸³⁶ this process of decline was accelerated by his successor, Joe Tkach Jnr., to precipitate proportions. It took just ten years or thereabouts from the death of Herbert Armstrong to reduce it to this pitiful state.

⁵⁸³² especially during the period 1970–1985AD

⁵⁸³³ in 1986AD

⁵⁸³⁴ after peaking, apparently, in 1991AD

⁵⁸³⁵ at the end of 1994AD

⁵⁸³⁶ in 1995AD

The disintegration, splits, faction-fighting, and all the rest of it that produced organisational spin-outs such as:

1. Church of God International,
2. United Church of God,
3. Global Church of God,
4. Philadelphia Church of God,

and all the subsequent sub-divisions and splits⁵⁸³⁷ bring to mind the Tanakh 'Massorah-emendation': *'Thus saith my God the Lord: Tend the sheep meant for slaughter, whose buyers will slaughter them with impunity, whose seller will say, "Praise be the Lord! I'll get rich," and whose shepherd will not pity them. For I will pity the inhabitants of the land no more—declares the Lord—but I will place every man at the mercy of every other man and at the mercy of his king; they shall break the country to bits, and I will not rescue it from their hands. So I tended the sheep meant for slaughter, for the sheep dealers. I got two staffs, one of which I name Favour and the other Unity, and I proceeded to tend the sheep. But I lost a third of the flock in one month; then my patience with them was at an end, and they in turn were disgusted with me. So I declared, "I am not going to tend you; let the one that is to die die, and the one that is to get lost get lost; and let the rest [or, 'remainder']⁵⁸³⁸ devour each other's flesh!" Taking my staff Favour, I cleft it in two, so as to annul the covenant I had made with all the peoples; and when it was annulled that day, the sheep dealers who watched me realised it was a message from the Lord.'*⁵⁸³⁹ This links back to the phrase *'the poor of the flock'*,⁵⁸⁴⁰ which means the *'afflicted of the flock'*.⁵⁸⁴¹ The afflicted in the flock, who are watching God,⁵⁸⁴² know that the repudiation of the Laodicean era is, in fact, the word of God, the act of God. They are aware, too, that that event, taking place substantially in one month,⁵⁸⁴³ where *'a third of the flock'* (correct translation from the marginal notes, rather than the K.J.V.'s *'three shepherds'*) is lost, is the *'falling away'* mentioned by Paul⁵⁸⁴⁴ as a condition precedent to the appearance of the Antichrist.

⁵⁸³⁷ with the total number of separate organisations disputing over the dwindling aggregate membership and the 'essential' tithe income now estimated by several commentators as approaching five hundred.

⁵⁸³⁸ Hebrew: shaar.

⁵⁸³⁹ Zech 11:4-11; Tanakh 'Massorah-emendation' version (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁵⁸⁴⁰ Zech 11:7,11

⁵⁸⁴¹ Hebrew: aniy.

⁵⁸⁴² Zech 11:11b

⁵⁸⁴³ Zech 11:8a

⁵⁸⁴⁴ II Thes 2:3

Some of the above-noted organisations no longer exist, or have been reformed amid further acrimony and divisions. Surprisingly, and despite the import of the parable of the great supper,⁵⁸⁴⁵ some still attempt to see the beneficent hand of God in all of this, aiding the future survival of His 'flock' by 'hiding' them in myriad, competing, recriminating divisions. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Herbert Armstrong used to refer to the church membership as his 'dumb sheep,' and certainly there has been much 'sheep-dealing' and 'sheep stealing' since his demise. He lived as a king, as did his replacements in The Worldwide Church of God, and many of those in control of the spin-out organisations. As for dealings in sheep, some in the leadership of the spin-out groupings were even engaged in tempting Worldwide Church of God ministers to come over to them on packages of enhanced salary and perks, but only on condition that they brought their tithe-paying and cash-generating congregations with them. In order to counteract this, 'Tkach & Co.' was making counter-offers involving even greater enhancements of salary and perks to the same ministers to stay put. The resulting free-for-all 'bidding war' was not in the least savoury, to put it mildly. As for 'selling the sheep,' this can also be taken to refer to the selling the assets which were built up on the basis of receipts of sheep tithes.⁵⁸⁴⁶

The end of all of these 'false shepherds' is prophesied by Paul: *'Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with diverse lusts. Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith. But they shall proceed no further: for their folly shall be manifest unto all men, as theirs also was.'*⁵⁸⁴⁷ Proof of the accuracy of this prophecy can be seen on the Internet today, in myriad web-sites and electronic discussion fora dedicated to charting and analysing the fall and spectacular collapse of this worthless church, and it's myriad daughters of damnation.

An even starker insight into the fall of the end-time 'shepherd-boys,' this time in terms of their financial well-being, comes into view in Zechariah: *'Open thy doors, O Lebanon, that the fire may devour thy cedars. Howl, fir tree; for the cedar is fallen; because the mighty are spoiled: howl, O ye oaks of Bashan; for the forest of the vintage is come down. There is a voice of the howling of the shepherds; for their glory is spoiled: a voice of the roaring of young lions; for the pride of [the] Jordan is spoiled.'*⁵⁸⁴⁸ The essential duality of this passage is reinforced: *'For I will no more pity the inhabitants of the land, saith the Lord: but, lo, I will deliver the men every*

⁵⁸⁴⁵ Luke 14:16-24

⁵⁸⁴⁶ facilities at Pasadena, Big Sandy, Brickett Wood, Wisconsin Dells, Lake of the Ozarks, etc.

⁵⁸⁴⁷ II Tim 3:5-9 (sublinear emphasis added)

⁵⁸⁴⁸ Zech 11:1-3 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

*one into his neighbour's hand, and into the hand of his king: and they shall smite the land, and out of their hand I will not deliver them.*⁵⁸⁴⁹

This speaks specifically of the inhabitants of the land—all of Israelite descent around the world—being laid desolate, not merely the sheep-dealers and the dumb sheep: the entire prophecy being interwoven; intertwined. The picture is of total destruction and desolation, a total implosion of the indigenous money economy, and, by implication, externally too, impacting the greater world economy, especially that in Jacob: *'his king'* here being a reference to the relevant kings of the initial ten world-girdling kingdoms wherein Jacob now resides. These latter day sheep-dealers will bemoan their impoverishment, for with desolation in the land—principally here picturing the U.S.A., for that is the seat of the dealers, but also applying to all of Jacob—their income, luxury, and lordly lifestyle will come to an abrupt end. Ten percent of nothing is nothing much.

By targeting the spiritually weak, the plainly gullible, and those driven by evil concupiscence, and under instruction to lie,⁵⁸⁵⁰ the deeply oppressive sheep-dealers and ministers had set about dividing the flock into the acceptably submissive—for rapacious fleecing—and what they usually term 'intellectuals.' The 'intellectuals' were those who actually asked questions: a dangerous breed indeed! These genuine doubters were seriously troubled by the wholesale and precipitate changes in doctrine, especially during the last decade of the twentieth century. They were branded 'Old Covenant,' and either ignored, or disfellowshipped; usually the latter.

The demise of that visible church, the Laodicean era, is prophesied: *'But I lost a third of the flock in one month; Then my patience with them was at an end, and they in turn were disgusted with me. So I declared, "I am not going to tend you; let the one that is to die die and the one that is to get lost get lost; and let the rest devour each other's flesh!"'*⁵⁸⁵¹ The entire is divided into three main constituents, and, through time, not one is to survive. All are forsaken by God, for they have rejected Him, and He has disowned them. His church will be found elsewhere. The same exclusion, this time with the separation of God's 'elect,' is seen in, *'But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not.'*⁵⁸⁵² *'Leave out'* literally means *'cast out.'* The forsaken are cast out. They are not God's.

The extreme degree of prophetic intertwining in Zechariah is seen, especially in the Tanakh translation: *'Taking my staff favour, I cleft it in two, so as to annul the covenant I had made with all the peoples; and when it was annulled that day, the sheep dealers who hired me realised that it was a message from the Lord. Then I said to them, "If you are satisfied, pay me my wages; if not, don't. So they weighed out my wages, thirty shekels of silver—the noble sum that I was worth in their estimation. The Lord said to me, "Deposit it in the treasury."*

⁵⁸⁴⁹ Zech 11:6; this may be taken as a reference to the state of affairs in the principal countries of the dispersion of the children of the northern tribe of Israel. There, neighbour will spy on neighbour, and the 'king,' the government, will reduce society through strife, conflict, and fraud to penury.

⁵⁸⁵⁰ the essence of which is the intention to deceive.

⁵⁸⁵¹ Zech 11:8,9, Tanakh 'Massorah-emendation' version

⁵⁸⁵² Rev 11:2a

*And I took the thirty shekels and deposited it in the treasury in the house of the Lord. Then I cleft in two my second staff, Unity, in order to annul the brotherhood between Judah and Israel.*⁵⁸⁵³ The key linking word is the emendation's '*hired*.' Correctly, Judæo-Christians have seen in the thirty pieces of silver the heinous bargaining over Jesus Christ, where His 'price' was the equivalent of that of a dead slave: almost nothing. But there is more to this tract than that, for the end-time sheep-dealers have a similar estimation of His worth, for He is utterly worthless in their eyes too. Today's sheep-dealers are of the same evil mind as the high priesthood of old. They have no regard for Him, although they claim to come in His name. They disdain Him; they loathe Him; and He loathes them. Only then is the second staff broken, this time representing the unity between Judah and Israel. The Hebrew translated '*between*,'⁵⁸⁵⁴ is repeated twice, and can also mean '*among*,' in which case it could be seen to be referring to the destruction of the unity among the house of Judah⁵⁸⁵⁵ and among the house of Israel.⁵⁸⁵⁶

Bonds broken

In end-time terms, the main theme of this unity is that between the U.S.A. and the state of Israel, the Jews. Potentially, there are two main aspects to this: the U.S.A. and its allies in Jacob will be weakened and destroyed, and the Jews, after a severe national pummelling followed by an uneasy and limited 'peace,' will be strengthened in their ecstatic adoption of their false-messiah, the Antichrist. With the Antichrist in place, the Jews will no longer think it necessary to maintain their historic bond with their allies of old. They will seek and honour their false-messiah, and not Christ, as prophesied: '*I am come in my Father's name and ye received me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive.*'⁵⁸⁵⁷

The matter of the surviving remnant in Jacob is then addressed: '*O sword! Rouse yourself against My shepherd, the man in charge of My flock—says the Lord of Hosts. Strike down the shepherd and let the flock scatter;*⁵⁸⁵⁸ *and I will also turn My hand against all the shepherd boys. Throughout the land—declares the Lord—two thirds shall perish, shall die, and one third of it shall survive. That third I will put into the fire, and I will smelt them as one smelts silver and test them as one tests gold. They will invoke me by name, and I will*

⁵⁸⁵³ Zech 11:10-14 Tanakh 'Massorah-emendation' version (sublinear emphasis added)

⁵⁸⁵⁴ Hebrew: bein.

⁵⁸⁵⁵ the tribes of Judah, Levi, Benjamin.

⁵⁸⁵⁶ the ten tribes.

⁵⁸⁵⁷ John 5:43

⁵⁸⁵⁸ Hutton, R. H., *Theological Essays*, p.149:

'The Apostles are told that they are to be for a long time few and scattered, sowers of division, preachers to people who could not or would not understand.'

respond to them. I will declare, "You are My people," and they will declare, "The Lord is our God!"⁵⁸⁵⁹ This refers to all of Jacob, the masses outside the church who go through the Great Tribulation and are refined in the great heat thereof.

'My shepherd' in this passage is almost exclusively attributed by mainstream Christianity to Jesus Christ, with the words of Christ Himself confirming: *'Then said Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad.'*⁵⁸⁶⁰ There is, however, a further meaning. A footnote in the Tanakh notes: 'Verses seven through nine would read well after Zechariah chapter eleven, verse seventeen.' Indeed so! The idol shepherd of Zechariah chapter eleven is, in this duality or extension, the self-same shepherd depicted in chapter thirteen.⁵⁸⁶¹ In this case it is not Jesus Christ in purview. The 'sword' depicts judgement, and that judgement has been served and meted. The flock has been scattered, and the hand of God that struck down the idol shepherd is also turned against his successors, the faction leaders—the 'shepherd boys.' The K.J.V. translation of the Hebrew as 'little ones'⁵⁸⁶² is very poor, and is better rendered, 'ignoble ones,' or 'ones brought low.' The Tanakh's 'shepherd boys' is apposite.

In all this sorry mess there are two benefits. Firstly, the 'elect' of the Philadelphian era are clear and free of it all, and, secondly, the 'third' or surviving remnant of Jacob—two-thirds perish, with the remaining one third refined by being drawn through the fire—is to be refined in adversity as precious metals, and brought to purity, as the residual of the people of God.⁵⁸⁶³ Mainstream Christianity ascribes the entire of this purifying process to the Great Tribulation, but that is far too late for the 'elect,' although it does encompass those who are to be refined in the Tribulation, but these are not the 'firstfruits'. The church has its Great Commission to fulfil, and who would there be to undertake it if all were left to the last three-and-a-half years, when the powers of the Restrainer are restricted by God, and the Antichrist is in full force, and no man can work? The 'firstfruits' are in process of being refined right now, in preparation for events to come.

'Except there be falling away first,' has been amply exhibited in the 'flight from truth' evident in the disintegration of the Worldwide Church of God, and the part played by the idol shepherd, the false shepherds, and the sheep-dealers. With precious few exceptions, all have travelled in Laodicea. Placing this in an overall context, now that the 'falling away' has happened, next will come the revealing of the son of perdition, and this indicates the seven year 'false-peace' covenant with the Jews, and the events of the time of the end: *'Let no*

⁵⁸⁵⁹ Zech 13:7-9; Tanakh translation; Zech 13:7a, Bible in Basic English (with added comment and clarification in square brackets), *'Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow [Hebrew: al gebher amithi, 'the man My Fellow'],' or 'the man who is with me.'*

⁵⁸⁶⁰ Mat 26:31

⁵⁸⁶¹ Zech 13:7

⁵⁸⁶² Hebrew: tsar.

⁵⁸⁶³ this not being the same 'third' of the Laodicean era of the Church, which was 'lost' in Zech 11:8.

*man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there be a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition.*⁵⁸⁶⁴

True church

In stark contrast, the final condition of the true Christian church, just before the return of Christ, is one of being cast out and plundered by the Laodiceans, and lacking of a shepherd, *'because there was no shepherd.'*⁵⁸⁶⁵ This is the Philadelphian era, one of only two of the seven eras of the church that escaped criticism from Our Lord in Revelation chapters two and three. One, Smyrna, a persecuted church; the other, Philadelphia, a little one.

There is also one further major link between the church eras of Smyrna and Philadelphia: both are warned directly about the dangers of *'the synagogue of Satan.'*⁵⁸⁶⁶ Despite the considerable time difference between these two eras, and differences in the actual exposition, the danger is the same: the insidious work of Satan in the church itself, seeking to wean away the 'elect' from the truth to a devilish concoction of error, lies, and half-truths. In short, this is a counterfeit of the true church propagated by the Devil. As no criticism is levelled against either of these churches by Our Lord, Satan's ire is at its most fervent against them. He will do all in his power to end them, but he will be unable to accomplish his evil intentions. As he failed in the past against Smyrna, he will fail again with Philadelphia. But the intervening period will not be pleasant. Boll gives a chilling preview: *'The period called "this age," or "the age that now is," is always spoken of as an evil age....' Satan is the God of this age,*⁵⁸⁶⁷ *whose work is to blind "the minds of the unbelieving, that the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should not shine unto them."* Hence, he is called *"the prince of the world,"* and the whole world is said to lie in the evil one.⁵⁸⁶⁸

His throne is here below,⁵⁸⁶⁹ He is the head of *"the world rulers of this darkness,"* the leader of *"the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places."*⁵⁸⁷⁰ He is *"the prince of the powers of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the sons of disobedience,"* in accordance to whose will and dictate all sinners walk *"according to the course [age] of this world."*⁵⁸⁷¹ Therefore, Christians are warned that they be not fashioned according to this age⁵⁸⁷² and that they love not this world.⁵⁸⁷³ *"Demas forsook me, having loved this present world [age]."*⁵⁸⁷⁴ But

⁵⁸⁶⁴ II Thes 2:3

⁵⁸⁶⁵ Zech 10:2c

⁵⁸⁶⁶ Rev 2:9b,3:9a

⁵⁸⁶⁷ II Cor 4:4

⁵⁸⁶⁸ I John 5:19

⁵⁸⁶⁹ Rev 2:13; this study places that throne today in the Vatican in Rome, as Attilus III (king of Pergamum, 138–133BC, the last of the Attilid line) bequeathed Pergamum to Rome in 133BC, q.v. sup.

⁵⁸⁷⁰ Eph 6:12

⁵⁸⁷¹ Eph 2:2 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁵⁸⁷² Rom 12:2

the Lord Jesus Christ gave Himself for us that He might deliver us out of it and out of all complicity with it.⁵⁸⁷⁵ We are in the world, but we are not of the world. We are commanded to keep our garments unspotted from the world, and are told that the friendship of this world is a spiritual adultery and means *"enmity with God."*⁵⁸⁷⁶ Like Jesus our Lord, we are strangers here, and go forth without the gate, bearing His reproach.

Another characteristic of the age is that Christ, the King, is absent. During His absence His servants are amid a hostile citizenship administering His goods,⁵⁸⁷⁷ and no other prospect is held out to these servants than that of suffering and persecution until their Lord returns. The more faithful they are, the more true to their Lord and separated from the world, the more certain they are to suffer persecution. *"All that would live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."*⁵⁸⁷⁸ (How foolish is the church when it hopes for the favour of the world and tries to obtain it!). And the promised share in that glory that shall be revealed is for us, only *"if so be that we suffer with him."*⁵⁸⁷⁹

Vaughan provides an analogy: 'If a man throws himself into the cold river at mid-winter to rescue a drowning woman, we honour the attempt: we say, whether he succeeds or fails, 'That man has a feeling heart': and if he fails, if he gives his life in vain, if both sink, we say, 'He did what he could—he gave his all. We separate easily and justly between the endeavour and the result.'

For many, such ease of distinguishing evaporates when confronted with the inevitable results of trying to live a righteous life in a world devoted to Satan. *'All who seek to live godly shall suffer persecution.'*^{5880 5881}

Such is the picture of the present age which the New Testament sets before us. The only hope and prospect of a change from these distressful circumstances is connected with the coming of the Lord. Nowhere in the New Testament is the hope of a gradual improvement held out, or the hope that the world will gradually be absorbed in the church until at last the world will become the church. The one and only goal of hope set before the Christian is the Lord's return....The battle will not grow easier, but heavier with the progress of timeYea, the last times will be the worst, not the best....

"Be patient therefore, brethren, until the coming of the Lord," says James.⁵⁸⁸² The word to *'be patient'*⁵⁸⁸³ means to *'remain under,'* that is, under a strain, under a burden. When Christ comes, the strain is over, the burden lifted. We need not look for that relief any sooner, so far as conditions in the world are concerned....For

⁵⁸⁷³ I John 2:15

⁵⁸⁷⁴ II Tim 4:10 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁵⁸⁷⁵ Gal 1:4

⁵⁸⁷⁶ James 1:27,4:4

⁵⁸⁷⁷ Luke 19:12-14

⁵⁸⁷⁸ II Tim 3:12

⁵⁸⁷⁹ Rom 8:17,18

⁵⁸⁸⁰ II Tim 3:12

⁵⁸⁸¹ Vaughan, C. J., *Christ the Light of the World*, p.216

⁵⁸⁸² James 5:7

⁵⁸⁸³ Greek: hupomeno.

"the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together even until now. And not only so, but ourselves also, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting of our adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body."^{5884 5885}

Without this true church, all mankind would be condemned, since Christ said, *'When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whosoever readeth, let him understand), Then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains: For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.*⁵⁸⁸⁶ and, *'I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?'*⁵⁸⁸⁷ The implied answer to the question is 'No,' or as near 'No' as it is possible to get, such will be the falling away. Without the existence of this end-time 'election,' frequently disfellowshipped by the spew, there is nothing of worth left in all of the earth.

Thankfully, the wiles and devices of the workers of iniquity have failed, and are doomed to fail again in the near future, irrespective of their uttermost efforts, and the 'elect' are destined to be raised in glory, and to reign with the Lord Jesus Christ.

Just as Davidson could opine that: 'It is very encouraging for us to find that, unknown to each other, there are now found to be bands of brethren and sisters, and many individuals, isolated from each other, in several different states, who have believed the same things, taken the same position, set out to seek the same objects, by the same means, and, so far as now appears, filled with the same spirit, and having the same hope of inheriting the kingdom of God; looking for it as nigh at hand,'⁵⁸⁸⁸ there were those who held an unshakeable belief in what was, fundamentally, close to the true Christian doctrine. This usually derived from exposure to the early teachings of The Radio Church of God—limited and error-strewn though they were—and not from physical fellowship with that church itself!⁵⁸⁸⁹

⁵⁸⁸⁴ Rom 8:19;22,23

⁵⁸⁸⁵ Boll, R. H., *Christ's Coming: Premillennial and Imminent*, chpt. 14.1 (sublinear emphasis added)

⁵⁸⁸⁶ Mat 24:15,16,21,22 (sublinear emphasis added); the word 'sake' should be deleted as it does not occur in the original Greek text, leaving '*but for the elect.*'

⁵⁸⁸⁷ Luke 18:8

⁵⁸⁸⁸ Davidson, Samuel, writing in 1863AD

⁵⁸⁸⁹ one such man lived in Airdrie, Scotland: James Scott. He had long become disenchanted with the patent deficiencies inherent in the simplistic stories and homilies of the Congregational Church in Scotland, to the extent that he effectively disassociated himself and started to seek the source of a better doctrine, on the basis that there simply had to be so much more to Christianity. In such circumstances, the broadcasts of the Radio Church of God in the AD1950s were both illuminating and enthralling. When the church of God opened in a rented hall in nearby Glasgow in the early part of 1964AD (a mid-week evening Bible class having commenced late in the previous year), he and his family were among the first attendees. Sometime after, he and his wife, Martha, who had been enthusiastically supportive through out of this quest for truth, were baptised into the church of God, although she had been baptised long before in the Glasgow Tent Hall Mission.

By mid-1965AD, amongst other areas of concern, there had arisen a dispute over attendance at the weekly Sabbath service. The Scott family, while keeping the Sabbath in the manner appropriate, so far as it was then perceived, did not

attend all weekly Sabbath services in Glasgow, but took some weekends at their country retreat. This was deemed completely unacceptable by Robin Jones, the minister of the Glasgow church, and an ultimatum was delivered: "Undertake to attend every week or be disfellowshipped forthwith!"

The tract quoted by Jones in support of his insistence on compulsory attendance every week was Lev 23:1-3 (sublinear emphasis added), *'And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, Concerning the feasts of the Lord, which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations, even these are my feasts. Six days shalt work be done: but the seventh day is a sabbath of rest, an holy convocation; ye shall do no work therein: it is the sabbath of the Lord in all your dwellings.'* On a cursory reading of Lev 23:1-3 his ultimatum would appear sound and unassailable, but it is based on a peculiar translation, for there are words in Lev 23:2 inserted in the K.J.V. translation: '*concerning,*' '*to be,*' and '*even,*' which do not appear in the original Hebrew, and there is also the misleading translation of Hebrew: *miqra* as '*convocation*' instead of '*proclamation*' (from the root *gara* meaning to '*call out*,' the very word translated '*proclaim*' in the same verse!). The correct translation of Lev 23:2 reads therefore: '*The feasts of the Lord, which ye shall proclaim holy proclamations, these are my feasts.*' The Tanakh rendering of the original Hebrew is much more faithful in the words '*sacred occasion*,' than the K.J.V.'s '*holy convocation*.' There is no '*convocation*' commandment here; rather it is a commandment to proclaim the day as a holy day. The only commanded assemblies in Scripture are at the three annual feasts in Jerusalem for males, cf. Deut 16:16, and at the New Moons for the 'elect.' The phrase in Lev 23:3, '*the sabbath of the Lord in all your dwellings*,' is apposite, for it mentions '*dwellings*' or '*houses*,' as is Ex 16:29, '*See for that the Lord hath given you the sabbath, therefore he giveth you on the sixth day the bread of two days; abide ye every man in his place, let no man go out of his place on the seventh day.*' There is no travelling to remote Sabbath services sanctioned in any of this, for the Sabbath should be kept in the home, in the family dwelling-place, or at meeting places within easy walking distance (i.e., a Sabbath day's walk). Like much else, the hierarchical ministry simply had it wrong. Indeed, the 'Scotts' version' ultimately proved to be a deal closer to the correct mode of observance.

However, ultimatums of such grossly unfair and unwarranted nature, especially when delivered to Scots by Englishmen, have a tendency to result in conflict, or, in this case, disfellowshipping. While Article III, Section 3, of the 1954AD Constitution and Byelaws, drafted by Herbert Armstrong, provided for mandatory procedures for dealing with disputes and for disciplining members, including the right of the accused to appear on his or her behalf before the congregation, none of the provisions was followed. Herman Hoeh, in a members' article dated February, 1963AD stated that the fate of those leaving (or being forced out of) the church was hell-fire (cf. McNair, Marion J., *Armstrongism: Religion or Rip-off?* p.230), presumably regardless of whether Article III, Section 3 had been followed.

Despite all the manoeuvring, propaganda, and upheaval, the church continued to reap the advantage of the Scott family's tithe flows, cash being of paramount importance to the profligate organization, with the two former members being 'downgraded' to 'Co-worker' status. The consequence was that, for a long while, the original teachings of the church, albeit good only in very limited part, delivered through the medium of radio in the period of the AD1950s, were preserved sensibly unadulterated by all of the subsequent and myriad doctrinal manoeuvrings of the church in its efforts to increase membership and garner still greater revenues.

Into this developing hiatus came their son, John, the author of this humble work. Starting in 1958AD, he studied all the literature then available and also undertook the extensive 5-year correspondence course, beginning in 1960AD, but he too was shunned by the church of God, ostensibly on the basis of his being the son of James and Martha. Again, despite this, his tithe flows were accepted by the church, cash continuing to be paramount and rapidly growing in its hold on the minds of the hierarchy.

After the death of James Scott in 1972AD, John was baptised into the church of God by his mother in 1975AD, and by dint of protracted study and searching—in part before, but mainly after her death in 1994AD—succeeded in unravelling some of the seemingly intractable issues that had dogged the doctrine expounded previously.

Recited very briefly, these included the identification of the proper recipients of the tithes; the method of funding of the church; the constitution of the church; the correct and sacred calendar; the New Moons and their observance; the three annual presentations before God in Jerusalem; the proper celebration of the weekly Sabbath; the Passover; the Sabbatical years; and the Jubilees; the mortal resurrection of Christ; divine healing; the rebuttal to the pre-tribulation rapture of the saints; and many insights into the meaning and extent of the book of Revelation and its correlation with Daniel and other books of the Bible—the latter element in this recital being the principal subject matter of Volume 2 of this work.

For an appreciation of the magnitude of endeavour involved, four years were spent in an intensive study of tithing and sourcing an appropriate recipient. Unfortunately, due to frequent persecutions of the Jews down through the ages, many records have become lost, and it is not a simple undertaking to source a true 'son-after-son' Levite or priest. The highly convoluted trail eventually led to Rabbi Tendler of Yeshiva University in New York and, through him, to his son-in-law, Rabbi Shabtai Rappoport in Jerusalem. Rav Rappoport, a Rosh Yeshiva and a direct son-after-son descendant of

The end-day effective church, led by the Holy Spirit and Philadelphian in belief, fervour and character, will be small in number, scattered around, almost invisible to the world until the very end-time, and have no shepherd here on earth. The true Shepherd, Christ, will come soon, to gather His own to Him, and to judge and mete out punishment to the miscreants. Since the 'elect' of the Philadelphian era have no oppressive hierarchy and no earthly leader, they accomplish much of real worth, especially through the acme, the end-time two witnesses.⁵⁸⁹⁰

This concludes a very brief summary of the history of the church of God. Although much more is known, it is sufficient for the purpose. This can be compared with the prophecies contained in the seven letters to the churches contained in volume one of this work, and with the early historical background material found therein.

Aaron, the brother of Moses, and thus a priest of God, was not only found to be a proper and fitting recipient of tithes from the children of Israel, but also one willing to receive them. The fact that these tithes are being rendered to a priest, and not to an ordinary Levite, is not without profound significance in a number of ways, all of which are or should be rather obvious; the principle one lying in the exclusion of the Levites, q.v 'Tithing' sup. In 1995AD John started travelling to Jerusalem for the three feasts, as commanded in Deuteronomy. Passover 1996AD saw the first rendering of tithes, including all tithes accumulated since late 1991AD, in accordance with the commandments of God, and this has continued unabated, with tithes rendered at one of the annual feasts. In 1997AD, John was accompanied by his younger brother, David, who had also been baptised into the church of God by his mother.

⁵⁸⁹⁰ the two witnesses will win to repentance many who, at the time of writing, are impenitent.

Chapter 75

Second Temple—Date of Destruction

One matter that has long been pondered, apparently without success in terms of universal agreement, is the year in which the Second Temple was destroyed, for there are implications deriving which go beyond the actual determination of the year of that event. The date usually given is 70AD. Many Jews, on the other hand, maintain that it was in 69AD, while some commentators claim it was in 68 or 71AD. Jews have long regarded it as a matter of 'Jewish chronology,' presumably not open to those who do not read Hebrew or do not wholly subscribe to the Jewish dates for the First Temple, and other events.

The reason for the destruction of the Temple is not difficult to discern. The terminal phase of the great malaise had continued for forty years—forty being the prominent probation number in Scripture⁵⁸⁹¹—ever since the crucifixion of Christ, getting progressively worse, but, in reality, things had gone awry long before then.

⁵⁸⁹¹ according to the Bible, forty it is the number of the waiting, the preparation, the test, or the punishment. Also the Bible often resorts to that number when it starts a new chapter of the history of the salvation. Instances of the use of forty are many:

40 days of fast of Jesus in the desert; Mat 4:2

40 days between Jesus' Resurrection and His Ascension; Acts 1:3

40 years times three (120 years) notice given of flood by God; three being the number of judgement; Gen 6:3b

40 days height of flood of Noah; Gen 7:4

40 days and 40 nights walk by Elijah to reach mount Horeb; I Kings 19:8

40 days fast before Elijah began his public ministry; I Kings 19:8

40 days Elijah remained on mount Carmel; 1 Kings 19:8

40 years Eli the priest was judge of Israel; 1 Sam 4:18

40 years of age when Moses called by God; Acts 7:23

40 years Moses in exile (having killed the Egyptian), tending the herds of Jethro; Acts 7:30

40 days and 40 nights Moses remained on summit of Horeb to receive the tablets of the Law; Ex 24:18

The Lord told Ezekiel of the iniquity of things at the very heart of Jerusalem. *'Her priests do violate my law, and have profaned mine holy things: they have put no difference between the holy and the profane, neither have they showed difference between the unclean and the clean, and have hid their eyes from my Sabbaths, and I am profaned among them.'*⁵⁸⁹² Consequently, Jerusalem and the First Temple were destroyed, *'For the sins of her prophets, and the iniquities of her priests, that have shed the blood of the just in the midst of her.'*⁵⁸⁹³

'The destruction of the First Temple, followed by the Babylonian exile, put the priests out of their element. With no Temple, they were unable to fully perform their ministry.⁵⁸⁹⁴ After the years of Babylonian captivity, and the rebuilding of the Temple, the full ritual system was revived, but the ensuing centuries did not give evidence of any change for the better.

Given the dominance of foreign empires over Jerusalem and the surrounding countryside for much of this period, the high priest and the holders of other positions of eminence were often determined by the invaders. The Romans, for example, sought to remove or negate any element of the political from the priesthood, reducing it to a largely religious, and thus non-threatening, order. Mendels notes that, 'The high priesthood, which had been abused for a long time, was frequently held by people who were thieves, such as Jason and Menelaus, and was not given to the legitimate Zadokite house already from Hasmonean times. The position

40 days Goliath defied Israel before meeting his fate at the hand of David; I Sam 17:16

40 years Israel delivered into the hands of the Philistines; Judg 13:1

40 years Israel wandered in the desert; Num 32:13; Acts 7:36

40 years probation of the Jews after Jesus' death until the destruction of the Temple and the exile; (cf. secular history)

40 years reign of Joash in Jerusalem; II Chron 24:1

40 days allowed to people of Ninevah to repent; Jonah 3:4

40 years old when Isaac married Rebekah; Gen 25:20

40 days prolonged embalming of Jacob's body; Gen 50:3

40 years reign of David over Israel; I Kings 2:11

40 years reign of Solomon over Israel; I Kings 11:42; II Chron 9:30

40 days of iniquity of Judah before Ezekiel; Ezek 4:6b

⁵⁸⁹² Ezek 22:26; cited in *Bible Readings for the Home Circle*, pp.131,132:

'What does another prophet say that God's professed teachers will do?

"Her priests have violated my law, and have profaned mine holy things; they have put no difference between the holy and profane, neither have they showed difference between the unclean and the clean, and have hid their eyes from my Sabbaths, and I am profaned among them." Ezek 22:26.

What does he say they have done to maintain their theories?

"And their prophets have daubed them with untempered mortar, seeing vanity, and divining lies unto them, saying, Thus saith the Lord God, when the Lord hath not spoken." Ezek 22:28.

Untempered mortar is that which is unworked, and therefore will not stand the test. It is said by many that the Sabbath has been changed, and that God says so. This is "untempered" mortar, and after it has been thus used in order to plaster up the first-day theory, it is found to be unsound, because "*the Lord hath not spoken*" to that effect.

What does the Lord say will become of this wall thus daubed with untempered mortar?

"Say unto them which daub it with untempered mortar, that it shall fall; there shall be an overflowing shower; and ye, O great hailstones, shall fall; and a stormy wind shall rend it." Ezek 13:11.'

⁵⁸⁹³ Lam 4:13

⁵⁸⁹⁴ Gwatkin, Henry Melvill, *Early Church History to AD 313*, Vol. 1, pp.49,50 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'Atonement was the very essence of the Law, and atonement [under the Law] ceased when sacrifice became impossible: yet the religious life of the Dispersion went on almost unchanged.'

was granted to people as a reward for certain deeds by Herod, his successors, and the Romans.' Similar sentiments appear in Josephus' *Antiquities*.⁵⁸⁹⁵ By the time of the 'Great Revolt,' there was widespread dissatisfaction with the conduct of some of the priests, and especially the High Priestly families. On this, Talmud, Josephus, and the Gospels agree. These High Priests are described as violent, greedy, gluttonous men: and the cause, at least partially, of the destruction of Jerusalem in the Great Revolt.

[The Talmud speaks of how the High Priests robbed the common priests of their due, and disregarded all appeals to restrain themselves. For example, the skins of the animals sacrificed at the Temple were traditionally divided among all the priests who served. The particular High Priests violently took all the skins for themselves, depriving the common priests of a significant part of their livelihood].

Josephus remarks, 'As for the High Priest Ananias, he increased in glory every day, and this to a great degree, and had obtained the favour and esteem of the citizens in a single manner; for he was a great hoarder up of money....[H]e also had servants who were very wicked, who joined themselves to the boldest sort of people, and went to the threshing-floors and took away the tithes that belonged to the priests by violence, and did not refrain from beating such as would not give the tithes to them. So the other High Priests acted in the like manner, as did those his servants, without anyone being able to prohibit them; so that the priests, that of old were wont to be supported by these tithes, died for want of food.'⁵⁸⁹⁶ This High Priestly family enriched themselves through their commerce in the Temple: 'This [Temple] market was what in rabbinic writings was styled 'the bazaars of the sons of Annas,'⁵⁸⁹⁷ the sons of that High Priest Annas, who is so infamous in New Testament history....From the unrighteousness of the traffic carried out in these bazaars, and the greed of the owners, the 'Temple market' was most unpopular at the time. This appears, not only from the conduct and words of the patriarch Simeon⁵⁸⁹⁸ and of Baba ben Buta,⁵⁸⁹⁹ but from the fact that popular indignation, three years before the destruction of Jerusalem, swept away the bazaars of the family of Annas,⁵⁹⁰⁰ and this, as expressly stated, on account of the sinful greed which characterised their dealings.'⁵⁹⁰¹

The High Priestly families joined with the Roman rulers in intrigue and murder, sometimes even in the Temple itself. Mendels notes that Josephus comments that this outrageous behaviour was why, in his opinion, 'even God himself, for loathing of their impiety, turned away from our city and, because He deemed the Temple to be no longer a clean dwelling place for Him, brought the Romans upon us and purification by fire upon the city, while He inflicted slavery upon us together, with our wives and children; for He wished to chasten us by these calamities. With such pollution did the deeds of the brigands infect the city.

⁵⁸⁹⁵ Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, 18:33-35

⁵⁸⁹⁶ Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, 20,9,2-4

⁵⁸⁹⁷ Chanuyoth beney Chanan.

⁵⁸⁹⁸ grandson of Hillel, cf. *Ker.* I.7

⁵⁸⁹⁹ *Jerus. Chag.* 78a

⁵⁹⁰⁰ and thus forty years from Christ's first cleansing; q.v. John 2:13-22, et sup.

⁵⁹⁰¹ cf. Edersheim, Alfred, *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, Vol. 1, pp.371,372

Horsley has examined the political role of the High Priests under Roman rule, and the dynamics of their position. 'The imperial government held the provincial aristocrats accountable not simply for the steady flow of tax revenues but also (under the authority and supervision of the Roman governor) for maintenance of order in their society. This apparently included accountability for breaches of public order by those supposedly under their control—just as a Roman governor was held responsible for outbreaks of disorder in the territory subject to his authority.'⁵⁹⁰²

In the years leading up to the revolt,⁵⁹⁰³ while ostensibly using their authority 'in the interests of order,' the High Priests and royalists actually contributed to the breakdown of social order through their own aggressive, even violent, predatory actions.

The Jewish aristocracy, ostensibly placed in a situation of conflict between representing the Jewish people on the one hand and maintaining the imperial system on the other, appear to have pursued their own political-economic interest as collaborators with the Roman government.

As the ostensible leaders of the Palestinian Jewish people, the High Priests were supposedly responsible for the guidance and protection of the interests of Jewish society as a whole. But as the leaders in the Jewish aristocracy in particular, they were expected by Rome to control Jewish society in the interest of the imperial order, and they were dependent on Roman power for the maintenance of their own position of power.

The provincial upper classes were, by and large, loyal to the imperial regime that guaranteed their own position. The aristocracies apparently preferred to enjoy their wealth and power rather than to risk the drastic penalties they knew would result from an unsuccessful revolt for independence.'⁵⁹⁰⁴

In summary, the High Priests of the time had position and some sort of covering of claimed biblical authority, despite their appointment by the Roman authorities. What's more, they had power and wealth, and no scruples about using what they had to get what they wanted. Such was the ruling aristocracy, and the state of the Temple, in the years around the time of Jesus Christ. Is it any wonder He purged the Temple?⁵⁹⁰⁵ And is it any wonder that it was destroyed?⁵⁹⁰⁶

The terrible events of 30AD, the rending of the Temple veil, and related matters, are dealt with elsewhere in this work and need not be elaborated upon here. Suffice to say that God refused the Temple service and system upon the death of His Son on the cross, and turned away from it. It was left to its own devices, while the forty year period for repentance on the part of the Jews was consumed in a worthless pursuit of the same

⁵⁹⁰² Horsley, Richard A., *High Priests and the Politics of Palestine*, p.28

⁵⁹⁰³ years 66–70AD

⁵⁹⁰⁴ Horsley, Richard A., *High Priests and the Politics of Palestine*, pp.24,29

⁵⁹⁰⁵ twice; once at the beginning and again near the end of His ministry; cp. John 2:13-22,12:1,12; Mark 11:15-20

⁵⁹⁰⁶ Gruber, Daniel, *Rabbi Akiba's Messiah*, chpt. 14 (excerpted, paraphrased, and extended; added comment and clarification in square brackets)

old habits, confirmed by the thread of crimson wool tied to the door of the Temple court on Yom Kippur not turning white.⁵⁹⁰⁷

Once the probation had elapsed, the inevitable happened. Josephus describes the general state of society in Jerusalem during the years leading up to the destruction of the Second Temple: 'I cannot say it without regret, but I must declare it as my opinion, that if the Romans had delayed to come against these wretches, the city would have been swallowed up by an earthquake, or overwhelmed by a deluge, or else been consumed by fire from heaven, as Sodom was; for it produced a generation of men more wicked than those who had suffered such calamities....To reckon up all their villainies is impossible; but never did any city suffer so great calamities; nor was there ever, from the beginning of the world, a time more fruitful of wickedness than that was.'⁵⁹⁰⁸

Josephus notes⁵⁹⁰⁹ that it was on the ninth of Ab⁵⁹¹⁰ in the second year of the reign of the emperor Vespasian that the Temple was destroyed, with completion in taking absolute control of the entire of Jerusalem by the eighth of Elul,⁵⁹¹¹ that is, about one month later. It was after this cataclysmic fall that the Jews were expelled from Jerusalem and kept excluded for decades. They were to become a despised and outcast people, described as a 'people of the weary breast and the wandering feet.'

Vespasian is usually regarded as having taken over from Nero,⁵⁹¹² and it is this that gives the 70 dating for the destruction. In turn, this causes difficulty for a 31AD crucifixion, for many maintain, correctly, that the forty days of Jonah concerning Nineveh, a city that did repent, was the period allowed by God, in years, for the Jews in Jerusalem to do likewise. Sadly, the latter did not do so, and the judgement was carried out. Forty years from 30 does alight on 70, the end of the Jewish national life and polity.

Jerusalem was destroyed behind the Apostles, for there was no need of that wicked city and its temple of corruption. The Gospel was going out to the whole world independently of the forsaken and condemned. After Christ's once-for-all death and subsequent resurrection and ascension, the supervening experience was of the Holy Spirit as the directing power within the church. Every new development in the New Testament story of the early church was brought about by the guidance of the Spirit, Christ's gift to His church. That is what propelled the church and its message to the very ends of the earth. Those who became '*partakers of the Holy Spirit*'

⁵⁹⁰⁷ Yoma 6.8; Shabbath 9.3; Rosh hashanah 31b; Isa 1:18; an alternative story to the central lamp of the Menorah being unlit for the duration of the forty years probation of the Jews is that the western lamps of the Menorah refused to burn during the forty years' probation of the Jews, leading up to the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple. Why the western? Perhaps: Salvation cometh from the east, in Christ's return, while in the west, the Jews, were spiritually dead.

⁵⁹⁰⁸ Josephus, *Wars of the Jews*, 5.13.6;5.10.5

⁵⁹⁰⁹ Josephus, *Wars of the Jews*, 6.4.8

⁵⁹¹⁰ roughly the beginning of August.

⁵⁹¹¹ Josephus, *Wars of the Jews*, 6.10.1

⁵⁹¹² Nero died 9th June, 68AD

entered the 'fellowship.'⁵⁹¹³ This identifier of membership is nothing other than the clear exhibition of the gift of the Holy Spirit in the individual.

There is one slight but highly significant omission, however, in this chronology, and it concerns what happened after Nero's death—there was a less than smooth, seamless elevation of Vespasian to the Imperial crown. 'After subduing almost the whole of Galilee, he was about to attack Jerusalem, when he received the news of the death of Nero.'⁵⁹¹⁴ After the transient reigns of Galba, Otho, and Vitellius,⁵⁹¹⁵ he was elevated to the Imperial power.'⁵⁹¹⁶ '[Vitellius] was proclaimed emperor January 2, 69[AD], by his troops, who murdered Galba, and in July 69[AD] he entered Rome as emperor. He made no preparation to meet the forces of Vespasian [i.e., Vespasian] who had been proclaimed emperor by his troops in the East and was advancing upon Rome. Vitellius' army proved indifferent to his fate, he was dragged from the palace by a common soldier, and put to death in the forum.'⁵⁹¹⁷

The second year of Vespasian, dating it from the proclamation of his troops at Cæsarea,⁵⁹¹⁸ would have started at the very beginning of the second moiety of year 70[AD], about a month or more before the destruction of the Second Temple.⁵⁹¹⁹ This meshes synchronously and exactly with a 27AD Jubilee, a circa three-year ministry for Jesus Christ, a 30AD crucifixion, and a forty-year probationary period importing a deferral of sentence on Jerusalem and the Second Temple.

⁵⁹¹³ Greek: koinonia; cf. I Cor 1:9; II Cor 13:13; Phil 2:1f.; Heb 6:4, etc.

⁵⁹¹⁴ 9th June, 68AD

⁵⁹¹⁵ Tiberius Cæsar antedated his reign to a point in time about 10 years before the death of Cæsar Augustus. Antedating did occur in the reigns of some first century Roman emperors. Dio describes the reigns of the emperors Galba, Otho, and Vitellius as lasting, respectively, 9 month and 13 days, 90 days, and 1 year minus 10 days (for a total of about 2 years' time). Yet he gives the length of time from Nero's death to the start of Vespasian's reign (the time frame containing the rules of Galba, Otho, and Vitellius) as only 1 year and 22 days. Dio's explanation is a classic example of antedating:

"For they did not succeed one another legitimately, but each of them, even while his rival was alive and still ruling, believed himself to be emperor from the moment that he even got a glimpse of the throne." (Dio, Cassius, *Roman History*, 66.17.5)

Though he complains about antedating in the reigns of Galba, Otho, and Vitellius, Dio himself accepts antedating in the reign of Vespasian to a time several months before the death of Vitellius. Furthermore, many modern scholars accept the idea that Tiberius antedated his reign to a point in time at least a couple of years before the death of Augustus. The Roman historian Tacitus writes of those tempestuous Roman times: 'The worst crimes were dared by a few, willed by more and tolerated by all.'

⁵⁹¹⁶ *Encyclopedia Americana*, 'Vespasian' (sublinear emphasis added)

⁵⁹¹⁷ 22 Dec., 69AD; *Encyclopedia Americana*, 'Vitellius' (added comment and clarification in square brackets; sublinear emphasis added)

⁵⁹¹⁸ 1 July, 69AD; his son Titus was left to deal with the Jewish insurrection.

⁵⁹¹⁹ 9th . Av; sometime in August.

Chapter 76

Definition of Apostle

An apostle does not mean one in authority; it means one under authority. The only authority Christ gave His apostles, the apostles of Jesus Christ, was *'to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick.'*⁵⁹²⁰ They did not have executive authority, nor 'board membership,' nor did they constitute the conduit between man and God. They were never given the power to rule, or to govern, or to decide doctrine, or to change doctrine, or to change doctrine by reversion, or to add doctrine, or to divert tithes, or to erect any centralised religious hierarchy whatsoever. These are the imaginings and devices of man, and are contrary to the will of God.

Witness of resurrection

There is one unique qualification for the position of apostle, found in Acts: *'Beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection.'*⁵⁹²¹ This was the prerequisite for the person appointed to fill the place vacated by Judas Iscariot.⁵⁹²² The appointed person, the replacement apostle, had to be able to witness personally to the resurrection of Christ, and in almost all cases probably had to have been with Christ from near the beginning of His ministry —*'But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me: And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with*

⁵⁹²⁰ Luke 9:2

⁵⁹²¹ Acts 1:22

⁵⁹²² Iscariot meaning, dually, 'man of Kerioth' and 'the false.'

*me from the beginning*⁵⁹²³—with His baptism in the river Jordan by John the Baptist. Paul was in a somewhat similar position. He was a Pharisee, he had seen the events throughout Christ's ministry, and later he had seen Christ on the road to Damascus and he had spoken with Christ on the road to Damascus. And that was Christ risen. An apostle had to be a witness of Christ's ministry and His resurrection, although Paul was different from the others in that he saw Christ, '*as one out of season.*' Paul's actual phrase, '*as of one born out of due time,*'⁵⁹²⁴ indicates that when he saw Christ on the road to Damascus, Christ was in His mortal state. Had Paul seen Christ risen in His mortal state at any point during the full forty days prior to His ascension to heaven, then he would not have used the phrase that he did. Christ had to be in His mortal state in order to afford Paul his apostleship, for an apostle had to be a witness to Christ's mortal resurrection.

Five counts

Now it is evident that Paul claimed apostleship on at least five counts:

1. He was a chosen vessel of God;⁵⁹²⁵
2. He was personally commissioned by Christ;⁵⁹²⁶
3. He had actually seen both Jesus Christ in the flesh and the risen Lord;⁵⁹²⁷
4. He had the evidence of being an apostle, '*in patience, signs, wonders, and mighty deed*';⁵⁹²⁸ and,
5. He was the recipient of divine revelation.⁵⁹²⁹

False apostles

Scripture also speaks of false apostles: '*For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ,*'⁵⁹³⁰ and, '*I know thy works,*'⁵⁹³¹ and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and

⁵⁹²³ John 15:26,27 (sublinear emphasis added)

⁵⁹²⁴ I Cor 15:8b

⁵⁹²⁵ Acts 9:15

⁵⁹²⁶ Acts 9:6

⁵⁹²⁷ I Cor 9:1,2; Acts 1:21,22,9:3-9

⁵⁹²⁸ II Cor 12:12

⁵⁹²⁹ Gal 1:10-12,16,17

⁵⁹³⁰ II Cor 11:13

⁵⁹³¹ Murray, A. Victor, *Christian Education*; cited by Barclay, William, *The Daily Study Bible, Gospel of Mark*, p.215:

'It does not matter how high sounding a man's professions may be, it is by his actions that people judge him, and, in judging him, judge his master.'

*hast found them liars.*⁵⁹³² The correct translation of false apostles in the Corinthians text is *'false teachers,'* although it is known that some also claimed to be apostles. The Ephesian era of the church, recorded in Revelation chapter two, tried those who claimed to be apostles, and found them to be what they were: liars.

By trying apostolic claimants, they can be found to be what they are, for it is possible to check their provenance, and whether they have seen both Christ in the flesh and the risen Christ. If they prophesy, it is appropriate to look for the fulfilment; if they decree, it is appropriate to look for the scriptural authority; if they preach living by the word of God, it is appropriate to look at their lives, and their works, and their fruits. As Christ said, *'Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.'*⁵⁹³³ *'Any creed or ideology or religion [or cult or covert society] must be known and tested by its fruits, and its fruits are people [and the works or deeds of those people].'*

5934

False authority

There is no hierarchical apostolic or petrine authority in God's church. Mark clarifies the matter: *'But Jesus called them to him, and saith unto them, Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them. But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister; And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all. For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.'*⁵⁹³⁵

The petrine doctrine of apostolic succession is totally false. 'The first pope, in the real sense of the word, was Leo I.'⁵⁹³⁶ This is remarkably late for proponents of apostolic succession. To Leo, the plan of government of the Roman Empire was an obsession. He applied and adopted that same form of government to the Roman church, forming the papacy. Myers states that the Roman church, under Leo, set up: 'within the Roman Empire, an ecclesiastical state (government) which, in its constitution and its administrative system, shaped itself upon the imperial model.'⁵⁹³⁷

Apostolic succession is utterly apostate. There are no living witnesses today to the life, death and resurrection of Christ. Anyone who claims to be a latter day apostle is a liar, and borne of the father of lies, the Devil: *'Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for*

⁵⁹³² Rev 2:2

⁵⁹³³ Mat 7:20

⁵⁹³⁴ Barclay, William, *The Plain Man's Guide to Ethics*, p.92 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁵⁹³⁵ Mark 10:42-45

⁵⁹³⁶ 440-461AD; *Cyclopædia of Biblical, Theological and Ecclesiastical Literature*, Vol. 7, p.629

⁵⁹³⁷ van Myers, Philip Ness, *Ancient History*

he is a liar, and the father of it.'⁵⁹³⁸ Therefore, any latter day, self-proclaimed apostle, is of the Devil; not of Christ.

Breaking the bond

'What was done in the Temple was done in the presence of both parties to the covenant: in the presence of Jehovah, in whose honour the Temple had been erected, and in the presence of the nation, who, by its erection of that temple, has accepted Jehovah as their Lord and God. In the presence of both parties, the rejection of the Lord as the Shepherd of Israel was to be announced, and the dissolution of the covenant made by Jehovah to be publically proclaimed by the act of his representative.'⁵⁹³⁹

Bonds were to be broken later too. Culminating in the fateful Christmas Eve sermon⁵⁹⁴⁰ given by Joseph Tkach Snr. in Atlanta, Georgia, and the wholesale depletion of the membership in the following month,⁵⁹⁴¹ the staff of 'beauty'⁵⁹⁴² or, better, 'grace'—was broken by Jesus Christ. The covenant was dissolved, with God withdrawing from the visible church era known as Laodicean. From that point, He restricted Himself to those who had come out of that doomed era or who had never been part of it.

The 'vestments of a foolish⁵⁹⁴³ shepherd'⁵⁹⁴⁴ implies that the foolish person in question thinks of himself as a shepherd of the flock, God's church. In reality, he was made shepherd, not of the flock, but of the 'land,' implying control over the pasture of the flock, that on which they are fed—the doctrine, such as it was—and very probably what they had in their geographical locations, predominantly the United States of America.

God's only Apostle

There is one further aspect of apostleship that must be considered. Paul called himself an apostle, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, but he never called himself God's apostle, for the simple reason that he was not. The identity of God's only Apostle is revealed by Paul: '*Wherefore holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus.*'⁵⁹⁴⁵ Christ was the Father's apostle. Any other claiming to be 'God's apostle,' or 'God's only end-time apostle,' is a hypocrite, a liar, an imposter, and a blasphemer, and the truth is not in him.

⁵⁹³⁸ John 8:44

⁵⁹³⁹ Baron, David, *The Visions and Prophecies of Zechariah*, p.406; per Dr. C. H. H. Wright.

⁵⁹⁴⁰ 1994AD

⁵⁹⁴¹ January, 1995AD

⁵⁹⁴² Zech 11:7-11.

⁵⁹⁴³ Hebrew: *evili*, 'wicked' or 'ungodly.'

⁵⁹⁴⁴ Zech 11:15b

⁵⁹⁴⁵ Heb 3:1

Chapter 77

Denying Jesus

William Barclay, Professor of Divinity and New Testament Greek at the University of Glasgow, did not believe that Jesus was God. His belief, it seemed, was a curious blend of Unitarianism and Trinitarianism.⁵⁹⁴⁶

'[John] tells us what Jesus personally was. He begins with a brief statement which provides the translator with a problem not far from insoluble in the English language. '*The Word*,' says both the A.V. and the R.S.V., '*was God*.'⁵⁹⁴⁷ Moffatt is one of the few modern translators who dares to depart from that rendering. '*The Logos*,' he translates, '*was divine*.' In a matter like this we can do no other than go to the Greek.⁵⁹⁴⁸ Theos is the Greek for *God*, en for *was*, ho for *the*, logos for *word*. Now normally, except for special reasons, Greek nouns always have the definite article in front of them, and we can see at once here that theos, the noun for '*God*,' has not got the definite article in front of it. When a Greek noun has not got the article in front of it, it becomes rather a description, and has the character of an adjective rather than of a noun. We can see exactly the same in English. If I say: '*James is the man*,' then I identify James with some definite man whom I have in mind; but, if I say: '*James is man*,' then I am simply describing James as human, and the word man has become a description and not an identification. If John had said ho theos en ho logos, using a definite article in front of both nouns, then he definitely would have identified the logos with God, but because he has no definite article in front of theos it becomes a description, and more of an adjective than a noun. The translation then becomes, to put it rather clumsily, '*The Word was in the same class as God, belonged to the same order of being as God*.' The

⁵⁹⁴⁶ mutually exclusive in the real world.

⁵⁹⁴⁷ John 1:1

⁵⁹⁴⁸ Greek: theos en ho logos.

only modern translator who fairly and squarely faced this problem is Wuest, who has: '*The Word was as to his essence essential deity.*' But it is here that the N.E.B. has brilliantly solved the problem with the absolutely accurate rendering: '*What God was the Word was.*'"⁵⁹⁴⁹

In another work, Barclay says that: 'John says that '*the Word was God.*'"⁵⁹⁵⁰ This is a difficult saying for us to understand, and it is difficult because Greek, in which John wrote, had a different way of saying things from the way in which English speaks. When Greek uses a noun it always uses the definite article with it. The Greek for 'God' is theos and the definite article is ho. When Greek speaks about God it does not simply say theos; it says ho theos. Now when Greek does not use the definite article with a noun, that noun becomes much more like an adjective. John did not say that the Word was ho theos; that would have been to say that the Word was identical with God. He said that the Word was theos—without the definite article—which means that the Word was....of the same character and quality and essence and being as God.⁵⁹⁵¹ He was saying that Jesus was so perfectly the same as God in mind, in heart, in being that in Him we perfectly see what God is like.'

John is not here identifying the word with God. To put it very simply, he does not say that Jesus was God. What he does say is that no human description of Jesus can be adequate, and that Jesus, however you are going to define it, must be described in terms of God. 'I know men,' said Napoleon, 'and Jesus Christ is more than a man.'

But no sooner has John presented us with a problem in translation than he presents us with a problem in theology. '*In the beginning,*' he says, '*was the Word.*' '*He was in the beginning with God.*'"⁵⁹⁵² Here we come upon the doctrine of the pre-existence of the Word, or the pre-existence of the Son. There is no more difficult doctrine to understand in all theological thinking. It quite clearly cannot mean that this flesh and blood man Jesus existed before the creation of the world. What then does it mean?

[W]hatever else that doctrine may or may not mean, it does mean this. Let us remind ourselves what John basically means when he called Jesus the Word; he meant that in Jesus we see perfectly displayed in human form the mind of God. To put it at its very simplest, he meant that God is like Jesus....Now, if we go on to speak of the pre-existence of the Logos, one thing at least that we must mean is that God was always like that. The mind of God, the attitude of God towards men, was always from all eternity to all eternity that which we see in Jesus.

⁵⁹⁴⁹ Barclay, William, *Many Witnesses, One Lord*, pp.23-25 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets); Wuest, Kenneth.

⁵⁹⁵⁰ John 1:1

⁵⁹⁵¹ the difference then extant was that Jesus Christ was in His temporary human incarnation, in His voluntary state of humiliation, and not a spirit being like God the Father. He was God incarnate; the Word incarnated as the human being, Jesus Christ.

⁵⁹⁵² John 1:1,2

But, if we insist that the Logos was in the beginning and before the beginning, it very simply means that God was always like Jesus and always will be, and that Jesus did not come to change the attitude of God to men, but to show quite unmistakably what that attitude is and always was.⁵⁹⁵³

Barclay held this view to his death. Unscrambling Barclay's confused concoction, however, is relatively straightforward. Jesus was called '*Immanuel*,' which means '*God with us*.'⁵⁹⁵⁴ The lack of the definite article in the first verse of John is completely correct, proper Greek usage; actually one of the special reasons alluded to by Barclay. If ho had been added, then it would signify that Jesus Christ was the sole God, God divine—The God—when, in fact, He was in His voluntary state of humiliation, being incarnate, that is, a human being, one part of the otherwise immortal, dyadic Godhead. And, of course, if He were the sole God, it would make complete nonsense of the rest of the opening verses in John.⁵⁹⁵⁵ He'd end up 'being with Himself'!

Jesus Christ was human, mortal, with a human nature (no dual nature), and a superabundance of the Holy Spirit. That superabundance enabled Him to resist sinning, ever, and to give mankind the gift, upon His death and resurrection, of the general, freely available Holy Spirit. To be God, but incarnate, having divested Himself of His immortality, is a completely correct understanding. '*All things were made through him, and without him nothing was made that was made*.'⁵⁹⁵⁶ Barclay avoids verse three completely, for it exposes his fallacious argument. The creation, and all in it, was made by the Word, including all life. And only God can create life. And only God can die for the sins of all mankind, for God created all mankind. If Jesus were not God, then His death on the cross and His resurrection would be meaningless and worthless.

To claim that Jesus Christ is not God and not part of the Godhead is to deny the very foundation of Judæo-Christianity. In Mark,⁵⁹⁵⁷ Jesus quoted the Shema to one of the scribes. The Shema—a verbless clause in Hebrew, a construction which in that language denotes exclamation and imperative—correctly translated, is anything but singular: '*Hear, O Israel, YHWH your Gods, YHWH united. You shall love the Lords thy Gods⁵⁹⁵⁸ with all thy heart, with all thy being, and with all thy might*.'⁵⁹⁵⁹ John's record is a restatement of the above, written in Greek.⁵⁹⁶⁰ Jesus Christ, God incarnate about two millennia ago, is now sitting at the right hand of the Father, as God the Son.

Another admitting of the same possibility as Barclay is pope Benedict XVI. In 2001AD, the Pontifical Biblical Commission released a book that teaches the Old Covenant is still valid, and that the Jews' wait for the Coming of the Messiah (which was part of the Old Covenant) is also still valid. It teaches that Jesus doesn't

⁵⁹⁵³ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of John*, Vol.1, p.39 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁵⁹⁵⁴ Isa 7:14; Mat 1:23

⁵⁹⁵⁵ John 1:1,2

⁵⁹⁵⁶ John 1:3

⁵⁹⁵⁷ Mark 12:28-34

⁵⁹⁵⁸ Hebrew: elohim, plural.

⁵⁹⁵⁹ Deut 6:4,5

⁵⁹⁶⁰ John 10:29,30

have to be seen as the prophesied Messiah; it is possible to see Him, as the Jews do, as not the Messiah and not the Son of God. 'Jewish messianic expectation is not in vain.'⁵⁹⁶¹ '[T]o read the Bible as Judaism does necessarily involves an implicit acceptance of all its presuppositions, that is, the full acceptance of what Judaism is, in particular, the authority of its writings and rabbinic traditions, which exclude faith in Jesus as Messiah and Son of God...Christians can and ought to admit that the Jewish reading of the Bible is a possible one.'⁵⁹⁶² The preface was written by Joseph Ratzinger, who was to become Benedict XVI. According to this 'Vatican imprimatur,' Christians can and ought to admit that the Jewish position, that Jesus is not the Son of God and the prophesied Messiah, is possible. This is antichrist: '*He who denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist.*'

5963

Benedict teaches the same denial of Jesus Christ in a number of his books, including: 'It is of course possible to read the Old Testament so that it is not directed toward Christ; it does not point quite unequivocally to Christ. And if Jews cannot see the promises as being fulfilled in him, this is not just ill will on their part, but genuinely because of the obscurity of the texts...There are perfectly good reasons, then, for denying that the Old Testament refers to Christ and for saying, No, that is not what he said. And there are also good reasons for referring it to him—that is what the dispute between Jews and Christians is about.'⁵⁹⁶⁴ 'I have ever more come to the realization that Judaism...and the Christian faith described in the New Testament are two ways of appropriating Israel's Scriptures, two ways that, in the end, are both determined by the position one assumes with regard to the figure of Jesus of Nazareth. The Scripture we today call Old Testament is in itself open to both ways.'⁵⁹⁶⁵ '[The Jews'] No to Christ brings the Israelites into conflict with the subsequent acts of God, but at the same time we know that they are assured of the faithfulness of God. They are not excluded from salvation.'⁵⁹⁶⁶

Benedict says that, in his view, there are perfectly good reasons for not believing that the Old Testament refers to Christ as the prophesied Messiah. He says that the Old Testament record doesn't point unequivocally to Our Lord as the Messiah. This is another total denial of the Christian Faith.

What makes this apostasy all the more outrageous is the fact that the New Testament is filled with passages which declare that Our Lord is the fulfilment of Old Testament prophecy. John says Our Lord specifically told the Jews that what is written in the Old Testament concerning Him would convict them: '*Search the scriptures, for you think in them to have life everlasting; and the same are they that give testimony of me...the one who will accuse you is Moses, in whom you have placed your hope. For if you had believed Moses, you*

⁵⁹⁶¹ *The Jewish People and Their Sacred Scriptures in the Christian Bible*, section II, A, 5

⁵⁹⁶² *The Jewish People and Their Sacred Scriptures in the Christian Bible*, section II, A, 7 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁵⁹⁶³ I John 2:22

⁵⁹⁶⁴ Benedict XVI, *God and the World*, p.209

⁵⁹⁶⁵ Benedict XVI, *Milestones*, pp.53,54

⁵⁹⁶⁶ Benedict XVI, *God and the World*, pp.150,151 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

*would have believed me, because he wrote about me.*⁵⁹⁶⁷ But according to Benedict, all these declarations that Our Lord is the fulfilment of Old Testament prophecies, including the Lord's own words, may be false.

According to Benedict, the Jewish reading that Our Lord is not the Messiah, not the Son of God, and not foretold in the Old Testament, is possible and valid. This is totally heretical, apostate and antichrist. It will also have the effect of facilitating the Jews' acceptance of the Antichrist, aided by the pope's immediate or next but one successor, the false prophet.⁵⁹⁶⁸

⁵⁹⁶⁷ John 5:39,45-47
⁵⁹⁶⁸ q.v. sup.

Chapter 78

Exhortation

There is, perhaps, little better by way of brief and final exhortation and, indeed, appeal, than the following, excerpt from the 'Conclusion' to Hislop's epic work: 'Of the old martyrs it is said, *"They overcame by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony, and they loved not their lives unto death."* The same self-denying, the same determined spirit, is needed now as much as ever it was. Are there none who are prepared to stand up, and in that very spirit to gird themselves for the great conflict that must come, before Satan shall be bound and cast into his prison-house? Can anyone believe that such an event can take place without a tremendous struggle —that "the god of this world" shall quietly consent to resign the power that for thousands of years he has wielded, without stirring up all his wrath, and putting forth all his energy and skill to prevent such a catastrophe....If the servants of Antichrist are faithful to their master, and unwearied in promoting his cause, shall it be said that the servants of Christ are less faithful to theirs?....To take such a part, and steadily and perseveringly to pursue it, amid so much growing lukewarmness, it is indispensable that the servants of Christ set their faces as a flint. But if they have grace so to do, they shall not do so without a rich reward at last...."*To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me on My throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father on His throne. Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.*"⁵⁹⁶⁹

Lastly, I appeal to every reader of this work, if it does not contain an argument for the divinity of the Scriptures....Surely, if one thing more than another be proved in the previous pages, it is this, that the Bible is no cunningly devised fable, but that holy men of God of old spake and wrote as they were moved by the Holy

⁵⁹⁶⁹ James 1:12b

[Spirit]....[O]ught not that to lead us the more to reverence and adore the same wisdom that is in reality stamped on every page of the inspired Word? Ought it not to lead us to say with the Psalmist, *"Therefore, I esteem all Thy commandments concerning all things to be right?"*⁵⁹⁷⁰ The commandments of God, to our corrupt and perverse minds, may sometimes seem to be hard. They may require us to do what is painful, they may require us to forego what is pleasing to flesh and blood. But, whether we know the reason of these commandments or no, if we only know that they come from *"the only wise God, our Saviour,"* we may be sure that in the keeping of them there is great reward; we may go blindfold wherever the Word of God may lead us, and rest in the firm conviction that, in so doing, we are pursuing the very path of safety and peace. Human wisdom at the best is but a blind guide; human policy is a meteor that dazzles and leads astray; and they who follow it walk in darkness, and know not whither they are going; but he *"that walketh uprightly,"*⁵⁹⁷¹ that walks by the rule of God's infallible Word, will ever find that *"he walketh surely,"*⁵⁹⁷² and that whatever duty he has to perform, whatever danger he has to face, *"great peace have all they that love God's law, and nothing shall offend them."*^{5973 5974}

⁵⁹⁷⁰ Psa 119:128a

⁵⁹⁷¹ Psa 15:2a; Prov 10:9a,15:21b,28:18a; Isa 33:15a; Micah 2:7c

⁵⁹⁷² Prov 10:9a

⁵⁹⁷³ Psa 119:165b

⁵⁹⁷⁴ Hislop, Alexander, *The Two Babylons*, pp.288,289 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

Epilogue

And to conclude—a personal note.

It is time to relax a little, and reflect on what you've read. Firstly, congratulations, if you have managed to work your way through the entire study, including the Technical Papers in the Appendix, etc. If you have—and there's a lot in it—then I think it rather likely that you'll have come across much that is new, and, quite probably, a lot you will have found surprising, perhaps even exciting. I sincerely hope so. The work of many have gone into this, evidenced by the manifold citing of the writings of learned people from ancient times right down to the present age. Hopefully, it has given you much to think about.

Still, some might find it easy to dismiss and to cling to old and cherished but erroneous persuasions. 'A great nation is like a great man: When he makes a mistake, he realizes it. Having realized it, he admits it. Having admitted it, he corrects it. He considers those who point out his faults as his most benevolent teachers.'⁵⁹⁷⁵ Unfortunately, not many seem to have the mental rigour and the sincerity to change their beliefs.

The Bible has so much of worth to say to us today, and I fervently pray that you find yourself reacting like the great man, being encouraged to continue in detailed study of the Holy Scriptures, seeking the guidance of God's Holy Spirit in prayer and supplication, all with thanksgiving.

Hidden, almost

Judæo-Christianity throughout history has almost always appeared submerged by the deep apostasy of the surrounding world, and almost completely hidden from view. Certainly, the bulk of what is contained in these pages has been suppressed for far too long. Too often, unscrupulous religious leaders have subverted God's word to their own ends, and their own gain; whether it be a lust for power, or wealth, or esteem, or any combin-

⁵⁹⁷⁵ Lao Tzu.

ation of these. Under such conditions, the first casualty is always truth, and, with it, doctrine, practice, vigour, and just about everything else.

Many have difficulty reconciling the visible churches of this world with Christ. 'It is not easy [prima face, for most people] to reconcile the meagre, unsatisfactory results of mainstream Christianity in the world with the claims and promises of Christ.'⁵⁹⁷⁶ But Jesus Christ promised never to leave His church, and so, somewhere, always, there has been a true belief, albeit only held by a small, and usually persecuted, remnant.

This study was undertaken with the intent of finding and opening up that belief, doctrine, practice, and, especially, eschatology, so far as I am able and so far as it is known. Doubtless there will be more. On the glorious return of Jesus Christ, of course, there will be much, much more, for the reality will then be patent, but in the meantime, we have God's power, the Holy Spirit to lead us into truth, and our ardent prayers for God's guidance, protection, and blessing.

To list what is new in this book would involve a sizeable work in its own right, simply because there is so much of it. The sad fact is that, so far as I am aware, no other source of much of this knowledge is currently available at the end of the twentieth- and the start of the twenty-first century, with the world on the very threshold of unprecedented upheaval and suffering. 'The End is Nigh' has been a call too often in vain in the past, but the eschatology in this work gives compelling evidence of just how close at hand the climactic events of this age happen to be, and what has to be faced by this generation.

This study was not written to shock. Lurid speculation on the coming death toll / mayhem in the Great Tribulation have been eschewed, as has the panoply of apocalyptic scare-mongering so common to 'commercial' end-time expositions of biblical prophecy. This is not a commercial undertaking—no charge will ever be made, in any form whatsoever⁵⁹⁷⁷—so the need of 'popular appeal' or 'sensationalism' has never arisen. Certainly, Judæo-Christianity never set out to be 'popular,' and in that it has succeeded in quite admirable fashion.

Out of ignorance, into light

This work has taken much of my spare time and energy over the past decade and a half, and, to a lesser extent, for seven years prior to that during which the essential groundwork was prepared. In total, the real

⁵⁹⁷⁶ Dods, Marcus, *The Parables of Our Lord, as recorded by St. Luke*, p.192 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

Dods, Marcus, *The Parables of Our Lord, as recorded by St. Luke*, p.212 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'The shallow characters that are content to have the appearance without the reality, reputation without worth, applause without desert, priority and high station without superior excellence, are content to be accepted [by man] as godly, although void of the love of God. And this lack of integrity and downright thoroughness, this craving for appearance and reputation irrespective of reality and excellence, is so common in every community.'

⁵⁹⁷⁷ unless unavoidable, through the existence of third-party publishers, portals, or websites, in which case any small charge levied will be kept to an absolute minimum, q.v. sup.

'contending for the faith once delivered' has taken twenty-two years. In comparison with what was known at the start,⁵⁹⁷⁸ the knowledge that is now in place is simply immense. Questions which appeared way beyond any rational answer are now capable of exact biblical explanation and response. New questions, which arise continually, are found, almost without exception, to be answerable from existing knowledge.

From leaving Ebenezer⁵⁹⁷⁹ Congregational Church in Airdrie, central Scotland, to the publication of this edition has been over half a century. While not quite all of it was spent in the wilderness, much valuable time was lost in suffering severe and protracted criticism from unscholarly imperia, especially from those who should have known better, and also in frustration, bewilderment, superficial study, and little more than what could be termed near-worthless speculation. But toward the end of the wilderness period the pace of events quickened, the desire for truth revived, confidence returned, and study became focused, critical, and pertinent, and so poured forth, over time, all that you have read in this work. The spiritual exigencies of youth have had a thorough repletion. It has been a fascinating journey, and, God willing, one by no means finished. Perhaps Paul's words in his epistle to Philemon reflect the transformation: *'Which in time past was to thee unprofitable, but now profitable to thee and to me.'*⁵⁹⁸⁰

Coming soon

There is much, much more, of course, especially in monitoring events as they transpire, investigating the motives, schemes, and intent of the forces of evil, and relating them to the detail of biblical prophecy. It is felt, however, that this exercise will prove more beneficial if undertaken in more media-immediate formats, such as frequently-updated Internet websites and discussion fora, and this is now being done, with some encouraging results.

As this world rushes toward its ultimate fate, events and developments can be seen unfolding with a dread inevitability. Things wax worse and worse. What would have been thought outrageous or scandalous just a few decades ago, is now commonplace, and mundane. Belief in the occult is growing ever stronger, worship growing ever more bizarre, and lives are being lived for the moment, in a hedonistic frenzy without a care for the future. It all bodes ill. God will not be mocked by this generation. And what He has prophesied to happen, will happen.

In the eschatological sections of this work, there has been reference to repeated attempts by man to form a one-world government, with the warning that the last and most dangerous is in the preparatory stages at

⁵⁹⁷⁸ 1991AD; the year that the writer's tithes, and those of his mother, were withheld from the W.C.G., and this grand undertaking embarked upon.

⁵⁹⁷⁹ Hebrew: *'stone of help.'*

⁵⁹⁸⁰ Plmn 11

the moment, a regime which will represent the ultimate system of man's concentrated power. The Antichrist will have his brief moment of glory, in terms of his own delusion, before the final storm sweeps him away.

The whole idea, first conceived in ancient Babylon by Nimrod acting under the influence of Satan, has erupted on a number of occasions in the forms of the Babylonian, Assyrian, Medo-Persian, Greek, Roman, French, Austrian, and German empires. All have failed, and fallen well short of the ultimate satanic goal of world hegemony. The nearest in living experience was Hitler and his evil Third Reich,⁵⁹⁸¹ which, in a cruel mimic of the Millennium, was to have lasted for a thousand years. It managed but twelve, but the devastation wreaked in that limited time was almost beyond imagination. In World War II, the total mobilisation of armed forces around the world peaked at over ninety-two million; in excess of fifty-five million people lost their lives, including those in the Nazi extermination camps; and the total cost of the war, including property damage—but excluding human suffering which cannot be valued in monetary terms—has been estimated at c.\$1.4 trillion, in 1945AD prices.

By the time of the end-time vial plagues, the world will have lost about half of its population. Perhaps four billion people or thereabouts will have died. That magnitude of suffering is simply unimaginable, and the appalling thought is that unregenerated man is so debased, so thoroughly wicked, so satanically possessed, as to wittingly and coldly plan and execute such mass slaughter. But we know from Bible prophecy that that is what is to happen. We need God now as has no other generation before us.

Phase end

This particular service or phase has come to an end. I am thankful for the wonderful knowledge that it contains, frightening though much of it is, for I knew little of the detail when I first set out. But 'forewarned is forearmed,' as they say. Henceforth what God has for my life is His decision; His Will will be done. But this I know: Jesus Christ promised never to leave His church, and so, even in the dark days to come, He will be with those of us then alive, right through to the end.

All in Christ await His glorious Second Coming, and their place with Him, for *'this must shortly come to pass, for the time is at hand.'*⁵⁹⁸² Hopefully, you too will take your place in that glorious and eternal kingdom as an immortal Son of God.

God bless,

JOHN SCOTT.

⁵⁹⁸¹ during most of the inter-war years, Hitler referred to himself as 'der Trommler'—'the Drummer'—a reference to his being the forerunner of / 'drumming for' a soon-coming occult German messiah. On assuming full powers, however, he became convinced that he was the messianic leader of the Aryan people, the true German messiah, destined to usher in a one-thousand year, world-girdling, German-headed reich. In occult lore, however, he is held to be the second of three 'messiahs': (1) Napoleon; (2) Hitler; and (3) the soon-coming final candidate, known widely as the Antichrist.

⁵⁹⁸² Rev 1:2b,3b