

God's reckoning upon a wayward world

For years, Israel has had to live with existential threats from Iran and its neighbors, yet hardly anyone has done anything about it. The world seems to take for granted that Israel must live with such threats without ever doing anything about it either. Imagine what would happen if Russia, or China, made such threats to America, or vice versa.

A few years ago, when the media went into another one of those cyclical frenzies with the notion that Israel was about to attack Iran and destroy that nation's nuclear facilities before it developed nuclear weapons, we said that according to biblical prophecies it is Iran who will attack Israel, not the other way around. Our prediction has proven true. In February 2012, Iran attacked a number of Israeli missions abroad – in Georgia, India, and Thailand, to mention those that made it into the media. From there, attacking Israel itself is only a short step away.

Iran has shown that its threats to Israel are not mere talk; that it is prepared to act on them. This has changed the name of the game. Israel is now entitled to reply and take action before a greater disaster hits the nation.

This is not going to make Israel many friends. On the contrary, biblical prophecies tell us that this tiny nation will face the wrath of the entire world. We have said much about those prophecies in the past, and may yet say more in the future, God willing, but for now we will only post this prophecy as a reminder.

Zec 12:1 The burden of the word of the LORD against Israel. Thus says the LORD, who stretches out the heavens, lays the foundation of the earth, and forms the spirit of man within him:

Zec 12:2 "Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of drunkenness to all the surrounding peoples, when they lay siege against Judah and Jerusalem.

Zec 12:3 And it shall happen in that day that I will make Jerusalem a very heavy stone for all peoples; all who would heave it away will surely be cut in pieces,

Zec 12:4 though all nations of the earth are gathered against it. In that day," says the LORD, "I will strike every horse with confusion, and its rider with madness; I will open My eyes on the house of Judah, and will strike every horse of the peoples with blindness.

Zec 12:5 And the governors of Judah shall say in their heart, 'The inhabitants of Jerusalem *are* my strength in the LORD of hosts, their God.'

Zec 12:6 **In that day I will make the governors of Judah like a firepan in the woodpile, and like a fiery torch in the sheaves; they shall devour all the surrounding peoples on the right hand and on the left,** but Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own place—Jerusalem.

Zec 12:7 "The LORD will save the tents of Judah first, so that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem shall not become greater than that of Judah.

Zec 12:8 In that day the LORD will defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; the one who is feeble among them in that day shall be like David, and the house of David *shall be* like God, like the Angel of the LORD before them.

Zec 12:9 It shall be in that day *that* I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.

Zec 12:10 "And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for *his* only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn.

Zec 12:11 In that day there shall be a great mourning in Jerusalem, like the mourning at Hadad Rimmon in the plain of Megiddo.

Zec 12:12 And the land shall mourn, every family by itself: the family of the house of David by itself, and their wives by themselves; the family of the house of Nathan by itself,

Zec 12:13 and their wives by themselves; the family of the house of Levi by itself, and their wives by themselves; the family of Shimei by itself, and their wives by themselves;

Zec 12:14 all the families that remain, every family by itself, and their wives by themselves.

Many times in the past we have said that the world is in 'the preceding stages to the Great Tribulation.' We amend that now to read, 'the preceding stages **of** the Great Tribulation.'

The Arab revolutions, the fall of the Libyan dictator and Assad massacring of his own people in Syria, while the world stands paralyzed in the face of Russian and Chinese vetoes in the Security Council, Europe's and America's monumental debt burdens, the acute shortages of water, food, energy and resources around the world, and starving millions in Africa, have well and truly set the Apocalypse in motion.

This is exactly what we have warned the world about for two decades. But the world has not listened to us. It listened instead to its own prophets who have opposed us in every way and at every step. Now let them get their nations out of this predicament. God is very angry with this wayward world, and about to unleash His terrifying vengeance upon it.

Isa 63:1 Who is this who comes from Edom, With dyed garments from Bozrah, This *One who is* glorious in His apparel, Traveling in the greatness of His strength?— "I who speak in righteousness, mighty to save."

Isa 63:2 Why is Your apparel red, And Your garments like one who treads in the winepress?

Isa 63:3 "I have trodden the winepress alone, And from the peoples no one *was* with Me. **For I have trodden them in My anger, And trampled them in My fury; Their blood is sprinkled upon My garments, And I have stained all My robes.**

Isa 63:4 **For the day of vengeance is in My heart, And the year of My redeemed has come.**

Isa 63:5 I looked, but *there was* no one to help, And I wondered That *there was* no one to uphold; Therefore My own arm brought salvation for Me; And My own fury, it sustained Me.

Isa 63:6 **I have trodden down the peoples in My anger, Made them drunk in My fury, And brought down their strength to the earth."**

Now consider what Jesus Christ said in His famous Mount of Olives prophecy about the end time.

Mat 24:3 Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things be? And what *will be* the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?"

Mat 24:4 And Jesus answered and said to them: "Take heed that no one deceives you. . .

Mat 24:21 For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be.

Mat 24:22 And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened.

Unless those days are shortened, no flesh would be saved alive. It is the elect of God that will keep alive some people in some nations, for many nations will vanish from the face of the earth altogether.

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

So few people will survive this worldwide catastrophe that EVERYONE is expected to come to Jerusalem, to keep what? Easter, Christmas, Halloween, Birthdays, Saints Days? No, they come to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. I am sure the prophets of your church will be able to tell you what that is and when to keep it. Happy Feast of Tabernacles!

Prophetic developments that portend catastrophe in our time

The wizard if ID, looking into a crystal ball:

“I see a time when peace will reign throughout the whole world”.

Interlocutor: “I bet people are happy”.

The wizard: “I don’t see any people”.

Scientists, politicians, even comics, are now contemplating the possibility that this world may have no future. Yet although the notion of an end to this world is on many a people’s lips, there is universal rejection of the one and only way by which humanity could be saved.

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

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

Mal 4:6 And he will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, And the hearts of the children to their fathers, Lest I come and strike the earth with a curse [*utter destruction, Tanakh*].

When God says that unless the world changes its ways and keeps His Commandments He will destroy it, He means it. And what does He expect from human beings above all?

LOVE! Love of children, love of parents, and especially love of our heavenly Father.

This kind of love is possible only in the context of the Ten Commandments – the first four regulate our relationship with our heavenly Father, while the last six regulate the relationship between human beings; the fifth one dealing specifically with love between parents and children.

The problem is that mainstream churches – Catholic, Orthodox, Anglican, Baptist, Presbyterian, etc. – have been preaching for centuries that the Commandments of God have been done away with and are no longer relevant for daily life or needed for salvation.

Fundamentalist churches on the other hand, while preaching that the Commandments of God are needed for salvation, have put so much emphasis on the Law, they have forgotten about grace. They fail to understand that while the Law is required of all human beings, grace and salvation is granted only to those who overcome their carnal nature and place their life in God’s hands, allowing Him to create in them a character suitable for His eternal Kingdom.

As Jesus Christ said in one of His prayer to His Father and our Father (John 20:17):

Joh 17:20 "I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word;

Joh 17:21 that they all may be one, as You, Father, *are* in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me.

Before a human being can become One with God he must present his body as a living sacrifice to Him.

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

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

Rom 12:3 For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think *of himself* more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.

Rom 12:4 For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function,

Rom 12:5 so we, *being* many, are **one body in Christ**, and individually members of one another.

Jesus Christ could not be more specific about the importance of God's Commandments in our struggle for salvation.

Mat 19:16 Now behold, one came and said to Him, "Good Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?"

Mat 19:17 So He said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, *that is*, God. But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments."

Mat 19:18 He said to Him, "Which ones?" Jesus said, " 'YOU SHALL NOT MURDER,' 'YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY,' 'YOU SHALL NOT STEAL,' 'YOU SHALL NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS,'

Mat 19:19 'HONOR YOUR FATHER AND YOUR MOTHER,' and, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.' "

Mat 19:20 The young man said to Him, "All these things I have kept from my youth. What do I still lack?"

Mat 19:21 Jesus said to him, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me."

Mat 19:22 But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.

Mat 19:23 Then Jesus said to His disciples, "Assuredly, I say to you that it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven.

Mat 19:24 And again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."

He went on to say the following to His disciples:

Joh 14:15 "If you love Me, keep My commandments.

Joh 14:16 And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever—

Joh 14:17 the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.

Now all these things Jesus Christ said during His ministry on earth, but for those who say that the Commandments of God were nailed to the cross at the time of His crucifixion, here is the glorified Christ speaking to us from heaven, not once but twice

Rev 12:17 And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, **who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.**

Rev 14:1 Then I looked, and behold, a Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred *and* forty-four thousand, having His Father's name written on their foreheads.

Rev 14:2 And I heard a voice from heaven, like the voice of many waters, and like the voice of loud thunder. And I heard the sound of harpists playing their harps.

Rev 14:3 They sang as it were a new song before the throne, before the four living creatures, and the elders; and no one could learn that song except the hundred *and* forty-four thousand who were redeemed from the earth.

Rev 14:4 These are the ones who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These were redeemed from *among* men, *being* firstfruits to God and to the Lamb.

Rev 14:5 And in their mouth was found no deceit, for they are without fault before the throne of God.

Rev 14:12 Here is the patience of the saints; here *are* those **who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.**

Anyone who loves God and Jesus Christ keeps the Commandments; anyone who does not keep the Commandments will not receive the Holy Spirit and cannot be saved.

Apostle John, the youngest of the Apostles, who received the book of Revelation, put a cap on this discussion with the following unmistakable statement.

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

Many Christians make a virtue of going to church with a Bible under their arm. They read from it with their preacher, and then go home where they are supposed to continue to study it and meditate upon it. Well, they are supposed to read and meditate upon it, but it is doubtful that many do it. How else can one explain the fact that although they all read the same Book, they end up believing different gospels, and following churches whose doctrines are diametrically opposed to each other?

What happens is that they are conditioned to read the Bible not to discover its truths and the mysteries of God, but rather to confirm the gospel preached by their minister.

Four decades ago, while member of the Worldwide Church of God, I was encouraged to do the same. However, it seems that I took the leaders' advice too seriously, for instead of confirming what the ministers were preaching, I discovered that their gospel was quite different from the one preached by Jesus Christ and His apostles.

I learned English studying the Bible. I used to have a dictionary on my left, the Bible in the middle, and a notebook on the right. Yet even in my rudimentary English, after a couple of years, I could see that the gospel of the Worldwide Church of God was different from the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

That disturbed me enormously, for the implications were horrendous. When one became a member of that Church, he had to leave behind everything, every aspect of his previous life, including friends and relatives.

I did not want to come in conflict with the leaders; I liked being a member of that Church. Aside from the fact that they convinced me they were the 'one and only true Church of God in the world', and that our destiny was God's paradise, I began to make friends and was contemplating marrying one of the girls from the Church.

However when doubts arise in your mind, you can only bottle up for so long then you have to speak up, risking all you have achieved, including losing 'God's paradise'.

I raised the issue with the minister, and the conclusion was exactly what I expected. No sooner did I finish speaking that he said, 'if that is what you believe then you are out'. And out of that Church I was, but not out of God's grace, as I would discover later on.

For a short while I was both angry and unhappy about it, not so much about what I was losing, but about their hypocrisy and their un-Christian methods. I wanted them to hear what I had to say, what I discovered in the Bible, but they would have none of it. That was a blatant disregard of Jesus advice on how to deal with such situations.

Mat 18:15 "Moreover if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother.

Mat 18:16 But if he will not hear, take with you one or two more, that 'BY THE MOUTH OF TWO OR THREE WITNESSES EVERY WORD MAY BE ESTABLISHED.'

Mat 18:17 And if he refuses to hear them, tell *it* to the church. But if he refuses even to hear the church, let him be to you like a heathen and a tax collector.

It did not take me long to realize that what they did to me was a blessing in disguise.

You would not believe the burdens the members of the Worldwide Church of God had to bear; far greater than the ones the Pharisees were putting on their people.

What saved me was the fact that my love of the Bible was not affected by their act. I spoke to them only after I became convinced that I was right. Such being the case, I could not

see how God and Jesus Christ would support them and condemn me for raising important issue of salvation and morality.

Time passed, I emigrated from Canada to Australia, I carved myself a new career, and I settled down to what I hoped would be a long and comfortable life. My life was comfortable all right, until that Church caught up with me again. Nearly two decades after we parted company, I saw posters about an evangelistic campaign in Australia. I joined them briefly to see whether they were preaching the same old, false, and ruinous doctrines, and when I discovered that they did, I determined to do something about it. So in 1990, the first edition of *The Christian Herald* made its appearance. Little did I know then that what started as an attempt to expose fundamentalist hypocrisy and falsehoods would soon turn into a cry against the sins of the whole world.

When I left the WCG, and saw that those who claimed to be true 'Christians' were in fact a 'synagogue of Satan', to use the words of Jesus Christ, I began a search for the 'little flock' of Jesus Christ over which 'the gates of Hell shall not prevail.'

Luk 12:32 "Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

Mat 16:18 "and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it."

So I devised a test which I used to determine whether a church or religion was, or held in its ranks, that 'little flock' of Jesus Christ. Here is that test.

1. **No idolatry;**
2. **No doctrines of demons;**
3. **Sabbath keeping;**
4. **Passover observance.**

It is a simple test – and one could add countless more points to it – but it was enough for me to determine relatively quickly whether I was on the right track or not. Let us have a brief look at each point to see how this applies to the flock of Jesus Christ.

1. **No idolatry.**

This is the second of the Ten Commandments.

Exo 20:4 "You shall not make for yourself a carved image—any likeness of *anything* that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth;

Exo 20:5 you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the LORD your God, *am* a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth *generations* of those who hate Me,

Exo 20:6 but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.

When I walked into a church and found it to be adorned with statues and images of heavenly things, icons as they like to call them these days, I knew that the 'little flock' of Jesus Christ would not be there.

2. **No doctrines of demons.**

Hard to believe, but I could not find a single church, mainstream or fundamentalist, that does not observe doctrines of demons. What are these?

1Ti 4:1 Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and **doctrines of demons**,

1Ti 4:2 speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron,

1Ti 4:3 **forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from foods** which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth.

1Ti 4:4 For every creature of God is good, and nothing is to be refused if it is received with thanksgiving;

1Ti 4:5 for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.

1Ti 4:6 If you instruct the brethren in these things, you will be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished in the words of faith and of the good doctrine which you have carefully followed.

Old Testament forbade interracial marriages because that was designed for one nation only, but the New Testament is for the entire world. This is why Christians could not say to converts from other nations that they could not intermarry because they are of a different race, color or culture. Remember also what Jesus Christ said before He rose to heaven.

Mat 28:18 And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.

Mat 28:19 Go therefore and **make disciples of all the nations**, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

Mat 28:20 teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, *even* to the end of the age." Amen.

And this is what the apostles preached.

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

Gal 3:27 For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

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

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

In regard to abstinence from foods, the same principle applies. Old Israel had many dietary and sacrificial laws, but these were designed to 'bring us to Christ', then finished.

Gal 3:23 But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed.

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

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

It is these laws that Jesus Christ put an end to with His sacrifice, not the Ten Commandments. Those who keep dietary laws forget what Jesus Christ said about food too.

Mar 7:15 There is nothing that enters a man from outside which can defile him; but the things which come out of him, those are the things that defile a man.

In the Old Testament, the people of Israel were considered defiled if they so much as even touched an 'unclean' animal, let alone eat it. In the New Testament, however, nothing that enters a man from outside defiles him; but the words that come out of his mouth defile him.

False ministers have added a new twist to this question. They ask their followers: 'does God care about your health?' The answer of course is yes. And how does He show that care? By telling them which animals are good for food, and which are not! Naturally, they never discuss these Scriptures.

Mar 16:17 And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues;

Mar 16:18 they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover."

Nothing hurts the true believers, not even deadly poison. Apostle Paul certainly believed that when he said the following.

1Co 10:25 Eat whatever is sold in the meat market, asking no question for conscience' sake;

1Co 10:26 "for the earth is the Lord's, and the fullness of it."

1Co 10:27 If any of those who do not believe invite you *to a feast*, and if you are disposed to go, eat whatever is set before you, asking no questions for conscience' sake.

3. **Sabbath keeping.**

The Sabbath has been the sign between God and His people since ancient times.

Exo 31:12 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying,

Exo 31:13 "Speak also to the children of Israel, saying: 'Surely My Sabbaths you shall keep, for it is **a sign between Me and you** throughout your generations, that *you* may know that I *am* the LORD who sanctifies you.

Exo 31:14 You shall keep the Sabbath, therefore, for *it is* holy to you. Everyone who profanes it shall surely be put to death; for whoever does *any* work on it, that person shall be cut off from among his people.

Exo 31:15 Work shall be done for six days, but the seventh is the Sabbath of rest, holy to the LORD. Whoever does *any* work on the Sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death.

Exo 31:16 Therefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations *as* a perpetual covenant.

Exo 31:17 It is **a sign between Me and the children of Israel forever**; for *in* six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day He rested and was refreshed."

Exo 31:18 And when He had made an end of speaking with him on Mount Sinai, He gave Moses two tablets of the Testimony, tablets of stone, written with the finger of God.

Is this sign still valid in the New Testament? Absolutely! Israel according to the flesh lost the status of 'chosen people' because they could not keep God's Commandments. And why could they not keep them? Because they did not have the Holy Spirit! In the New Testament, however, there is no longer such an excuse.

Joh 16:7 Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you.

Joh 16:12 "I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear *them* now.

Joh 16:13 However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own *authority*, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.

Joh 16:14 He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare *it* to you.

Joh 16:15 All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare *it* to you.

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

Joh 16:21 A woman, when she is in labor, has sorrow because her hour has come; but as soon as she has given birth to the child, she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy that a human being has been born into the world.

Joh 16:22 Therefore you now have sorrow; but I will see you again and your heart will rejoice, and your joy no one will take from you.

Joh 16:23 "And in that day you will ask Me nothing. Most assuredly, I say to you, whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give you.
 Joh 16:24 Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.
 Joh 16:25 "These things I have spoken to you in figurative language; but the time is coming when I will no longer speak to you in figurative language, but I will tell you plainly about the Father.
 Joh 16:26 In that day you will ask in My name, and I do not say to you that I shall pray the Father for you;
 Joh 16:27 for the Father Himself loves you, because you have loved Me, and have believed that I came forth from God.
 Joh 16:28 I came forth from the Father and have come into the world. Again, I leave the world and go to the Father."

Such promises were never made to Israel of old. In the New Testament, however, Jesus Christ is creating a new Israel, for a different world. Remember what He told Pilate about His Kingdom, and what He told Peter about the twelve apostles?

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

Mat 19:27 Then Peter answered and said to Him, "See, we have left all and followed You. Therefore what shall we have?"
 Mat 19:28 So Jesus said to them, "Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, **you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.**

If the Sabbath was a sign between God and people whom He knew would fail, how much more is it a requirement for people who have been granted the Holy Spirit in order to overcome the weaknesses of their human nature?

The Old Covenant was made with carnal human beings for a purpose – to show them that they could not keep it and they need a New Covenant.

Jer 31:31 "Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah—
 Jer 31:32 not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day *that* I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says the LORD.
 Jer 31:33 But this *is* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.
 Jer 31:34 No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."

Therefore the Sabbath is more a sign between God and His people in the New Testament than it ever was in Old. Remember also that when Jesus Christ returns to this world He

expects to find His disciples observing not Sunday (which was never sanctioned by God or Jesus Christ to be a Holy Day), but the Sabbath.

Mat 24:20 And pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath.

Mat 24:21 For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be.

They must pray that their flight may not be in winter because it is cold and they may freeze in the mountains or wherever they flee, and not on the Sabbath because, even in the Great Tribulation, they are not allowed to carry heavy burdens on that day.

4. **Passover observance.**

This is what Jesus Christ said about the Passover, and how the apostles observed it.

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

1Co 11:18 For first of all, when you come together as a church, I hear that there are divisions among you, and in part I believe it.

1Co 11:19 For there must also be factions among you, that those who are approved may be recognized among you.

1Co 11:20 Therefore when you come together in one place, it is not to eat the Lord's Supper.

1Co 11:21 For in eating, each one takes his own supper ahead of *others*; and one is hungry and another is drunk.

1Co 11:22 What! Do you not have houses to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and shame those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you in this? I do not praise *you*.

1Co 11:23 For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the *same* night in which He was betrayed took bread;

1Co 11:24 and when He had given thanks, He broke *it* and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me."

1Co 11:25 In the same manner *He* also *took* the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink *it*, in remembrance of Me."

1Co 11:26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.

1Co 11:27 Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks *this* cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.

1Co 11:28 But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup.

1Co 11:29 For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.

1Co 11:30 For this reason many *are* weak and sick among you, and many sleep.

It is clear that failure to observe the Passover brings about God's judgment. Yet most members of mainstream churches have not so much as even heard of Passover let alone observe it in the manner prescribed by Jesus Christ.

This then was the test with which I search the world for decades for the little flock of Jesus Christ. In the end, the result was as astounding as it was unexpected.

Surprise result in the search for the 'little flock' of Jesus Christ

After parting company with the Worldwide Church of God, and armed with my simple test, I set out to locate the little flock of Jesus Christ among the many denominations of this world. I was convinced that Jesus Christ would lead me to His people, but after a long and unsuccessful search, I began to have doubts; something was not right, but what?

Had God and Jesus Christ changed policy and decided to accept the almost unrecognizable and diluted versions of the true Gospel that are being preached in the world today? If so, the early Christians, and thousands after them, endured extreme persecutions and died unnecessarily for their beliefs. I could not accept that this would be the case, especially since I could not find anything in the Bible that would remotely justify this fact.

I never stopped studying the Bible, even during my university days, and when I could not get results among Christian congregations, I wondered whether Jesus' disciples could be found among other religions. So for a while I shifted my attention back to Judaism, as distinct from the Old Testament, then I looked at Islam, and after that I looked at eastern religions: Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Daoism, Shinto, and others, and when I did not get results among them either, I returned to Christianity.

I remember how during my university days, the head of the Religious Studied Department wondered where I was heading with my studies. After satisfying the requirements for one major in biblical studies, instead of enlarging and deepening those studies for the required second major, I shifted my attention to eastern religions. He thought I would have a good future in biblical studies, and without saying so directly, I felt he thought I was making a mistake. I could not tell him why I was doing it, or that I had a better knowledge of the Bible than all my lecturers and tutors in those subjects. I had a hard time abstaining from shouting aloud that they were wrong in what they were teaching, but that would have put an end to any hope of me obtaining a degree.

Shifting my search for the little flock of Jesus Christ to eastern religions was not based on a whim but on long introspection. The Bible says that people will be judged on their works, and that transcends the boundaries of religion. My problem was on how to reconcile good works with the beliefs in Brahma, Vishnu, Buddha, or any of the myriad of eastern gods.

In the end, I had no choice but to return to the Bible and pure Christianity. This is what the apostles believed and there is no argument, or possibility of any derailment from it.

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

And this is what Jesus Christ said of those who want to follow Him.

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

Mat 7:22 Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?'

Mat 7:23 And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'

Now the will of Jesus' Father in heaven is unalterable:

Exo 20:3 "You shall have no other gods before Me."

If eastern religions are good at anything, inventing gods is one of them. There is hardly an animal or a dead person that is not a god with them. I trust the God of the Bible who says that those who obey Him will be blessed and those who disobey Him will be cursed. One

only has to look at the world and its history to see which God has proven to be beneficial. So coming back to the Bible and Christianity was inevitable.

Looking at religions from all angles, I concluded that anyone can put on a good show for a while, or show acts of kindness and charity under ideal situations, but few do so under extreme conditions. There is a reason why the disciples of Jesus Christ are subjected to extreme trials and tribulations, and why only those who overcome to the end attain eternal life and make it into the eternal Kingdom of God. This is what Apostle Paul said.

Act 14:21 And when they had preached the gospel to that city and made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, strengthening
Act 14:22 the souls of the disciples, exhorting *them* to continue in the faith, and *saying*,
"We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God."

And this is what Apostle Peter said.

2Pe 2:19 While they promise them liberty, they themselves are slaves of corruption; for by whom a person is overcome, by him also he is brought into bondage.
2Pe 2:20 For if, after they have **escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ**, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning.

One cannot escape the pollutions of this world except through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and that knowledge can be obtained only through the study of the Bible, not through the myriad of commentaries and 'Bible studies' that have filled this world.

It seems that everyone who had spent a little time on the Bible feels that he can write a commentary on it and teach others on how to study it. What they teach instead is how to conform to the doctrines of their particular church. How can one explain the fact that hardly anyone puts the Commandments of God at the centre of the Christian faith?

Here is Jesus Christ again.

Joh 14:15 "If you love Me, keep My commandments.

Joh 14:16 And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever—

Joh 14:17 the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.

Joh 14:26 But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.

Joh 14:27 Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

Joh 14:28 You have heard Me say, 'I am going away and coming *back* to you.' If you loved Me, you would rejoice because I said, 'I am going to the Father,' for My Father is greater than I.

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

Salvation is not possible outside the framework of belief and obedience to God and His Commandments. **The Holy Spirit, the Helper, cannot arrive in any other name but Jesus Christ, and without the Holy Spirit there is no salvation, no eternal life, no Kingdom of God.**

Works cannot be separated from faith; the two, plus overcoming to the end, create candidates for the Kingdom of God. Out of this pool of people, God is exercising His grace to choose whomever He wants for His Kingdom. As Apostle Paul explained:

Rom 9:13 As it is written, "JACOB I HAVE LOVED, BUT ESAU I HAVE HATED."

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

Rom 9:15 For He says to Moses, "I WILL HAVE MERCY ON WHOMEVER I WILL HAVE MERCY, AND I WILL HAVE COMPASSION ON WHOMEVER I WILL HAVE COMPASSION."

Rom 9:16 So then *it is* not of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God who shows mercy.

Rom 9:17 For the Scripture says to the Pharaoh, "FOR THIS VERY PURPOSE I HAVE RAISED YOU UP, THAT I MAY SHOW MY POWER IN YOU, AND THAT MY NAME MAY BE DECLARED IN ALL THE EARTH."

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

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

Rom 9:20 But indeed, O man, who are you to reply against God? Will the thing formed say to him who formed *it*, "Why have you made me like this?"

God does whatever He wants with His creation. Everyone can obey God and accept the faith of Jesus Christ for salvation. Most people, however, would rather have a good life in this world than overcome trials and tribulations necessary to bring human nature under control and qualify for the grace of God.

Eastern people may have works, some works, but they do not have the faith of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, and without them overcoming this world is not possible.

So unhesitatingly I returned to the Bible and to Christianity, but still without fellowshiping with anyone in the name of Jesus Christ. I never got this promise out of my mind that He would be with His disciples to the very end? So where were they?

My colleagues at work, at university, everywhere, found me friendly but distant and absent minded. I just could not tell them what was in my mind, for they would have thought me crazy as well. How could I tell people who hardly believed in God that I was meditating on the Law of God and on deep biblical mysteries? For me, the words of Jesus Christ were unshakable, and since He said that the Word of God is true, I unquestioningly believed it.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Joh 17:14 I have given them Your word; and **the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.**

Joh 17:15 I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one.

Joh 17:16 They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.

Joh 17:17 Sanctify them by Your truth. **Your word is truth.**

So I kept searching and looking at the Bible from every possible angle, always trying to see whether I was missing something, or making a mistake somewhere.

Then, after two decades, I had a new encounter with the Worldwide Church of God. Their inroads into Australia with their old, false, and ruinous doctrines could not go unanswered, hence the decision to publish *The Christian Herald*.

That decision would turn out to be as momentous for my life as the decision to join that Church in the first place. It was like a window opened in heaven. Not only did I see a myriad of Bible prophecies unravel before my eyes, but I finally had the answer to my years of search for the 'little flock' of Jesus Christ.

There was no 'little flock' of Jesus Christ in the world anymore.

That discovery was as astounding as it was frightening; astounding because it was totally unexpected; frightening because it had extraordinary end time implications.

There comes a time in the history of the world when every church in the world, including the Churches of God mentioned in the book of Revelation, fall away from the truth of God.

2Th 2:1 Now, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, we ask you,

2Th 2:2 not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as though the day of Christ had come.

2Th 2:3 Let no one deceive you by any means; for ***that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first***, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition,

2Th 2:4 who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.

2Th 2:5 Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things?

2Th 2:6 And now you know what is restraining, that he may be revealed in his own time.

2Th 2:7 For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains *will do so* until He is taken out of the way.

2Th 2:8 And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming.

2Th 2:9 The coming of the *lawless one* is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders,

2Th 2:10 and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

2Th 2:11 And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie,

2Th 2:12 that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

2Th 2:13 But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth,

2Th 2:14 to which He called you by our gospel, for the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

2Th 2:15 Therefore, brethren, stand fast and hold the traditions which you were taught, whether by word or our epistle.

2Th 2:16 Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and our God and Father, who has loved us and given *us* everlasting consolation and good hope by grace,

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

The lawless one, who has been at work deceiving the world ever since, will be revealed just prior to the return of Jesus Christ, and destroyed by none other than Jesus Christ Himself. This realization was as frightening as it was full of hope. I realized then that I was never alone in my search, that God and Jesus Christ were directing my every step and leading me to this conclusion. That changed the name of the game. My initial intention to focus my attention on the Worldwide Church of God and its daughter churches would now shift to the whole world, crying out its sins and trying to bring it back to God before it was too late.

The death of its founder, Herbert W Armstrong, in 1986, started a slow process of decline of that Church. Some two decades later, the Church ceased to exist as a single entity. A mad scramble for its members ensued among its evangelists, with the result that more than three hundred new 'Churches of God' made their appearance.

Most are a carbon copy of their mother Church, but some have swung the pendulum to the opposite extreme, from deep fundamentalism to extreme liberalism.

Now even though I had little connection with them, from the beginning of this work some of have never ceased harassing and defrauding us, trying desperately to derail us from our mission. Here is a typical exchange of emails with one of them.

Anthony Buzzard, December 27, 2009

Grigore, Is this a sabbatarian (saturday sabbath) movement?

Yes, Anthony! G.S.

Thanks, but I wonder why Paul then in Col 1:16, 17 states that the trio of observances is a shadow now superseded by Jesus who has come: Let no one tell you what to do in relation to holy days, new moons and sabbaths, which are a single shadow, but the substance is Christ's.
Anthony

Hello, Anthony!

I can see that you are in a mood to argue a little here. Normally, I do not bother answering people that have lapsed from the truth, as the Scriptures tell us that it is impossible to bring them back to it. However, since I am not quite sure where you stand and where you are heading, I give you the benefit of the doubt. I presume you come from the stable of H.W. Armstrong, for you seem to struggle with the same doctrinal points that have divided that community for decades. I was once part of that stable too, but I left it behind long time ago.

First of all, I think you mean Col. 2:16,17, and not 1:16,17. "Therefore let no one judge you in food or in drink, or in respect of a feast, or of the new moon, or of the sabbaths. For these are a shadow of things to come, but the body *is* of Christ".

Assuming that this is the case, the answer can be found just a few verses later: Col 2:20 – 22. "If then you died with Christ from the elements of the world, why, as *though* living in *the* world, are you subject to *its* ordinances: touch not, taste not, handle not; which things are all for corruption in the using, according to the commands and doctrines of men?" This goes well with Gal. 4:10 "You observe days and months and seasons and years"? Therefore my answer will cover them both.

The operative words here are, "according to the commands and doctrines of men". Apostle Paul was not referring to the Commandments, statutes and judgments that God gave Moses at Mount Horeb, but to "commandments and doctrines of men", of which the Jews had a lot. Remember what God said about the mission of Elijah:

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

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

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

The Law that God gave to Moses in Mount Horeb with the statutes and judgments, will be valid to the very end of this world. And just the same, remember what Jesus Christ said about the Jews?

Mat 15:1 Then the scribes and Pharisees who were from Jerusalem came to Jesus, saying,

Mat 15:2 "Why do Your disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? For they do not wash their hands when they eat bread."

Mat 15:3 He answered and said to them, "Why do you also transgress the commandment of God because of your tradition?"

Mat 15:9 AND IN VAIN THEY WORSHIP ME, TEACHING AS DOCTRINES THE COMMANDMENTS OF MEN.' "

In Colossians and Galatians, Apostle Paul was not preaching against the Commandments and the Holy Days that God gave Moses, but against the "ordinances" that the Jews had added in the course of time. I can give you two examples that prove this fact. In the book of Acts, Apostle Paul directed his followers to the "oracles" that God gave to the Jews. Look carefully at what he said:

Act 7:38 "This is he who was in the congregation in the wilderness with the Angel who spoke to him on Mount Sinai, and *with* our fathers, the one who received the living oracles to give us,

Act 7:39 whom our fathers would not obey, but rejected. And in their hearts they turned back to Egypt.

What happened when the Jews rejected those "oracles"? They turned back to Egypt; in other words they went back to paganism. It is the same these days: those who reject God's "oracles" are left with nothing but paganism.

The second proof comes from 1 Cor 11:20 - 30. Here it is:

1Co 11:20 Therefore when you come together in one place, it is not to eat the Lord's Supper.

1Co 11:21 For in eating, each one takes his own supper ahead of *others*; and one is hungry and another is drunk.

1Co 11:22 What! Do you not have houses to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and shame those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you in this? I do not praise *you*.

1Co 11:23 For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the *same* night in which He was betrayed took bread;

1Co 11:24 and when He had given thanks, He broke *it* and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me."

1Co 11:25 In the same manner *He* also *took* the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink *it*, in remembrance of Me."

1Co 11:26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.

1Co 11:27 Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks *this* cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.

1Co 11:28 But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup.

1Co 11:29 For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.

1Co 11:30 For this reason many *are* weak and sick among you, and many sleep.

If one were to take Col 2:16,17 literally, and not discern between genuine Commandments and Holy Days of God, and doctrines and commandments of men, then observing Passover would make no sense. Once again, what happens when people take this bread and drink in an unworthy manner? They bring judgment upon themselves, not discerning the Lord's sacrifice. Therefore, be careful what you preach, friend, for you could be on very shaky ground. I hope this solves your dilemma. G. S.

Grigore, thanks for taking time. However your points are quite odd! If the Law of Moses is in force for us all today, then physical circumcision for everyone (Gen 17) is mandated. If that is your view, then Paul was terribly wrong! I hope you know that Jesus speaks in Paul.

You write us off! "impossible to bring them back"

In Col 2:16, 17(thanks for the correction on the chapter, 2 and not as I wrote 1),

Paul obviously (to all commentary, except those touched by the HWA movement), contrasts Christ with the shadows of the Jewish calendar. You are living in the shadows, alas. I think you have completely misunderstood Paul here.

Thanks for writing, and please reckon with the crippling effects of HWA!

Anthony

Circumcision was not given to Moses at Mt Horeb, but to Abraham. You can find answers to your other queries in *The Christian Herald*s. I think you need to spend a lot more time with the Bible. G.S.

Thanks: the point I was making is that you are not following Paul who did not insist in any way on circumcision in the flesh. As Jesus said circumcision was part of God's law?

This shows you do not really keep the Mosaic Law. Nor should you.

The same applies to the calendar which as superseded shadow (Col 2:16, 17).

Jesus abolished the law in dogmas, Paul said. What do you make of that (Eph. 2:15-17).

Anthony

Circumcision was indeed part of God's law under the Old Testament. When Jesus Christ spoke about it, the Jews, and the world, were still under the Old Testament. You seem to have problems understanding the difference between the Old and the New Testaments, where the Old ended and the New began, or what tenets of the Old Testament are still valid under the New Testament. If you cannot find these answers in the Bible, go to *The Christian Herald*s. All these issues have been amply covered in our magazines.

Apostle Peter made the point that some of Apostle Paul's writings are hard to understand. Since Apostle Paul kept the Sabbath and the Holy Days and God's Ten Commandments, which aside from the weekly Sabbath, are the true Mosaic law - it should be obvious that in Col 2:16,17 he was not referring to these things, but to Jewish additions to the Law of God, a point made clear by the context of the passage, which speaks of commandments and doctrines of men.

I have had a brief look at your "Is Jesus Human". Pure and utter blasphemies! G.S.

Grigore, It (Circ in the flesh) is included in the Law of Moses (of course you are right about it originating with Abraham). But Jesus speaks of it as also of Moses as you know).

We all know that the New Covenant is passed. [*Pardon? The New Covenant is passed? What are we under then? G.S.*]

It is quite clear that Paul describes the calendar as a SHADOW in Col 2:16, 17!

The weekly and annual holy days are the past shadow. [*Then why did Apostle Paul keep the Sabbath, the Passover, and other Holy Days? G.S.*]

Paul simply states that: so why are you insisting on the shadow?

The New Covenant begins with Jesus and continues with Jesus speaking in Paul.

The contrast between the two covenants is dealt with in II Cor 3 and Gal 4.

Anthony

You've had your three tries; now as Jesus said, behind me Satan. Beware of coming back to me again with your blasphemies. G.S.

You, happily, are not God! or Jesus!

I am amazed at your brutality. Anthony

I warned you not to come to me again with your blasphemies. Therefore, you have chosen Satan, to Satan you shall go. In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen! G.S.

This is a former fundamentalist follower of Herbert W. Armstrong for whom there is nothing sacred anymore: not in the Old Testament, not in the New Testament, no Commandments, no Holy Days, nothing, because we now live under shadows, he says. I do not know how big his congregation is or how many followers he has, but it is surprising that anyone would accept such blatant departure from the Gospel of Jesus Christ. And he calls himself a minister of Jesus Christ. But then, the world is full of them.

He forgets that even though what Moses received in Mount Horeb were 'shadows of heavenly things', Israel was under strict command to observe them nevertheless.

We could have so much to say here, but we would rather let the Bible speak for itself; one can hardly do better than the Scriptures. Here are three chapters from the book of Hebrews. See how wonderfully its author (most likely Apostle Paul) handled these issues.

(Please note: most of our biblical quotations come from the New King James version of the Bible. In this version, when the Old Testament is quoted in the New, it is always in capital letters so as to make a distinction. Consequently, capital letter passages in our quotes come from the original. However, the emphasis on bold letters, underlining, and italic letters are ours).

Heb 8:1 Now *this* is the main point of the things we are saying: We have such a High Priest, who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens,

Heb 8:2 a Minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle which the Lord erected, and not man.

Heb 8:3 For every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices. Therefore *it is necessary* that this One also have something to offer.

Heb 8:4 For if He were on earth, He would not be a priest, since there are priests who offer the gifts according to the law;

Heb 8:5 who serve the copy and shadow of the heavenly things, as Moses was divinely instructed when he was about to make the tabernacle. For He said, "SEE THAT YOU MAKE ALL THINGS ACCORDING TO THE PATTERN SHOWN YOU ON THE MOUNTAIN."

Heb 8:6 But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as He is also Mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises.

Heb 8:7 For if that first *covenant* had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second.

Heb 8:8 Because finding fault with them, He says: "BEHOLD, THE DAYS ARE COMING, SAYS THE LORD, WHEN I WILL MAKE A NEW COVENANT WITH THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL AND WITH THE HOUSE OF JUDAH—

Heb 8:9 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 DID NOT CONTINUE IN MY COVENANT, AND I DISREGARDED THEM, SAYS THE LORD.

Heb 8:10 FOR THIS IS THE COVENANT THAT I WILL MAKE WITH THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL AFTER THOSE DAYS, SAYS THE LORD: I WILL PUT MY LAWS IN THEIR MIND AND WRITE THEM ON THEIR HEARTS; AND I WILL BE THEIR GOD, AND THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE.

Heb 8:11 NONE OF THEM SHALL TEACH HIS NEIGHBOR, AND NONE HIS BROTHER, SAYING, 'KNOW THE LORD,' FOR ALL SHALL KNOW ME, FROM THE LEAST OF THEM TO THE GREATEST OF THEM.

Heb 8:12 FOR I WILL BE MERCIFUL TO THEIR UNRIGHTEOUSNESS, AND THEIR SINS AND THEIR LAWLESS DEEDS I WILL REMEMBER NO MORE."

Heb 8:13 In that He says, "A NEW COVENANT," He has made the first obsolete. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.

Heb 9:1 Then indeed, even the first *covenant* had ordinances of divine service and the earthly sanctuary.

Heb 9:2 For a tabernacle was prepared: the first *part*, in which *was* the lampstand, the table, and the showbread, which is called the sanctuary;

Heb 9:3 and behind the second veil, the part of the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of All,

Heb 9:4 which had the golden censer and the ark of the covenant overlaid on all sides with gold, in which *were* the golden pot that had the manna, Aaron's rod that budded, and the tablets of the covenant;

Heb 9:5 and above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat. Of these things we cannot now speak in detail.

Heb 9:6 Now when these things had been thus prepared, the priests always went into the first part of the tabernacle, performing *the services*.

Heb 9:7 But into the second part the high priest *went* alone once a year, not without blood, which he offered for himself and *for* the people's sins *committed* in ignorance;

Heb 9:8 the Holy Spirit indicating this, that the way into the Holiest of All was not yet made manifest while the first tabernacle was still standing.

Heb 9:9 It *was* symbolic for the present time in which both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot make him who performed the service perfect in regard to the conscience—

Heb 9:10 concerned only with foods and drinks, various washings, and **fleshly ordinances imposed until the time of reformation.**

Heb 9:11 But Christ came *as* High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation.

Heb 9:12 Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.

Heb 9:13 For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh,

Heb 9:14 how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

Heb 9:15 And for this reason **He is the Mediator of the new covenant**, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that **those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.**

Heb 9:16 For where there is a testament, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator.

Heb 9:17 For a testament *is* in force after men are dead, since it has no power at all while the testator lives.

Heb 9:18 Therefore not even the first *covenant* was dedicated without blood.

Heb 9:19 For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and goats, with water, scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people,

Heb 9:20 saying, "THIS IS THE BLOOD OF THE COVENANT WHICH GOD HAS COMMANDED YOU."

Heb 9:21 Then likewise he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry.

Heb 9:22 And according to the law almost all things are purified with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no remission.

Heb 9:23 Therefore *it was* necessary that the copies of the things in the heavens should be purified with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.

Heb 9:24 For Christ has not entered the holy places made with hands, *which are* copies of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us;
Heb 9:25 not that He should offer Himself often, as the high priest enters the Most Holy Place every year with blood of another—
Heb 9:26 He then would have had to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now, once at the end of the ages, He has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.
Heb 9:27 And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment,
Heb 9:28 so Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation.

Heb 10:1 For the law, having a shadow of the good things to come, *and* not the very image of the things, can never with these same sacrifices, which they offer continually year by year, make those who approach perfect.
Heb 10:2 For then would they not have ceased to be offered? For the worshipers, once purified, would have had no more consciousness of sins. [*Notice carefully, it was the law of sacrifices that has ceased, not the Ten Commandments. G.S.*]
Heb 10:3 But in those *sacrifices there is* a reminder of sins every year.
Heb 10:4 For *it is* not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins.
Heb 10:5 Therefore, when He came into the world, He said: "SACRIFICE AND OFFERING YOU DID NOT DESIRE, BUT A BODY YOU HAVE PREPARED FOR ME.
Heb 10:6 IN BURNT OFFERINGS AND SACRIFICES FOR SIN YOU HAD NO PLEASURE.
Heb 10:7 THEN I SAID, 'BEHOLD, I HAVE COME— IN THE VOLUME OF THE BOOK IT IS WRITTEN OF ME— TO DO YOUR WILL, O GOD.' "
Heb 10:8 Previously saying, "SACRIFICE AND OFFERING, BURNT OFFERINGS, AND OFFERINGS FOR SIN YOU DID NOT DESIRE, NOR HAD PLEASURE IN THEM" (which are offered according to the law),
Heb 10:9 then He said, "BEHOLD, I HAVE COME TO DO YOUR WILL, O GOD." He takes away the first that He may establish the second.
Heb 10:10 By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once *for all*.
Heb 10:11 And every priest stands ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins.
Heb 10:12 But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God,
Heb 10:13 from that time waiting till His enemies are made His footstool.
Heb 10:14 For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified.
Heb 10:15 But the Holy Spirit also witnesses to us; for after He had said before,
Heb 10:16 "THIS IS THE COVENANT THAT I WILL MAKE WITH THEM AFTER THOSE DAYS, SAYS THE LORD: I WILL PUT MY LAWS INTO THEIR HEARTS, AND IN THEIR MINDS I WILL WRITE THEM," [*Now why does God put His Law in our hearts if not to obey it? And which Law does He put in our hearts? Not the Law of sacrifices, but the holy Law of the Ten Commandments that prepares people for God's grace. G.S.*].
Heb 10:17 then He adds, "THEIR SINS AND THEIR LAWLESS DEEDS I WILL REMEMBER NO MORE."
Heb 10:18 Now where there is remission of these, *there is* no longer an offering for sin.
Heb 10:19 Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus,
Heb 10:20 by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh,
Heb 10:21 and *having* a High Priest over the house of God,

Heb 10:22 let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

Heb 10:23 Let us hold fast the confession of *our* hope without wavering, for He who promised *is* faithful.

Heb 10:24 And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works,

Heb 10:25 not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as *is* the manner of some, but exhorting *one another*, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.

Heb 10:26 For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins,

Heb 10:27 but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries.

Heb 10:28 Anyone who has rejected Moses' law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses.

Heb 10:29 Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace?

Heb 10:30 For we know Him who said, "VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL REPAY," says the Lord. And again, "THE LORD WILL JUDGE HIS PEOPLE."

Heb 10:31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

Heb 10:32 But recall the former days in which, after you were illuminated, you endured a great struggle with sufferings:

Heb 10:33 partly while you were made a spectacle both by reproaches and tribulations, and partly while you became companions of those who were so treated;

Heb 10:34 for you had compassion on me in my chains, and joyfully accepted the plundering of your goods, knowing that you have a better and an enduring possession for yourselves in heaven.

Heb 10:35 Therefore do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward.

Heb 10:36 For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise:

Heb 10:37 "FOR YET A LITTLE WHILE, AND HE WHO IS COMING WILL COME AND WILL NOT TARRY.

Heb 10:38 NOW THE JUST SHALL LIVE BY FAITH; BUT IF ANYONE DRAWS BACK, MY SOUL HAS NO PLEASURE IN HIM."

Heb 10:39 But we are not of those who draw back to perdition, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul.

Now, even if I have to repeat myself a thousand times, here are the words of Jesus Christ, both from here on earth and from heaven.

Joh 14:15 "If you love Me, keep My commandments.

Joh 14:16 And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever—

Joh 14:17 the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.

Rev 14:12 Here is the patience of the saints; here *are* those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.

The Commandments, the Passover and the Holy Days of God are synonymous with the faith and Gospel of Jesus Christ. Without these, no one will ever be saved.

A Great Christian World or a Great Falling Away

If one were to judge this world by the number of people who profess to be Christians he would conclude that the world is in good hands. But if he judged it by the number of people who believe the Gospel according to the Scriptures, he would conclude that the world is in big trouble.

What does it matter if the world is not following the Scriptures one hundred per cent, someone may say; as long as they believe in Christ they are saved. Does not the Bible say that "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." (Joh 3:16).

Yes, the Bible does say that, but it also says this:

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

Mat 7:22 Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?'

Mat 7:23 And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'

It is not enough to believe in Christ, cast out demons in His name, and do miracles in His name. One must do the will of the Father in heaven, and His will is not found in just one sentence; His will is the entire Bible. However, one does not need to know the entire Bible in order to qualify for eternal life. There are two aspects to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The first one presents us with a simple message. This is what Jesus Christ told a young man.

Mat 19:16 Now behold, one came and said to Him, "Good Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?"

Mat 19:17 So He said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, *that is*, God. But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments."

Mat 19:18 He said to Him, "Which ones?" Jesus said, " 'YOU SHALL NOT MURDER,' 'YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY,' 'YOU SHALL NOT STEAL,' 'YOU SHALL NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS,'

Mat 19:19 'HONOR YOUR FATHER AND YOUR MOTHER,' and, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.' "

Mat 19:20 The young man said to Him, "All these things I have kept from my youth. What do I still lack?"

Mat 19:21 Jesus said to him, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me."

Mat 19:22 But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.

Mat 19:23 Then Jesus said to His disciples, "Assuredly, I say to you that it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven.

Mat 19:24 And again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."

Mat 19:25 When His disciples heard *it*, they were greatly astonished, saying, "Who then can be saved?"

Mat 19:26 But Jesus looked at *them* and said to them, "With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

If you want to enter into life, keep the Commandments. The young man could have said, what do you mean 'enter into life', am I not alive now? Jesus Christ could have quoted Scriptures which tell us this world is merely God's workshop, like a potter's workshop, in which He is preparing human beings for His eternal Kingdom (Isa 29:16; 45:9-13).

But the young man asked instead, 'which Commandments?' Jesus listed six of Ten Commandments that God gave Moses in Mount Horeb. He left out the first four, because He knew that the Jews were, on the whole, observing these.

Jesus Christ told something else to the young man which reflects the problem rich men have when it comes to salvation. "Sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me." What do you think the preachers of today would tell the young man? To sell what you have and give to the poor? Far from it! More likely they would say, sell what you have and give to the church, then follow us.

Jesus' message of salvation could not be any simpler. If you want to gain eternal life, keep the Commandments. One does not need to be highly educated to understand this message. Indeed, one hardly needs to be educated at all to be a candidate for salvation.

Many of the people who formed the early Churches of God were, in most likelihood, illiterates. They did not have a national education system that required every child to attend school up to a certain age as we have these days. They learned letters from parents, brothers and sisters, or if they could afford it, from private tutors. Those who started attending church meetings could have learned from their church fellows. All we know for sure is that the apostles enjoined the disciples to study the Bible to make themselves approved before God.

2Ti 2:10 Therefore I endure all things for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.

2Ti 2:11 This is a faithful saying: For if we died with *Him*, We shall also live with *Him*.

2Ti 2:12 If we endure, We shall also reign with *Him*. If we deny *Him*, He also will deny us.

2Ti 2:13 If we are faithless, He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself.

2Ti 2:14 Remind *them* of these things, charging *them* before the Lord not to strive about words to no profit, to the ruin of the hearers.

2Ti 2:15 **Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.**

One cannot obtain that kind of education in the educational institutions of today. If they ever study the Bible, they do it not to discover the truth of God, but to dissect it, to find out who said what and when, and who borrowed from whom – things that have nothing to do with God's message. The Holy Spirit has no role in the august educational institutions of our time. This is why the world is perishing.

The second aspect of Jesus' message is reflected in a discussion He had with a Pharisee.

Joh 3:1 There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews.

Joh 3:2 This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him."

Joh 3:3 Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

Joh 3:4 Nicodemus said to Him, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?"

Joh 3:5 Jesus answered, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.

Joh 3:6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

Joh 3:7 Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.'

Joh 3:8 The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit."

Joh 3:9 Nicodemus answered and said to Him, "How can these things be?"

Joh 3:10 Jesus answered and said to him, "Are you the teacher of Israel, and do not know these things?"

Joh 3:11 Most assuredly, I say to you, We speak what We know and testify what We have seen, and you do not receive Our witness.

Joh 3:12 If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things?

Jesus Christ did not expect the young man to know or understand the mysteries of the Kingdom of heaven, but He expected it of the Pharisee. Why? Because the Pharisee was a teacher of Israel, and from teachers and preachers a lot more is expected. This is why if one is not sufficiently proficient in the Scriptures, he should not take it upon himself to teach others, for both will end up on the road to perdition. This is what the apostles taught.

1Ti 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the commandment of God our Savior and the Lord Jesus Christ, our hope,

1Ti 1:2 To Timothy, a true son in the faith: Grace, mercy, *and* peace from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord.

1Ti 1:3 As I urged you when I went into Macedonia—remain in Ephesus that you may charge some that they teach no other doctrine,

1Ti 1:4 nor give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which cause disputes rather than godly edification which is in faith.

1Ti 1:5 Now the purpose of the commandment is love from a pure heart, *from* a good conscience, and *from* sincere faith,

1Ti 1:6 **from which some, having strayed, have turned aside to idle talk,**

1Ti 1:7 **desiring to be teachers of the law, understanding neither what they say nor the things which they affirm.**

1Pe 4:17 For the time *has come* for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if *it begins* with us first, what will *be* the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God?

Ancient Israel paid a heavy price for departing from the standards of their God. But God is patient and willing to receive back those who repent and amend their ways. This is how Hezekiah, one of Israel's better Kings, resolved with this problem.

2Ch 30:1 And Hezekiah sent to all Israel and Judah, and also wrote letters to Ephraim and Manasseh, that they should come to the house of the LORD at Jerusalem, to keep the Passover to the LORD God of Israel.

2Ch 30:2 For the king and his leaders and all the assembly in Jerusalem had agreed to keep the Passover in the second month.

2Ch 30:3 For they could not keep it at the regular time, because a sufficient number of priests had not consecrated themselves, nor had the people gathered together at Jerusalem.

2Ch 30:4 And the matter pleased the king and all the assembly.

2Ch 30:5 So they resolved to make a proclamation throughout all Israel, from Beersheba to Dan, that they should come to keep the Passover to the LORD God of Israel at Jerusalem, since they had not done *it* for a long *time* in the *prescribed* manner.

2Ch 30:6 Then the runners went throughout all Israel and Judah with the letters from the king and his leaders, and spoke according to the command of the king: "**Children of Israel, return to the LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel; then He will return to the remnant of you who have escaped from the hand of the kings of Assyria.**

2Ch 30:7 And do not be like your fathers and your brethren, who trespassed against the LORD God of their fathers, so that He gave them up to desolation, as you see.

2Ch 30:8 Now do not be stiff-necked, as your fathers *were*, *but* yield yourselves to the LORD; and enter His sanctuary, which He has sanctified forever, and serve the LORD your God, that the fierceness of His wrath may turn away from you.

2Ch 30:9 For **if you return to the LORD**, your brethren and your children *will be treated* with compassion by those who lead them captive, so that they may come back

to this land; for the LORD your **God is gracious and merciful, and will not turn His face from you if you return to Him.**"

Hezekiah linked their return to God with keeping of the Passover. It may surprise people to know this but observance of the Passover is a condition of being right with God and Jesus Christ in the New Testament too.

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

1Co 11:18 For first of all, when you come together as a church, I hear that there are divisions among you, and in part I believe it.

1Co 11:19 For there must also be factions among you, that those who are approved may be recognized among you.

1Co 11:20 Therefore when you come together in one place, it is not to eat the Lord's Supper.

1Co 11:21 For in eating, each one takes his own supper ahead of *others*; and one is hungry and another is drunk.

1Co 11:22 What! Do you not have houses to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and shame those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you in this? I do not praise *you*.

1Co 11:23 For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the *same* night in which He was betrayed took bread;

1Co 11:24 and when He had given thanks, He broke *it* and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me."

1Co 11:25 In the same manner *He* also *took* the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink *it*, in remembrance of Me."

1Co 11:26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.

1Co 11:27 Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks *this* cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.

1Co 11:28 But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup.

1Co 11:29 For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.

1Co 11:30 For this reason many *are* weak and sick among you, and many sleep.

How many Christians keep the Passover in the manner commanded by Jesus Christ? Most of them do not even know the meaning of Passover, let alone observe it properly.

Jesus Christ referred to His followers as a 'little flock.' Now do you know of any church to which this epithet could be applied? Today's preachers make a virtue out of making their church big and bigger, rather than of being obedient to the will of God and Jesus Christ.

Jesus told His little flock that He will be with them to the end of the world. He did not say that His little flock would become a huge flock by the time of the end.

When the Bible speaks of a huge religious organization, it refers to it as Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots (Rev 17). And what does this Mother of Harlots do to the little flock of Jesus Christ? It deceives them, persecutes them, or murders them! And it does it all in the assumed name of Jesus Christ.

Joh 16:2 They will put you out of the synagogues; yes, the time is coming that whoever kills you will think that he offers God service.

Because Jesus Christ used the term 'synagogue', people assume that this happened only in the early days of Christianity from the Jews. They forget what Catholic inquisition did to those who dared possess and read the Bible for themselves.

Unlike other religions, Christianity has to contend with false prophets whose role is to lead people away from the truth of God and the Gospel of Jesus Christ, rather than lead them to salvation. And why would they do that? Because they serve not the true God but a false one, not Jesus Christ the Lord of light, but Satan the lord of darkness.

Mat 8:11 And I say to you that many will come from east and west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven.

Mat 8:12 But the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

2Co 11:12 But what I do, I will also continue to do, that I may cut off the opportunity from those who desire an opportunity to be regarded just as we are in the things of which they boast.

2Co 11:13 For such *are* false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ.

2Co 11:14 And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light.

2Co 11:15 Therefore *it is* no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works.

Rom 16:18 For those who are such do not serve our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly, and by smooth words and flattering speech deceive the hearts of the simple.

Php 3:18 For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, *that they are* the enemies of the cross of Christ:

Php 3:19 whose end *is* destruction, whose god *is their* belly, and *whose glory is* in their shame—who set their mind on earthly things.

Jesus Christ and the apostles never tired warning the disciples against deceivers. This is what Jesus Christ had to say.

Mat 24:24 For **false christs and false prophets will rise and** show great signs and wonders to **deceive, if possible, even the elect.**

Mat 24:25 See, I have told you beforehand.

And this is what Apostle Paul said.

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

2Ti 3:2 For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,

2Ti 3:3 unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good,

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

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

2Ti 3:6 For of this sort are those who creep into households and make captives of gullible women loaded down with sins, led away by various lusts,

2Ti 3:7 always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.

2Ti 3:8 Now as Jannes and Jambres resisted Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, disapproved concerning the faith;

2Ti 3:9 but they will progress no further, for their folly will be manifest to all, as theirs also was.

2Ti 3:10 But you have carefully followed my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, perseverance,

2Ti 3:11 persecutions, afflictions, which happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra—what persecutions I endured. And out of *them* all the Lord delivered me.

2Ti 3:12 Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.

2Ti 3:13 But **evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.**

And here is Apostle Peter.

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

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

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

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

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

2Pe 2:6 and turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemned *them* to destruction, making *them* an example to those who afterward would live ungodly;

2Pe 2:7 and delivered righteous Lot, *who was* oppressed by the filthy conduct of the wicked

2Pe 2:8 (for that righteous man, dwelling among them, tormented *his* righteous soul from day to day by seeing and hearing *their* lawless deeds)—

2Pe 2:9 then the Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations and to reserve the unjust under punishment for the day of judgment,

2Pe 2:10 and especially those who walk according to the flesh in the lust of uncleanness and despise authority. *They are* presumptuous, self-willed. They are not afraid to speak evil of dignitaries,

2Pe 2:11 whereas angels, who are greater in power and might, do not bring a reviling accusation against them before the Lord.

2Pe 2:12 But these, like natural brute beasts made to be caught and destroyed, speak evil of the things they do not understand, and will utterly perish in their own corruption,

2Pe 2:13 *and* will receive the wages of unrighteousness, as those who count it pleasure to carouse in the daytime. *They are* spots and blemishes, carousing in their own deceptions while they feast with you,

2Pe 2:14 having eyes full of adultery and that cannot cease from sin, enticing unstable souls. *They have* a heart trained in covetous practices, *and are* accursed children.

2Pe 2:15 They have forsaken the right way and gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness;

2Pe 2:16 but he was rebuked for his iniquity: a dumb donkey speaking with a man's voice restrained the madness of the prophet.

2Pe 2:17 These are wells without water, clouds carried by a tempest, for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever.

2Pe 2:18 For when they speak great swelling *words* of emptiness, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through lewdness, the ones who have actually escaped from those who live in error.

2Pe 2:19 While they promise them liberty, they themselves are slaves of corruption; for by whom a person is overcome, by him also he is brought into bondage.

2Pe 2:20 For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning.

2Pe 2:21 For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known *it*, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them.

2Pe 2:22 But it has happened to them according to the true proverb: "A DOG RETURNS TO HIS OWN VOMIT," and, "a sow, having washed, to her wallowing in the mire."

And Apostle John:

3Jn 1:1 The Elder, To the beloved Gaius, whom I love in truth:
 3Jn 1:2 Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers.
 3Jn 1:3 For I rejoiced greatly when brethren came and testified of the truth *that is* in you, just as you walk in the truth.
 3Jn 1:4 I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.
 3Jn 1:5 Beloved, you do faithfully whatever you do for the brethren and for strangers,
 3Jn 1:6 who have borne witness of your love before the church. *If* you send them forward on their journey in a manner worthy of God, you will do well,
 3Jn 1:7 because they went forth for His name's sake, taking nothing from the Gentiles.
 3Jn 1:8 We therefore ought to receive such, that we may become fellow workers for the truth.
 3Jn 1:9 I wrote to the church, but Diotrephes, who loves to have the preeminence among them, does not receive us.
 3Jn 1:10 Therefore, if I come, I will call to mind his deeds which he does, prating against us with malicious words. And not content with that, he himself does not receive the brethren, and forbids those who wish to, putting *them* out of the church.
 3Jn 1:11 Beloved, do not imitate what is evil, but what is good. He who does good is of God, but he who does evil has not seen God.
 3Jn 1:12 Demetrius has a *good* testimony from all, and from the truth itself. And we also bear witness, and you know that our testimony is true.
 3Jn 1:13 I had many things to write, but I do not wish to write to you with pen and ink;
 3Jn 1:14 but I hope to see you shortly, and we shall speak face to face. Peace to you. Our friends greet you. Greet the friends by name.

Now consider this: if they did such things to Apostle John, the youngest of the apostles and the one Jesus Christ loved the most, before the ink was even dry on the epistles that formed the New Testament, what would be the condition of the Churches of God by now? Apostle Paul gave us the answer.

2Th 2:1 Now, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, we ask you,
 2Th 2:2 not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as though the day of Christ had come.
 2Th 2:3 Let no one deceive you by any means; for *that Day will not come* unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition,
 2Th 2:4 who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.
 2Th 2:5 Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things?
 2Th 2:6 And now you know what is restraining, that he may be revealed in his own time.
 2Th 2:7 For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains *will do so* until He is taken out of the way.
 2Th 2:8 And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming.
 2Th 2:9 The coming of the *lawless one* is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders,
 2Th 2:10 and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved.
 2Th 2:11 And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie,
 2Th 2:12 that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

Jesus Christ does not return before a great falling away took place and the man of sin is revealed. Who is this man of sin? This question has preoccupied theologians for millennia. We can do no better now than to quote an article published in an earlier edition of *TCH*.

“Garner Ted Armstrong said that the "man of sin" will be sitting in the holy place, in a temple of God which is yet to be built in Jerusalem. He based his prophecy on Apostle Paul's letter to the Thessalonian Church. Here is a quotation from his booklet (p.20), with his comments interspersed in square brackets.

"Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come [the second coming of Christ], except there come a falling away [apostasy!] first, and that the man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposed and exalted himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God [a temple which is yet to be constructed in Jerusalem!], showing himself [claiming] that he is God...

And now ye know what withholdeth [withstands; resists. Paul is speaking of himself, as one who was "holding back" this growing apostasy] that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity [it was a "mystery" religion; one which condoned sin, or "iniquity"] doth already work; only he who now letteth [restrain] will let [continue to restrain], until he be taken out of the way." (II Thess. 2:3-7).

Then he continued:

"Here we see a human religious leader who will ensconce himself inside the temple in Jerusalem and actually claim to be divine! - claim to be god!" (pp. 20 -21).

And again:

"Paul clearly said the 'man of sin' would sit in the temple of God. But today, there is no temple in Jerusalem." (p. 27).

There is no better example of unfounded assumptions being read into the Scriptures than this one. Apostle Paul never said that the "man of sin" would sit in the temple of God, but that he was ALREADY SITTING in that temple when he wrote his epistle.

Neither did he mention Jerusalem as the city of the temple of God. That is a very important biblical passage, which requires an in-depth analysis. For this reason, we will quote it again in its entirety from the New King James Version:

2Th 2:1 Now, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, we ask you,

2Th 2:2 not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as though the day of Christ had come.

2Th 2:3 Let no one deceive you by any means; for *that Day will not come* unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition,

2Th 2:4 who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.

2Th 2:5 Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things?

2Th 2:6 And now you know what is restraining, that he may be revealed in his own time.

2Th 2:7 For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains *will do so* until He is taken out of the way.

2Th 2:8 And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming.

2Th 2:9 The coming of the *lawless one* is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders,

2Th 2:10 and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

2Th 2:11 And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie,

2Th 2:12 that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

There are several important points in this passage that need to be remembered:

- * There will be a great falling away from the truth of God before the return of Jesus Christ (v.3);
- * The "man of sin" and "son of perdition," will be revealed before the return of Jesus Christ (v.3);
- * He was already sitting in the Temple of God claiming to be God when Apostle Paul wrote his epistle to the Thessalonians (v.4);
- * The "mystery of lawlessness" was already at work (v.7);
- * The position which this man was holding will be in existence when Jesus Christ returns (v.8);
- * The "man of sin" has the power of Satan behind him (v.9);
- * Those who follow him will perish, "because they did not receive the love of the truth" (v.10);
- * There was a certain lie which this man was preaching at that time (v.11).

The first question to be answered is where was the temple of God in which this "man of sin" was sitting? Instinctively, people think that it was in Jerusalem, but this cannot be true for a number of reasons:

1) The Jews did not worship any human being who claimed to be God. Had they not just killed Jesus Christ for saying that He was the Son of God? How much less would they have worshiped someone who claimed to be not the Son, but the very God Himself?

2) There are no historical or religious documents speaking of a human being who ensconced himself in the temple of God in Jerusalem claiming to be God, between the time of Jesus Christ and the time the temple was destroyed in 70 AD. If that had been the case it would, most certainly, have been mentioned by the Apostles or by the historians of that period, but no such mention was ever made.

3) Why was Apostle Paul afraid to name this "man of sin" in his letter? "Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things?" If he had been a Jew he would have had no hesitation telling the churches who he was, for he openly blasted those people who caused problems to the Churches of God. But whoever this man was, he was a feared person.

The reason he could not be mentioned was that the letter could have fallen into the wrong hands. Now, who were the people who were feared by both the Jews and the Thessalonians at that time? The Romans, of course!

The Romans were the masters of the ancient world and they did not take kindly to anyone who spoke disparagingly about them and especially about their leaders. It is in Rome, therefore, that we must look for the "man of sin" who sat in the temple of God claiming to be God.

It is a great error to assume that Jerusalem was the only city in the world in which there was a temple of God. It is true that only the temple in Jerusalem was sanctified by God, but that does not mean that there were no temples of God in other cities. Virtually every ancient city had a temple dedicated to God or to some other deity.

With this in mind, let us now compare what Apostle Paul wrote to the Romans with what he wrote to the Thessalonians.

Rom 1:18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness,

Rom 1:19 because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown *it* to them.

Rom 1:20 For since the creation of the world His invisible *attributes* are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse,

Rom 1:21 because, although they knew God, they did not glorify *Him* as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened.

Rom 1:22 Professing to be wise, they became fools,

Rom 1:23 and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man—and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things.

Rom 1:24 Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves,

Rom 1:25 who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.

Notice the similarities between the two epistles:

- * The people mentioned in both of them take delight in unrighteousness.
- * They both reject the love and the truth of God.
- * Both worshipped what they ought not to.
- * Both were given by God to strong delusions and passions.
- * Both believed the lie.
- * And both did things that were Satanic in nature, even though Satan was mentioned by name only in the letter to the Thessalonians.

It is obvious that in both epistles Apostle Paul was speaking about the same people. Since we know that the first were Romans, it follows that the second were Romans too. We should not be surprised then if we find that the "man of sin" was a high standing Roman.

The Romans, more than any other people, were infatuated with images of "four-footed beasts and creeping things" and have remained so ever since, as any visitor to Italy could confirm. That is why we must look for the "man of sin" not among the Jews, who to this day have observed God's injunction against making and worshipping images and statues (Ex. 20:4-5), but among the Romans who take pleasure in such things.

In the book of Acts we find that when Apostle Paul visited Athens, "his spirit was provoked within him when he saw that the city was given over to idols" (Acts 17:16). If he was so "provoked" by the idols of Athens, we can hardly imagine that there could have been such idols in Jerusalem. No such complaint was made by any of the Apostles against the Jews. Athens, however, could not have been the city of the "man of sin" because the Greeks had no dominion over the Jews and, after this episode, Athens played little role in the life of the early Christians, whereas Rome played a mighty and murderous one.

We notice that Apostle Paul made no comment about his "spirit being provoked within himself" when he visited Rome, even though that city was given over to idols more than Athens was. The Romans had the habit of carting anything of value from the conquered territories to their capital, and monuments, artifacts and idols were of high value to them.

The reason Apostle Paul said nothing about the Romans was that he knew when to keep his mouth shut. He knew that he would not have received the same reception in Rome as he did in Athens. The Romans were too busy with their murderous pleasure games to have time for philosophical discussions as did the Athenians in the Areopagus (Acts 17).

It is fashionable these days to think of the Romans as a civilization far advanced for their time, and in many respects they were. But we must never forget how the "Pax Romana" was achieved. Only the Romans were capable of decorating their roads with impaled human beings, left to die a slow agonizing death; or use them as torches for their night carnivals; or make a spectacle of them being torn apart by animals; or watch them fighting gladiatorial games till death.

It was the Roman predilection for the macabre that provided a fertile ground for the murderous Catholic inquisition later on. Can anyone imagine such "sports" being practiced openly these days in any country of the world?

The Romans were tolerant of other peoples' religions as long as they acknowledged the supremacy of the Roman gods. But the Jews and the Christians refused to do so, and paid heavily for their attitude.

As happened throughout history, the religion of the dominant civilization influenced that of the conquered peoples. We should not be surprised then, that the Roman religion exercised a powerful influence over other religions of the empire, including Christianity. Apostle Paul saw that occurring already during his time, and warned his followers to be on guard against it.

It is from Rome that he saw "the mystery of lawlessness already at work". It is there that he saw the man who came "according to the working of Satan". It is from there that he saw the lie being spread over the conquered nations.

Who then was the "man of sin" who had authority over religious matters, who sat in the temple of God claiming to be God? Was he the emperor? No! It could not have been the emperor for a number of reasons:

- First, not all emperors received divine honors. Caesar and Augustus were deified after they died; Tiberius disapproved of the cult of emperor worship; Caligula demanded to be worshipped while alive and was murdered; Claudius I, the ruling emperor when Apostle Paul wrote his epistles to the Thessalonians, suffered from a speech impediment and was despised by the Senate.

You may have seen the British television series "I Claudius" which dealt with that period. Claudius was depicted as a bumbling, stuttering individual, always outwitted by his wives. Did he look as if he might have been the man who was worshipped as God?

The film producers were not particularly concerned with historical accuracy, for the records show that he was in fact one of the better and more sensible of the Roman emperors. He improved the administration and the judicial system over the empire and was generous with Roman citizenship, but because he was held in low esteem by the disgruntled senators, he did not receive divine honors even after death, let alone while alive. Neither was it Nero, the next emperor and the one in whose reign Apostle Paul wrote the epistle to the Romans. Under Nero, the Christians suffered their first major persecution, but that not because he demanded divine honors, but because he needed scapegoats for the fire which destroyed Rome.

Emperor worship was not a common practice until much later. Domitian, Trajan and Hadrian were the first emperors who persecuted the Christians for that reason, and that was after the Apostles had disappeared from the scene.

- Second, even when some emperors received divine honors, there is no evidence that any of them actually sat on the throne in the temple of God claiming to be God.

- Third, the Scriptures say that the "man of sin" will be destroyed at the return of Jesus Christ. Since no man could have survived that long, it means that the Scriptures are referring not to an individual, but to a position or office. Since the position of emperorship disappeared with the disintegration of the Roman Empire, it follows that the emperor could not have been the "man of sin."

The only position in the Roman world which was held in high esteem then, which rivaled that of the emperor, and which has survived to this day, is that of Pontifex Maximus.

Armstrong's idea that Apostle Paul was putting some restraints on Pontifex Maximus and keeping him from being revealed (2 Thess. 4:6-8), is as spurious as the one that he was a Jew. It was the emperor who overshadowed and kept in check the power of Pontifex Maximus, but when the emperors were no longer on the scene, Pontifex Maximus became the undisputed leader of the Roman world, and still is to this day.

The position of Pontifex Maximus goes as far back in Roman history as there are recorded documents. Indeed, the earliest chronicles of Roman history, dealing with

events of religious significance (famines, eclipses, etc.), called "Annales Pontificum," were written by Pontifex Maximus. As the chief priest of the Roman religion, he presided over religious ceremonies in the temple of God, served by a group of girls called the Vestal Virgins.

The story is that when the Romans abolished their monarchy and instituted a Republic, late in the sixth century BC, they still needed a king for religious ceremonies. So they bestowed the title of "Rex Sacrificulum" (King of Sacrifices), and "Rex Sacrorum" (Sacred or Divine King) upon Pontifex Maximus.

But there was another title of which Pontifex Maximus was very fond of: "Father of the nation". It is not clear how he obtained that title, but since the Romans believed that he came down from the gods, it is not hard to see why he felt that he was the "Father of the nation".

When you combine the titles, "Divine King" with "Father of the nation" you come up with "Divine Father", a title which belongs to God and to Him alone. Can you see now why Apostle Paul spoke of a "man of sin" sitting in the temple of God claiming to be God?

During the Republic, the legislative power was held by the Senate, the executive power by the two praetors, later consuls, but the religious power with all its accoutrements and honors was held by Pontifex Maximus.

When Julius Caesar became the undisputed leader in Rome, he acquired for himself the title of Pontifex Maximus. He felt that he was entitled to it because his genealogy reached back to the Trojan hero Aeneas, the founder of Lavinium - the parent city of Rome - and through him to the goddess Venus. But other Roman senators were not happy that he declared himself "Sacred King", and fearing that he intended to re-establish the monarchy they killed him. Unfortunately, what they feared in Julius Caesar they got in Octavian Augustus.

Augustus, who is considered to be the first Roman emperor, also acquired for himself the title of Pontifex Maximus. After him, that title passed on to all Roman emperors, but for them it was only an honorific title; the real function and religious authority remained with the chief Roman priest who continued to sit in the temple of God as "Divine Father" surrounded by the Vestal Virgins.

There is a similarity here between the Roman imperial system and the present arrangement in the Anglican Church. Nominally, the Queen of Great Britain is also head of the Anglican Church, but the religious authority and functions lie with the Archbishop of Canterbury.

After the Roman Empire disintegrated, the title 'Pontifex Maximus' remained the sole preserve of the chief Roman priest." (*The Christian Herald* No 3, p.23ff)

This resolves the question of the identity of the 'man of sin' and the 'beast' of Revelation. They are one and the same. The question is why does he rebel against Christ? And the answer has to be because the religion of Pontifex Maximus is predicated on the notion that Rome is an eternal city, and the return of Jesus Christ will put an end to that. The world is being led to believe that it is fighting an 'Alien' that comes to destroy the earth.

Of course, the real power behind this is Satan. Remember what Apostle Paul said.

2Th 2:9 The coming of the *lawless one* is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders,

2Th 2:10 and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

Why is Satan so vehemently opposed to the returning Christ? Because it will be the end of his reign upon this world! Here is further proof that Satan is in control of this world.

Eph 2:1 And you *He made alive*, who were dead in trespasses and sins,

Eph 2:2 in which you once walked according to the course of this world, **according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience,**

Eph 2:3 among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.

Eph 6:10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.

Eph 6:11 Put on the whole armor of God, **that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.**

Eph 6:12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against **the rulers of the darkness of this age**, against spiritual *hosts* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*.

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

2Co 4:4 whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.

And here is proof of the end of Satan's reign.

Rev 20:1 Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand.

Rev 20:2 He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is *the* Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years;

Rev 20:3 and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while.

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

Rev 20:8 and will go out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle, whose number *is* as the sand of the sea.

Rev 20:9 They went up on the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city. And fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them.

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

The question that needs to be answered now is how far we are from these end time developments. When Jesus' disciples asked Him that question, this is what He told them.

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

Preaching the Gospel as a witness to all the nations is the sign that the end is upon us. This would have been close to impossible before the Internet, but now that Gospel has been going out to all nations for years. The question is why did Jesus Christ say that the Gospel of the Kingdom will be preached to all the nations **as a witness**, and not as a means of calling them to repentance and salvation? Because Satan's ministers would have done their job too well, and no one believes that Gospel anymore! This explains why the witness is not being done by churches, but by two lone individuals, just as prophecies have foretold long ago.

One last point: Biblical scholars have come to understand that the Bible contains a code according to which this world has been set up to last seven thousand years and no more. However, at the end of six thousand years and the beginning of the seventh thousand years, the world undergoes a radical change that will reshape the face of the earth. That is the Great Tribulation that Jesus Christ spoke about.

According to biblical chronology, we are now at, or about, six thousand years since creation. You can draw your own conclusion as to what that means. That is if you believe the Bible, but if you believe evolutionary fallacies, you can go about unperturbed by such developments. We cannot change the minds of those who have closed them to the truth of God, but we can say this: a decade from now there will not be a single person in the world who believes in evolution, and everyone in the world will bend their knees and bow their head before God Almighty and Jesus Christ our Lord.

Newsletter

We have had requests from people to make our *Newsletters* available for them too. Consequently, until we make a different arrangement, we have decided to publish each *Newsletter* in the next edition of *The Christian Herald*. Here now is *Newsletter 23*.



“This Gospel of the Kingdom will be preached to all the world as a witness to all nations, and then the end will come.”

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Newsletter 23 (10/11)

Friends and Leaders Around the World, Greetings Again

Have you considered why the Christian world is in such turmoil? They have eradicated diseases, prolonged human life, brought the world to our living rooms, taken humans to the moon, yet they have not learned how to govern themselves. After glorifying greed for so long, they are now discovering that greed is not good after all. Two decades ago, in the very first edition of *The Christian Herald*, we wrote:

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

For centuries, the U.S.A. and the British Commonwealth have been the beneficiaries of the greatest of God's blessings. These countries have well and truly been “flowing with milk and honey”, a promise God made to those nations that obey His voice and keep His Commandments. Until recent times, they seemed to be good examples to the world, with a work ethic and spiritual values that were worthy of emulation. Their pioneers gave us the term, “Puritan work ethic”, and zealously tried to make the Word of God the foundation of their living. These nations also produced and exported most of the Bibles of this world, and were always ready to help others less fortunate who fell on hard times. But what has happened to them lately is

nothing short of astonishing. They have fallen into a deep morass from which there seems to be no way out. Their obsessive emphasis on personal freedoms and “human rights” is threatening the very fabric of their societies. Freedom without responsibility, without decency, without God, is no freedom at all; it is enslavement to one's uncontrolled passions and desires, and to Satan's clever devices and deceptions.

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

Can President Bush (senior) see now where his nation's truly vital interest lies? Does he realize the danger in which he finds himself, and the catastrophe that is about to engulf his nation and the world? If he does, he ought to take quick measures to rectify it, for the conditions are all set for the most spectacular fall in the history of the world. That this coincides with the fast approaching Great Tribulation that will change the face of the earth, should make it that much more obvious that the nations of this world in general, and the U.S.A. in particular, are about to face the truth and consequences of their way of life.”

Then, in the second edition of *The Christian Herald*, we wrote:

“People believe that communism failed. Communism never failed, atheism did! Communism never failed because it has never been tried. What they practiced in the Soviet Union and its satellite nations was not communism but a parody of it. It is a satanic ploy to undermine every good idea that comes from the Bible. True communism will work in the Kingdom of God.

Soviet communism has failed, but so has American capitalism. Such is the vulgarity of capitalism that at a time when a company like General Motors is closing down dozens of factories and laying off thousands of people, it grants its retiring Chairman an annual pension of \$US1.2 million. The Chairman of Chrysler, who has an allocated salary of \$4.5 millions, went to Japan with President Bush to lecture the Japanese on work ethics. When it was pointed out to him that the Chairman of Toyota, a much more successful company, earns a fifth of his salary, he stormed out of the meeting and left Japan indignant.

No social conscience on the part of those who clamber their way to the top. No Christian concern for one's fellow human beings from the leading citizens of the, supposedly, number one Christian nation on earth. Has no one ever told these people that “it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God” (Mat.19:24). Even at the retiring age they still do not think of the purpose of life and what lies beyond this temporary existence.

Where are the spiritual leaders of that nation? What have they achieved? Why are they silent in the face of such blatant greed and exploitation? Or are they part of the same mentality?

The country wonders why its economy is faltering so badly. Unfettered capitalism is just as unchristian as totalitarian communism. Soviet communism has collapsed; now watch for the collapse of capitalism. Those who believe that the USA will once again dominate the world, or that Great Britain will rule the waves as during the height of its empire, have some surprises coming their way.”

Ever since we published those editions, things have been going downhill exactly how we predicted. Now we have just published *The Christian Herald No 24* in which

we show how nations and empires sow the seeds of their own fall – not for the reasons that you would find in history books.

The ‘experts’ have had their say about why things have been going from bad to worse; now hear what God has to say about it. Truly, the world is on the brink.

The Christian Herald editions are freely available on this web site:

www.thechristianherald.info.

Here are some of the articles you will find in the latest edition.

- How Did It Ever Come To This?
- How nations and empires sow the seeds of their own fall:
 - . The Fall of Egypt;
 - . The Fall of Canaan;
 - . The Fall of Greece;
 - . The Fall of Rome;
 - . The Fall of America;
 - . The Fall of Judah;
- How Jewish ‘Queen of Heaven’ became Catholic ‘Queen of Heaven’;
- When Jews and Catholics find common ground, prepare to meet your Maker;
- ‘Daniel’s Last Great Mysteries Unveiled.’

In the service of Jesus Christ.

Grigore Sbarcea,

Coordinator A.O.C.F.

Post Scriptum (12/11)

The above newsletter has been sent out to world leaders and to thousands other people. This time, however, we are sending it to Australian Members of Parliament, Senators, and selected recipients.

Please do not burden this country with the abominable sin of homosexuality, for the country will not be spared the fate of those who have taken this path. Do not challenge God, for you, your family, the people you represent, and the people of Australia will not forgive you for the catastrophe you will bring upon this nation.

This is not the time to sink further into the morass of sin that God hates the most [*Not that it is ever a good time to do so*].

The world is already in the preceding stages to the Great Tribulation of which Jesus Christ said will reduce the world’s population to a trickle. Watch out for developments in Russia. Vladimir Putin is the man of destiny; he is already working hard to put together the end time coalition that will come against Israel and trigger a worldwide nuclear war. [*Of course, he does not know that he is fulfilling an important end time prophecy*]. For years, he has tried to create a breach between the Anglo-Saxons and their European allies. Britain’s refusal to join European nations in stricter budget rules and more fiscal integration across the euro-zone, and America’s refusal to contribute to the EU bailout fund have achieved that. The proverbial “Jacob’s trouble” is reaching its climax now.

God has chosen Australia as the base from which to send out His messages to the world. Many people take credit for the good fortune of this country, but they should never forget that it is God who determines the destiny of nations. He does it on the basis of how they honour and obey Him. So if you want to please him, and gain credit in heaven, join us in the faith of Jesus Christ, and be part of this little known, yet vital end-time work. With the love of God! G. S.

THE CHRISTIAN HOLY DAYS FOR THE YEARS 2012 - 2014

	2012	2013	2014
The Passover (Pesah – Nissan 14) Unlike the Jews, who used to kill the Passover lamb “at the twilight” of Nissan 14 (meaning in the evening towards Nissan 15), we, Christians, observe the Passover when our “Lamb” – Jesus Christ – was sacrificed. That happened on the afternoon of Nissan 14, before the twilight of Nissan 14, meaning that we keep it a little earlier than the Jews. We commemorate His death, not His supper, which occurred the previous evening, as some churches do. The time when His body was broken, not when He broke the symbolic bread.	6 April	25 March	14 April
Days of Unleavened Bread (Nissan 15 – 21) On the first and seventh days there shall be holy convocations. No customary work shall be done on these days.	7 April – 13 April	26 Mar. - 1 April	15 April - 21 April
Pentecost (Shavuot – Sivan 6)	27 May	15 May	4 June
Feast of Trumpets (Rosh Hashanah – Tishri 1)	17 Sept.	5 Sept.	25 Sept.
Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur – Tishri 10)	26 Sept.	14 Sept.	4 Oct
Feast of Tabernacles (Succoth – Tishri 15 – 22) On the first and the eighth days there shall be holy convocations. No customary work shall be done on these days.	1 Oct. – 8 Oct.	19 Oct. – 26 Oct.	9 Oct. - 16 Oct.