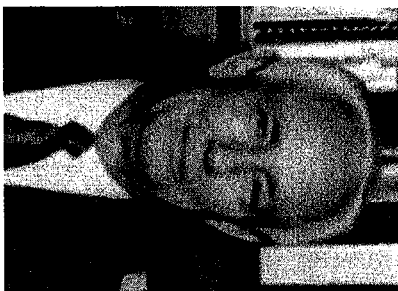


THE GLORY OF ISRAEL

James L. Meadows

INTRODUCTION

Premillennialists insist that many of the prophecies of the Old Testament depict the glories of the kingdom promised to the children of Israel. "Premillennialists also maintain that the modern nation of Israel is the recipient of various promises made in Scripture, and that it plays a prominent and continuing role in God's scheme of things" (Miller). When Christ returns, after the seven-year Great Tribulation, all the promises of God will be fulfilled in the thousand-year millennium with great glory and power. They get this golden age by interpreting the Old Testament literally.



WHAT WILL BE THE NATURE AND HOPES OF THE GOLDEN AGE

First, there will be peace. "And He shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore" (Isa. 2:4; cf. 11:6-9). [All Scripture references are from the King James unless otherwise noted.] Isaiah 11:6-8 gives a detailed description of the peacefulness of this golden age.

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Second, holiness will be there. "And it shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even everyone that is written among the living in Jerusalem" (Isa. 4:3; cf. 1:26-27).

Third, there will be glory. "Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of hosts shall reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously" (Isa. 24:23; 35:2).

Fourth, justice will prevail. "Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth, even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this" (Isa. 9:7).

Fifth, the nations of Judah and Israel shall become one.

Moreover, thou son of man, take thee one stick, and write upon it, For Judah, and for the children of Israel his companions: then take another stick, and write upon it, For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and for all the house of Israel his companions: And join them one to another into one stick; and they shall become one in thine hand. (Ezek. 37:16-17)

There shall be one nation in the land and one king shall rule over them. "And I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king to them all: and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all" (Ezek. 37:22).

Sixth, the land promise will be fulfilled. "And the Lord appeared unto Abram, and said, unto thy seed will I give the land: and there builded he an altar unto the Lord, who appeared unto him" (Gen. 12:7). Palestine would provide the homeland for the nation through which the Messiah would come into the world.

Seventh, the Gentiles will be servants of the Jews.

For the Lord will have mercy on Jacob, and will yet choose Israel, and set them in their own land: and the strangers shall be joined with them, and they shall cleave to the house of Jacob. And the people shall take them, and bring them to their place: and the house of Israel shall possess them in the land of the Lord thy servants and handmaids; and they shall take them captives, whose captives they were; and they shall rule over their oppressors. (Isa. 14:1-2)

The Gentiles shall bow down to the Jews (Isa. 49:22-23; 60:14). The Israelites will have someone doing their work. "And the strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and the sons of the alien shall be your plowmen and your vinedressers" (Isa. 61:5).

Eighth, there will be unified worship. Isaiah 45:1-22 emphasizes the oneness of God. Then God says: "I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that unto me every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall swear (Isa. 45:23). Jerusalem will become the center of the worship of the age.

For I will restore health unto thee, and I will heal thee of thy wounds, saith the Lord; because they called thee an Outcast, saying, This is Zion, whom no man seeketh after. Thus saith the Lord; Behold, I will bring again the captivity of Jacob's tents, and have mercy on his dwelling-places; and the city shall be builded upon her own heap, and the palace shall remain after the manner thereof. And out of them shall proceed thanksgiving and the voice of them that make merry: and I will multiply them, and they shall not be few; I will also glorify them, and they shall not be small. Their children also shall be as aforetime, and their congregation shall be established before me, and I will punish all that oppress them. And their nobles shall be of themselves, and their governor shall proceed from the midst of them; and I will cause him to draw near, and he shall approach unto me: for who is this that engaged his heart to approach unto me? saith the Lord. And ye shall be my people, and I will be your God. (Jer. 30:17-22)

Ninth, sickness shall be removed. God says, "...I will strengthen that which was sick" (Ezek. 34:16); "For I will restore health unto thee... (Jer. 30:17); "And the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick..." (Isa. 33:24).

Tenth, the deformed will be healed. "And in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness" (Isa. 29:18). "Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped" (Isa. 35:5).

Eleventh, a new temple will be built and the glory of the Lord will fill that temple (Ezek. 42-48). "Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts" (Mal. 3:1).

Twelfth, deliverance shall be given in Jerusalem. "And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the Lord hath said, and in the remnant whom the Lord shall call" (Joel 2:32). "But Judah shall dwell forever, and Jerusalem from generation to generation" (Joel 3:20). Jerusalem will become the center of the millennial earth (Isa. 2:2-4).

Thirteenth, there will be full knowledge. "They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea" (Isa. 11:9).

Fourteenth, the manifold presence of God will always be there. "My tabernacle also shall be with them: yea, I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And the heathen shall know that I the Lord do sanctify

Israel, when my sanctuary, shall be in the midst of them evermore" (Ezek. 37:27-28), "And said until him, Run, speak to the young man, saying, Jerusalem shall be inhabited as towns without walls for the multitude of men and cattle therein: For I, saith the Lord, will be unto her a wall of fire round about, and will be the glory in the midst of her" (Zech. 2:4-5).

Fifteenth, his rest shall be glorious in that day. "And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious" (Isa. 11:10).

Sixteenth, prosperity for Israel will be restored. "Yea, the Lord will answer and say unto his people, Behold, I will send you corn, and wine, and oil, and ye shall be satisfied therewith: and I will no more make you a reproach among the heathen" (Joel 2:19). Ezekiel 34:1-31 shows that the Lord will bless Israel.

Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed; and the mountains shall drop sweet wine, and all the hills shall melt. And I will bring again the captivity of my people of Israel, and they shall build the waste cities, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof; they shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them. (Amos 9:13-14)

Seventeenth, joy shall be there. "Thou hast multiplied the nation, and not increased the joy ["thou hast increased their joy" (ASV)]: they joy before thee according to the joy in harvest, and as men rejoice when they divide the spoil" (Isa. 9:3).

GOD'S PROMISE FULFILLED

God's promise to bless all nations through Abraham's seed was fulfilled in Christ. "And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou has obeyed my voice" (Gen. 22:18). "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one. And to thy seed, which is Christ" (Gal. 3:16). God's promise did not include all the physical descendants of Abraham. John the Baptist warned the Jews about depending on their physical relationship to Abraham (Matt. 3:7-13). The real Jew is spiritual.

For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh. But he is a Jew,

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Christ.**

which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God. (Rom. 2:28-29)

The church is the Israel of God today. "And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God" (Gal. 6:16). Members of the church have been cleansed by the washing of water (Eph. 5:26-27) and are placed in the body (1 Cor. 12:13, 18). When one is in the body one is in Christ where all spiritual blessings are found (Eph. 1:3).

CONCLUSION

It is easy to see why the Premillennialists are looking forward to such an age. The golden age is the ideal age for the Jew, but such an age will never happen. The golden age is now.

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THE COMING KING

James L. Meadows

INTRODUCTION

The prophets Haggai and Zechariah spoke after the children of Israel returned from Babylonian captivity. In the first year of the reign of Cyrus he gave a decree that the Jews could return to Palestine if they desired (2 Chron. 36:22-23). [All Scripture references are from the King James Version unless otherwise noted.] In about 536 or 537 BC. Zerubbabel let 50,000 Jews go back to Palestine to rebuild the temple. The work soon stopped and God raised up Haggai and Zechariah to stir up the people to complete the work (Ezra 5:11-12; Hag. 1:14).

“Zechariah has exercised a greater influence upon the Messianic picture of the New Testament more than any other minor prophet” (Lewis 79). Lewis lists the following: (1) He mentions the branch (Zech. 3:8, 6:12); (2) the king riding upon an ass (Zech. 9:9); (3) the betrayal (Zech. 11:12); (4) the one they pierced (Zech. 12:10); (5) the smitten shepherd (Zech. 13:7); (6) the king who reigns (Zech. 9:10); and (7) the fountain for cleansing (Zech. 13:1) (78-80).

MICAH 5:1-3

Now gather thyself in troops, O daughter of troops: he hath laid siege against us: they shall smite the judge of Israel with a rod upon the cheek. But thou Bethlehem Ephrathah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting. Therefore will he give them up, until the time that she which travaileth hath brought forth: then the remnant of his brethren shall return unto the children of Israel.

The chief priests and scribes told Herod that Jesus was to be born “. . . in Bethlehem of Judaea; for thus it is written by the prophet” (Matt. 2:5-6). In the days of Jesus there seemed to be widespread belief that he would be born in Bethlehem (cf. John 7:42).

The Conning One would go forth from Bethlehem “for me,” i.e., Yahweh. Just as Yahweh provided for himself a king from among the sons of Jesse (1 Sam. 16:1), so God would again provide a Ruler for his own redemptive purposes. Bethlehem’s ruler would be devoted to the will of the Lord. He would in a special way belong to the Lord. Yet at the same time he would be “ruler” over Israel. His authority would be over all to which the term “Israel” could legitimately be applied. Under the New Covenant Israel consists of all those who have put their faith in Jesus as

Messiah (Gal. 6:15; Rom. 9:6-29). Over the church of Christ Jesus is absolute Ruler (Eph. 1:22; 5:23). (Smith 331)

ZECARIAH 6:12-13

And speak unto him, saying, Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is The BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD: Even he shall build the temple of the LORD; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both.”

The Lord speaks unto Zechariah and tells him to crown Joshua the high priest. . . . In which, Joshua, the high priest, is crowned and made typical of the Messiah-Branch-Priest-King-the most composite and complete portion of the Coming One to be found in the Old Testament. (Robinson 151)

But who is the Branch? That this righteous branch is Christ, there can be no question. In the New Testament he is called “the root of Jesse” (Rom. 15:12), which means “descendent, branch of the family or stock.” Also, Christ is called “the root of David” (Rev. 5:5); Christ said of himself, “I am the root and the offspring of David” (Rev. 22:16). He is king now (Rev. 17:14); his throne is “for ever and ever,” and the sceptre of his rule is the “sceptre of uprightness (righteousness)” (Heb. 1:8). He sits upon the throne of David. David said his son Solomon would sit on his throne (1 Kings. 1:35). Solomon sat upon the throne of David (1Kings. 2:12). “Then Solomon sat on the throne of the Lord as king instead of David his father, and prospered; and all Israel obeyed him” (1 Chron. 29:23). “The same throne was Jehovah’s, David’s and Solomon’s. It was called Jehovah’s because he gave it to David; David’s because it was limited to David’s family; Solomon’s because he, as David’s son, sat upon it” (Hinds 9).

First, “He shall grow out of his place”—no doubt a reference to his being a root out of dry ground (Isa. 53:2) and as living among his own people. Second, “he shall build the temple of the Lord.” He shall build the church (Matt. 16:18) which is the temple (1 Cor. 3:16; Eph. 2:18-21). Third, he “shall bear the glory.” Majesty, power, dominion, and might shall be his. Fourth, he “shall sit and rule upon his throne.” Christ sits at God’s right hand now (Heb. 1:3). He rules at God’s right hand now. “But unto the Son he saith, thy throne O God, is for ever and ever; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom” (Heb. 1:8). Fifth, he “shall be priest upon his throne.” Christ is priest now. “Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession” (Heb. 4:14). Christ cannot be a priest on earth (Heb. 8:4). But he is priest on his throne. Therefore, his

throne cannot be on earth. Christ is priest now, and he is priest on his throne. So he is on his throne now. He is priest on his throne in heaven, therefore, his throne is in heaven. Christ is a priest after the order of Melchizedek (Heb. 5:10). Therefore, he is priest and king at the same time in heaven.

ZECCHARIAH 9:9-10

Zechariah 9:9-10 is one of the clearest of Messianic prophecies. It sets forth some characteristics of the king that was to come.

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass. And I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem, and the battle bow shall be cut off: and he shall speak peace unto the heathen: and his dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth. (Zech. 9:9-10)

First, he is "just." This little word "just" comprehends all virtues. He is just to himself, to God, and to man. Second, he brings salvation. "For the Son of man is come to seek and save that which is lost" (Luke 19:10). Third, he comes "riding upon an ass, and upon the colt the foal of an ass." This emphasizes his lowliness in opposition to the pomp and pride of earthly rulers (Matt. 21:1-11). Fourth, the cutting off of the weapons of war indicates the peaceful nature of his kingdom (Isa. 2:4). This was the message preached by Christ (Eph. 2:13-17). Fifth, there would be universal dominion from sea to sea. The outreaches of the Messiah's rule would be vast.

I saw in the night visions, and behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed. (Dan. 7:13-14)

The great commission includes preaching to all the world (Matt. 28:19-20). Sixth, "blood of the covenant" may well refer to Calvary. Judah and Israel had been one when God made a covenant with blood at Mt. Sinai.

Whereupon neither the first testament was dedicated without blood. For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled

both the book, and all the people, Saying, This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you. (Heb. 9:18-20)

God also made a new covenant with blood whereby all can enjoy the benefits through faith and obedience. "For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (Matt. 26:28).

But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? (Heb. 9:11-14)

THE PREMILLENNIAL COMING KING

There are at least two theories in connection with what has been termed the first and second stages of the coming of Christ.

The first stage is called the tribulation theory. Premillennialists assert that at the first stage of our Lord's coming the saints will ascend to meet the Lord and will remain with him in heaven for seven years. During this period of time there will be a period of "great tribulation." They say Matthew 24:21 refers to this period. "For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be." There are some definite reasons why Matthew 24:21 does not refer to the tribulation idea and does not refer to the second coming. Jesus tells the disciples to flee into the mountains (Matt. 24:16), but they will be in heaven according to the millennial theory. They are told to pray that their flight not be in the winter time or on the Sabbath (Matt. 24:20).

The second stage is called the rapture theory. First Thessalonians 4:13-17 is one of the key texts for this theory.

But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the

archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

These verses are not discussing two resurrections, but the general resurrection. One will observe the wicked dead are not mentioned here. Paul is assuring the Thessalonians that their loved ones, who have died in the Lord, will be raised before the righteous living are taken up. Both will go up together.

But on what grounds do they contend for two comings or two stages of the second coming? They contend that two New Testament words teach this, "*Parousia*" means "his presence" and "*epiphaneia*" means "his manifestation."

The theory is that when the Lord comes 'for his saints', it will be the time of his "presence"—the *parousia*. But when he comes 'with his saints', it will be the time of his manifestation—the *epiphaneia*. And it is argued that there will be a seven year period between the *parousia* and the *epiphaneia*. This period is what is called the 'rapture' of the saints in the heavens with the Lord, while the tribulation is blasting out its fury on the earth. (Wallace 203)

The New Testament makes no distinction between the two words. The one hundred forty-eight translators of the King James Version and the American Standard (1901) make no distinction. Second Thessalonians 2:8 shows there is not a split second between the Lord's presence and manifestation. "To the end he may establish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints" (1 Thess. 3:13). The word coming here is *parousia*. Paul said the Lord will come "with all his saints" at the *parousia*, but the millennial theory says he will come "for his saints" at the *parousia* and "with his saints" at the *epiphaneia*. Thus Paul has the Lord coming "with his saints" seven years too early according to the millennial theory.

CONCLUSION

The Bible clearly teaches that Christ is coming again. Jesus promised to return (John 14:1). The Bible teaches that the Lord's coming will be

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personal (1 Thess. 4:16), visible (Acts 1:9-11), audible (1 Thess. 4:16), and sudden (Matt. 24:43). It does not teach the time of his coming (Matt. 24:36; Mark 13:32).

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THE ETERNAL KINGDOM

James L. Meadows

INTRODUCTION

Premillennialism is a theological system, though varying in details, which embraces the following tenets: (1) The Old Testament prophecies concerning the kingdom refer to an earthly kingdom whose existence is still in the future; (2) The purpose of the coming of Christ was to set up an earthly kingdom in the city of Jerusalem in order to reign from David's throne for one thousand years; (3) The Jews rejected Jesus as king and thus rejected his earthly kingdom; (4) the establishment of the kingdom was postponed and the church was established as an after thought; (5) The Lord is returning to establish the kingdom on earth and reign with his saints for one thousand years. (Lipe 4)

THE KINGDOM AND THE CHURCH ARE THE SAME

The words "kingdom" and "church" do not mean the same, but they refer to the same institution. First, the Lord gave Peter the keys to the kingdom (Matt. 16:19), but he used the keys to open the doors of the church on Pentecost (Acts 2:13-47). Second, the Lord placed the Lord's Supper in the kingdom (Matt. 26:29), but the Corinthians observed it in the church (1 Cor. 11:18-22). Third, the Thessalonians were in the kingdom (1 Thess. 2:12), but they were called the church (1 Thess. 1:1). Fourth, the Hebrews were citizens of the kingdom which cannot be moved (Heb. 12:28), but they were also members of the church of the firstborn (Heb. 12:23). Fifth, the church and the kingdom have the same source of authority. Christ is head of the church (Eph. 1:22-23), but he is also king of the kingdom (Luke 1:30-33; Acts 17:7). Sixth, Christians are members of the body (1 Cor. 12:13), but they are also citizens of the kingdom (Eph. 2:19). Since the church and the kingdom are the same, then any verse in the New Testament which speaks of the kingdom (unless the eternal kingdom is talked about) will be speaking of the church, and any verse that speaks of the church will be talking about the kingdom.

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MICAH 4:1-8

But in the Last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it. And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, and to the house of God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths; for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation; neither shall they learn war any more. But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of the LORD of hosts hath spoken it. For all people will walk every one in the name of his god, and we will walk in the name of the LORD our God for ever and ever. In that day, saith the LORD, will I assemble her that hatheth, and I will gather her that is driven out, and her that I have afflicted; And I will make her that halted a remnant, and her that was cast far off a strong nation: and the LORD shall reign over them in mount Zion from henceforth, even for ever. And thou, O tower of the flock, the strong hold of the daughter of Zion, unto thee shall it come, even the first dominion; the kingdom shall come to the daughter of Jerusalem. [All Scripture references are from the King James Version unless otherwise noted.]

Several great truths about the kingdom are set forth in these verses. First, the "last days" refer to the Christian dispensation. Peter said the events of Pentecost were what Joel said would come to pass in the last days (Joel 2:28-32; Acts 2:16-19). Second, the Lord's house refers to the church. "But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Tim. 3:15). The church was not an afterthought on God's part (Eph. 3:9-11). Third, "all nations" would become a part of it. The Gentiles would be a part of the church.

And after they had held their peace, James answered, saying, Men and brethren, hearken unto me: Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, after this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: That the residue of men

might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things. (Acts 15:13-17)

Fourth, the law governing the church would go forth from Jerusalem. The Lord told the apostles to remain in Jerusalem until they received power from on high (Luke 24:49). They received power when the Holy Spirit came (Acts 1:8) and they began to reveal God's plan for man. Fifth, the kingdom was to be a peaceful kingdom. It would not be defended or extended by force. The weapons of our warfare are not carnal (2 Cor. 10:4-5). Jesus declared that his kingdom is not of this world (John 18:36). Sixth, it is a kingdom that can never be destroyed.

First it has a law that can never be destroyed. The law of the kingdom is the New Testament. God had promised through Jeremiah that he would give a new covenant (Jer. 31:31-34). It is called "the law of the spirit" (Rom. 8:2), "the law of Christ" (Gal. 6:2), and "the perfect law of liberty" (Jas. 1:25). It is indestructible. "But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you" (1 Pet. 1:25). Second, Christ is its king and he is eternal. "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever" (Heb. 13:8). "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death" (Rev. 1:18). Third, the citizens of the kingdom are Christians (Eph. 2:19) and they have an indestructible and eternal nature (Matt. 10:28; 1 Thess. 4:13-18). Fourth, Daniel said the kingdom would never be destroyed (Dan. 2:44). "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear" (Heb. 12:28).

DANIEL 2:44-45

Daniel was carried into Babylonian captivity in 606 BC. He was elevated to be one of Nebuchadnezzar's most trusted advisors. One night Nebuchadnezzar had a dream, but he forgot his dream. When his wise men could not tell him the dream he commanded that they all be put to death, which would have included Daniel. God revealed the dream to Daniel and also its meaning. Daniel told Nebuchadnezzar that he saw a great image which had a head of gold, breast and arms of silver, belly and thighs of brass, legs of iron, and feet of iron and clay. He also saw a little stone cut out of the mountain without hands which crushed the fourth world empire (Dan. 2:1-35). He then told Nebuchadnezzar that he was the head of gold—the Babylon kingdom which lasted from 606 BC to 536 BC (Dan. 2:36-38). Another kingdom would arise which was the Medo-Persian kingdom—536 BC to 331 BC. The third kingdom, the

Grecian kingdom, lasted from 331 BC to 60 BC. The fourth empire was the Roman Empire which lasted from 60 BC to AD 476.

And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever. Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain, without hands, and that it break in pieces, the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God had made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure. (Dan. 2:44-45)

Daniel plainly states that God would set up a kingdom in the days of the Roman Empire. The Romans were in power when Jesus was upon this earth. If he did not set up his kingdom, as the Dispensationalists claim, then the prophecy failed. A time prophecy cannot be postponed. The little stone cut out of the mountain without hand represents the growth of the kingdom. "Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed...." (Matt. 13-31).

The parable means that though the kingdom of heaven may begin with a small group of insignificant men, yet it will grow to enormous proportions. The parable represents the growth of the kingdom from its small beginning on the day of Pentecost to its large borders of the present day. . . (Boles 296)

THE BEGINNING OF THE KINGDOM

Every reference to the kingdom before the day of Pentecost always points to the future. Every reference to the kingdom after the day of Pentecost (unless the eternal kingdom is being talked about) always points backward.

CONCLUSION

The kingdom came in perfection on Pentecost. The time was right—"the last days." The place was right—Jerusalem. Jews entered the kingdom on this day (Acts 2:14, 38-47) and later the Gentiles (Acts 10:17-11:18). All forms of premillennialism are proven false by the fact that the kingdom has come and that Christians are already in it (Col. 1:13).

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I COME NOT TO DESTROY THE LAW

By James Meadows

INTRODUCTION

Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy ~~the law~~, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled (Mt. 5:17-18). (King James Version)

In order to appreciate this statement from our Lord, we need to observe the background and setting in which it is found. The Pharisees had already accused Jesus of disregarding the law; "And the Pharisees said unto him, why do they on the Sabbath day that which is not lawful" (Mk. 2:24). "Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the Sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God" (Jn. 5:18).

The scribes and Pharisees therefore, disputed the claim of Jesus to be the Christ because he reprobated the traditions of elders, which they strongly confounded with the law; and because he did not establish a secular kingdom according to their misinterpretation of the prophets. Jesus here vindicates himself against these errors.¹

DESTROY AND ABOLISH

Ephesians 2:14-¹⁵ specifically states that Christ abolished "the law of commandments contained in ordinances." Colossians 2:4 states that the "handwriting of ordinances" was "blotted out" and that God "took it out of the way nailing it to the cross."

The Revised Standard Version, the New English Bible and the New International Version substitute the word abolish for the word destroy in Jesus' statement. They change the verse to make it read: "I came not to abolish the law." But He did abolish it. Thus these new versions array Jesus against Paul.

Paragraph - Don't space

If Jesus had destroyed the law he could not have fulfilled it, but having fulfilled it, he did abolish it. Here, the so called new versions, by changing the text, have destroyed the truth.²

The statement that Jesus did not come to “destroy” the law but to fulfill it, cannot mean He did not abolish the law. “The words destroy and abolish do not carry the same meaning. The law was not destroyed but it was abolished. Jesus fulfilled the law, but its destruction would have prevented its fulfillment.”³

“Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.” ^大“Will all be fulfilled” is the qualifying statement and means that not one iota of the law would be annulled until the whole purpose of the law had been accomplished. After his resurrection Jesus said to His disciples: “These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning me” (Lk. 24:44). Paul, in his sermon at Antioch in Pisidia, said: “And when they had fulfilled all that was written of him, they took him down from the tree” (Acts 13:29). In Romans 10:4 the apostle Paul said: “For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.”

The word end in this place means purpose, and the preposition for is eis in the original, and the term righteousness means justification, or forgiveness. The simple meaning of the passage therefore is this: For Christ accomplished the purpose of the law in order to justification, and thus fulfilled the law...⁴

Jesus, instead of destroying the law, fulfilled it; instead of setting aside the prophets, he fulfilled their predictions. He fulfilled the law theoretically by unfolding its deep spiritual significance; he fulfilled it practically in his holy life; ceremonially, he fulfilled it by becoming the anti-type of all its types and shadows.⁵

JESUS FULFILLED ALL THE LAW AND THE PROPHETS

Jesus told His disciples "...that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms; concerning me" (Lk. 24:44). What are some of the things written about Him? Did He fulfill them; if so, how and when?

✓ First, Jesus fulfilled the prophecy about his conception birth. More than six hundred years before Jesus' birth Isaiah had prophesied about it. "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel" (Isa. 7:14). Matthew explains that Mary "was found with child of the Holy Ghost" (Mt. 1:18). Joseph was about to put her away when an angel of the Lord appeared and explained what had happened.

But while he thought on these things, behold the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto ^{thy} Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins. Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us (Mt. 1:20-23).

Second, Jesus fulfilled the prophecy about the place of his birth. When Jesus was born wise men came from the east to Jerusalem inquiring: "Where is he that is born king of the Jews?" (Mt. 2:1-2). Herod, the king, was troubled and called the chief priest and scribes together and he demanded of them where Christ should be born? (Mt. 2:4).

And they said unto him, in Bethlehem of Judaea: for thus it is written by the prophet, And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, art not the least among the princes of Judah: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel (Mic. 5:2).

*make a
part of
of David
Office*

Luke records that Caesar Augustus gave a decree that all the world should be taxed. This was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria (he was governor twice – the first time about 7 B.C. to 1 A.D.). Everyone went to his own city to be taxed.

And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David which is Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn (Lk. 2:4-7).

“Hath not the scriptures said, That Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was” (Jn. 7:42).

Third, Christ fulfilled all righteousness when he was baptized of John. John, at first, did not want to baptize Jesus. “And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it be so now: for thus it becometh as to fulfill all righteousness. Then he suffered him” (Mt. 3:15). John had a part in preparing the people for the coming of Christ (Mal. 4:5-6; Lk. 1:16-17).

Nothing must be left undone that would honor God and assist Jesus in beginning and carrying out his mission. As John’s baptism was not “from men” but from heaven” (Mt. 21:25; John 1:33), it became Jesus to receive the baptism of John, and John to administer it. It was fitting that Jesus should fill up the full measure of righteousness in all forms by accepting the baptism of John.⁶

Fourth, Jesus fulfilled the prophecy about his mission of caring for the poor, healing the sick, raising the dead, etc. Matthew 8 records Jesus healing the servant of a centurion (vv. 5-13), taking the fever away from Peter’s wife’s mother (vv. 14-15), casting out devils from many, and healing all that were sick (v.16). “That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses” (v. 17); *Isa. 53:4*,

~~This is a quote from Isaiah 53:4.~~

Jesus fulfilled the prophecy which said, "Himself took our infirmities, and bare our diseases." Jesus took away the infirmities and sicknesses by healing them; the context shows this is the meaning of the prophecy. Isaiah did not merely mean that Jesus cured all the bodily and mental diseases, but he finally suffered for the sins of the world.⁷

Fifth, Jesus fulfilled the prophecy about how he would enter Jerusalem. Zechariah had prophesied: "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass" (Zech. 9:9). On one occasion when Jesus drew near to Jerusalem he gave a charge to two of his disciples (Mt. 21:1).

Saying unto them, Go into the village over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and the colt with her: loose them and bring them unto me. And if any man say aught unto you, ye shall say, The Lord hath need of them; and straightway he will send them. All this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy king cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass (Mt. 21:2-5).

Sixth, Jesus fulfilled what the prophets had spoken about his betrayal and mission. After Judas betrayed the Lord a great multitude came with staves and swords. Then Peter drew his sword and cut off the ear of Malchus (Jn. 18:10).

Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword. Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be? ... But all this was done, that the scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled. Then all the disciples forsook him and fled (Mt. 26:52-56).

Seventh, Jesus fulfilled the prophecy about being reckoned with transgressors at his death. "Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong: because he hath poured out his soul unto death; and he was

numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sins of many, and made intercessors for the transgressors" (Isa. 53:12). "And with him they crucify two thieves: the one on his right hand, and the other on the left. And the scripture was fulfilled, which saith, And he was numbered with the transgressors" (Mk. 15:27-28; cf. Lk. 22:37).

Eighth, the prophecy regarding his garments was fulfilled after his death. The Psalmist wrote: "They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture" (Ps. 22:18). "And they crucified him, and parted his garments, casting lots: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, they parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots" (Mt. 27:35).

Ninth, Jesus fulfilled the prophecy about his burial in a rich man's tomb. "And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death..." (Ps. 53:9).

When the evening was come, there came a rich man of Arimathaea, named Joseph, who also was Jesus' disciple: He went to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body be delivered. And when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth. And laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock: and he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulcher and departed (Mt. 27:57-60).

Tenth, Jesus fulfilled the prophecy about being a prophet like Moses. In Deuteronomy 18, Moses first lists the priestly dues (vv. 1-8), then he warns against the abominations of the nations and false prophets (vv. 9-14).

The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken...I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him (Deut. 18:15, 18-19).

Peter, in his sermon in Acts 3, quoted from Deuteronomy 18, and showed the fulfillment of this passage to be in Jesus (Acts 3:22-24). We know that Jesus is the ultimate fulfillment of Moses' promise that God would send a prophet like himself. We know that He is the final and complete revelation of God's will to the human race. →

God, who at sundry times and in divers manner spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, who he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds (Heb. 1:1-2).

*Dark
Race*

The clearest indication that Jesus has succeeded Moses and the prophets is in connection with the transfiguration (Mt. 7:1-13). Jesus appeared in a glorified state, along with Moses and Elijah, to Peter, James and John. They were terrified and Peter suggested they build three tabernacles, one for Moses, one for Elijah, and one for Jesus. But a voice out of heaven spoke: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him" (v. 5). This becomes unmistakable proof that Jesus has replaced Moses and the prophets.

✓ Jesus has fulfilled the old ^{covenant} and replaced it with a new, just like Jeremiah stated (Jer. 31:31-34) ^{Jer. 8:6-13}. People today need to look to Jesus and the inspired writers of the New Testament for their word from the Lord.

Eleventh, Christ fulfilled the prophecy that he would be a priest after the order of Melchizedek. "The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent. Thou art a priest after the order of Melchizedek" (Ps. 110:4). The phrase "after the order of Melchizedek" appears seven times in the Bible (Ps. 110:4; Heb. 5:6,10; 6:20; 7:11,17,21). "After the order means such a priesthood is of a certain character and kind, or that which is of a certain arrangement."⁸ The Hebrew writer's main purpose was to show that Christ's priesthood,

being after the order of Melchizedek, was greater than that of the Levitical priesthood. He shows this in a number of ways.

First, it is proven by the fact that Melchizedek was both priest and king (Gen. 14:18-19; Heb. 7:1-3). He is the only man in the Old Testament who was both priest and king. Christ is both priest and king at the same time (Acts 2:36; Heb. 4:14-16).

Second, Melchizedek's kingly and priestly genealogy cannot be traced. We know nothing of his ancestry (Heb. 7:3). He had no predecessors or successors in office; he alone held this position. Christ did not receive his priesthood from anyone and he did not leave it to anyone.

Third, Abraham acknowledged the superior dignity of Melchizedek by paying him tithes and receiving his blessings (Heb. 7:4-10). Melchizedek blessed Abraham who had the promise (v. 6). The less is blessed of the better (v. 7). Therefore Melchizedek is better than Abraham. Levi paid tithes to Melchizedek through Abraham. Therefore Melchizedek is greater than Levi. Consequently the priesthood of Melchizedek is greater than the Levitical. Since Christ is a priest after the order of Melchizedek, then his priesthood is greater than that of Aaron.

Fourth, Christ is a priest after the order of Melchizedek (Heb. 7:17). Psalm 110:4 was spoken during the days of David, but Christ could not be a priest at that time. Our Lord sprang out of the tribe of Judah, but the priesthood must come from the tribe of Levi (Heb. 7:14-17). In Melchizedek's priesthood there was no beginning, no ending, no interruption by death or anything else. Therefore Christ could not begin His priestly ministry until He ascended back to the Father (Heb. 9:11-14).

What encouragement having a high priest who is on the throne offers us. We have someone up there who intercedes. He has been down here

among us and knows all our struggles. No wonder the Hebrew writer tells us to "hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering (for he is faithful that promised)" (Heb. 10:25).⁹

INCOMPATIBLE WITH DISPENSATIONALISM

There are four primary views of the Millennial reign of Christ. There is Amillennialism, Postmillennialism, Historic Premillennialism, and Dispensational Premillennialism. Time and space will only allow a brief definition of Dispensational Premillennialism, ~~its meaning~~ and why Matthew 5:17-18 is incompatible with it.

Dispensational Premillennialism holds that Christ came the first time to literally fulfill Old Testament prophecy, ~~to~~ to establish a new earthly Jewish kingdom. His effort failed but he will return the second time to set up a literal earthly thousand-year kingdom. Most say he failed because the Jews rejected him. He substituted the church in place of the kingdom.

We have already seen that Christ came to fulfill all the prophecies about Him and everything connected with him. He said "All things (not just some of them, emp. JM) must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me" (Lk. 24:44).

The church was in God's eternal purpose (Eph. 3:10-11), not an afterthought on God's part. Isaiah, more than six hundred years before Christ, prophesied about the beginning of the church.

And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted about the hills, and all nations shall flow into it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem (Isa. 2:2-3).

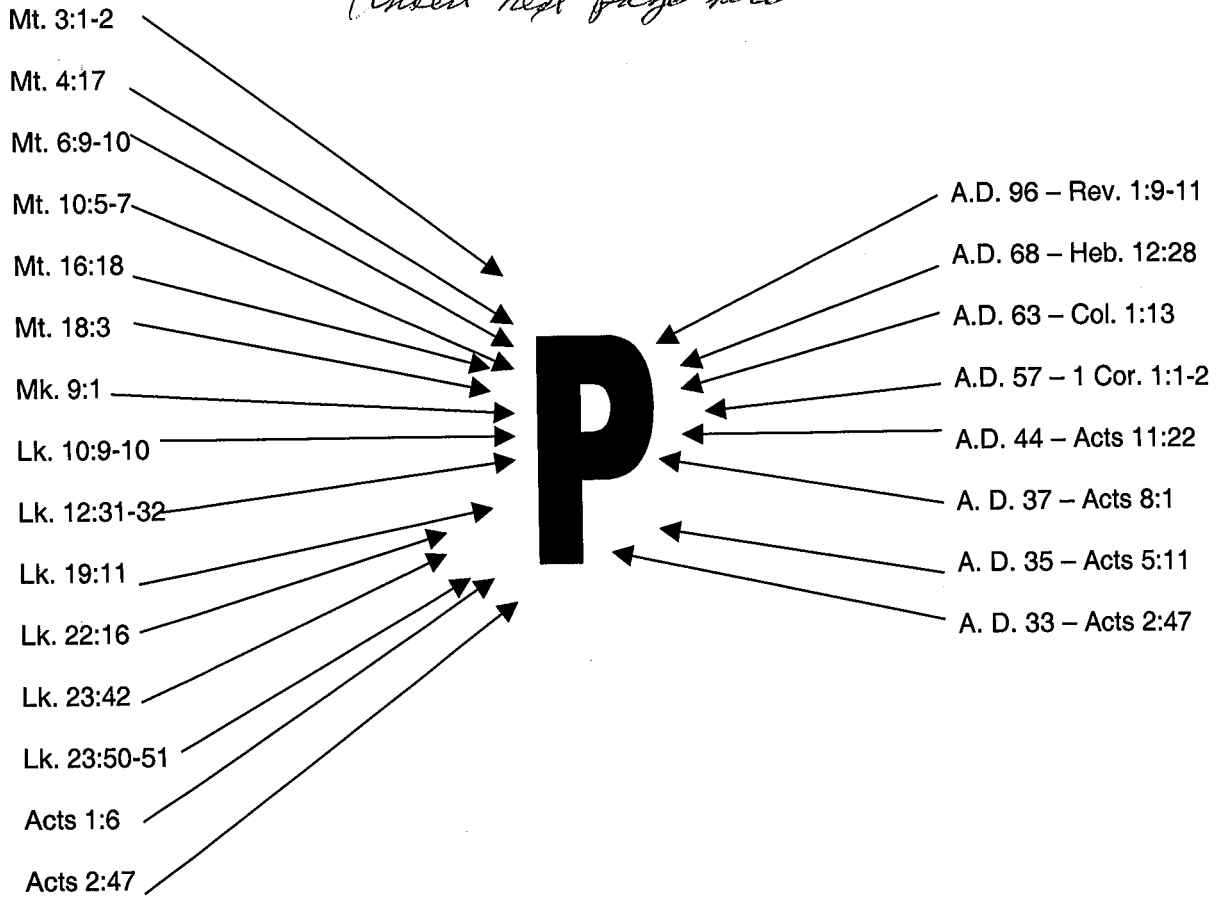
The "last days" refer to the Christian dispensation. Peter said the events of Pentecost is what Joel said would come to pass in the last days (Joel 2:28-32; Acts 2:16-19). Acts 11:15 may well imply the beginning of the last days. The Lord's house refers to the church (1 Tim. 3:15). "All nations" would become a part of it. The law that would govern it would go forth out of Zion or Jerusalem. The Lord told the apostles to remain in Jerusalem until they received power from on high (Lk. 24:49). They would receive power when the Holy Spirit came on them (Acts 1:8) and ^{they} would then reveal God's plan for man. The church had its beginning on the first Pentecost following the resurrection of our Lord and Savior. The Lord had promised to build his church and he did build it (Mt. 16:13-19). *Insert the P here*

Daniel was carried into Babylonian captivity in 607⁶ B.C. He was elevated to be one of Nebuchadnezzar's most trusted advisors. One night Nebuchadnezzar had a dream but he forgot his dream. When his wise men could not tell him the dream he commanded that they all be put to death which would have included Daniel. God revealed the dream to Daniel and also its meaning. Daniel told Nebuchadnezzar that he saw a great image which had a head of gold, breast and arms of silver, belly and thighs of brass, legs of iron and feet of iron and clay. He also saw a little stone cut out of the mountain without hands which crushed the fourth world empire (Dan. 2:1-35). He then told Nebuchadnezzar that he was the head of gold – the Babylon kingdom which lasted from 606 B.C. to 536 B.C. (Dan. 2:36-38). Another kingdom would arise which was the Medo-Persian kingdom – 536 B.C. to 331 B.C. The third kingdom – the Grecian kingdom lasted from 331 B.C. to 60 B.C. The fourth empire was the Roman Empire which lasted from 60 B.C. to 476 A.D.

And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever. Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it break in pieces, the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure (Dan. 2:44-45).

Daniel plainly states that God would set up a kingdom in the days of the Roman Empire. The Romans were in power when Jesus was upon this earth. If he did not set up his kingdom, as the Dispensationalists claim, then it failed. A time prophecy cannot be postponed. The little stone cut out of the mountain without hand represents that kingdom which grew from a little mustard seed (Mt. 13:31-32) to fill the earth.

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LAW AND LOVE – “LETTER OF THE LAW” AND “SPIRIT OF THE LAW”

Many today advocate that love enables one to understand the “spirit” of the law and to not be too concerned about the “letter” of the law. Some brethren have accepted this idea.

...the highest moral principle is indeed agape love. It is at once the intent of all law and the summation or fulfillment of all revealed commands...Love is to be the guiding and motivating force behind all Christian thought, speech and behavior... It is precisely because the Christian is led and motivated by agape love of God and his fellowman that he turns to the moral commands and principles set out in the scriptures.¹⁰

These statements sound good but, in the context in which they are found, they are emphasizing the “spirit” of Christianity as love without “the letter.” We are nothing without love (1 Cor. 13) but “love without law is a shifting sentiment without any sense of direction.”¹¹ Unless there is some standard by which to identify love then how can we know what love is? How can one distinguish love and lust if there is no so-called “letter” of the law? How is love to avoid evil and do good if there is no standard in the light of which to measure conduct?

Love fulfills the law in that it actively does what the law commands and refrains from doing the evil which the law prohibits (Rom. 13:8-10; Mt. 7:12). If we love God we will keep his commandments (Jn. 14:15; 1 Jn. 5:1-3). But if there is no “letter” of the law then how can we know what God’s commandments are? Dr. Charles J. Woodridge put the course of events for this type of attitude like this. There is a “shift in mood (love is the big thing), then a shift in method (the end justifies the means), then a shift in doctrine (questioning the inerrancy of the Bible), and then a shift in ethics and behaviour.”¹²

This is not a legalistic approach to moral decision making (it is argued) but it is the way of freedom.

In where the old morality thinking makes it the final moral responsibility of man to confirm his behavior to the content or letter of the law, the new morality makes it his moral responsibility to adjust his behavior to the spirit or rational behind the commandments as he sees it in his own unique context.¹³

In other words if one makes a decision according to the letter of the law, in a given situation, then one is not free (it would mean the decision is being made by some external force in advance of the situation and "will not really be your decision"), but if you decide what is the "spirit" behind the command and apply it to your situation then you are free. The "letter" of the law might say in a given situation "Thou shalt not commit adultery" (Ex. 20:14). But if one went behind the "letter," in a given situation, and determined that this would not be a misuse of the body and the exploitation of sexuality, but a conducting of one's "sex life lovingly" then it would be alright. Who can believe it?

It is further argued that "the legalist seeks justification through obedience to the letter of the law – the Christian seeks to know and do God's revealed will because he is justified... To turn the moral teachings of the New Testament into a legalistic system is to reveal a misunderstanding of the nature of law..."¹⁴ Joseph Fletcher taught that "they (love and reason) redeemed law from the letter that kills and brought it back to the spirit that gives it life."¹⁵ He used Paul's statement "for the letter killed, but the spirit giveth life" (2 Cor. 3:6) to prove that it is the "spirit," not the "letter," that counts.

The late James Bales gave the following answers to this argument:

- ① First, "if they have rightly interpreted II Cor. 3:6 what follows? It would be wrong to obey the "letter." The "letter" of baptism would be the burial and resurrection in water. Paul said that "the letter killeth." Therefore, it would be deadly to be baptized. It would kill

the spiritual life for one to observe the Lord's Supper for the bread and the fruit of the vine constitute the "letter." Paul taught that we are to observe the Lord's Supper in partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, and he taught that baptism is a burial and resurrection with Christ (I Cor. 11:23-28; Rom. 6:2-5). Therefore, there is something drastically wrong with an interpretation of II Cor. 3:6 that leads one to conclude that it is deadly to do exactly what the command says.

Don't know

Second, II Cor. 3:6 has no reference to the external of a command in contrast with the internal. Paul has reference to the law of Moses when he referred to the "letter." What was the letter which killed? It was the "ministration of death, written, and engraven on stone" when Moses' face shone (II Cor. 3:7-9). What was this? It was the Decalogue which was written on stones when Moses' face shone (Ex. 34:35-37). Paul's discussion concerns contrasts between the Old and the New covenants, and not the external and internals of a new covenant commandment (II Cor. 3:1-18).

when he referred to the "letter" and to the new covenant

- ③ Third, we show our love for Christ not only by serving others but also by our carefulness to do just what He has commanded. We are not to go beyond the faith but to content for the one faith (I Cor. 16:13; Jude 3). We know nothing of the "spirit" of the new covenant is, except as we learn it from the "letter" of the new covenant.
- ④ Fourth, we have not obeyed a New Testament command if we give only an outward obedience. A New Testament command contains the inward meaning of the outward act. For example, we have not obeyed Christ's command to be baptized unless we have obeyed from a heart of faith trusting in Christ's cleansing blood."¹⁶

In the distinction between the "legalist" and the Christian what is the point unless it is the following: First, the "legalist" is one who wants to know and do exactly what the command says - "the letter of the law." Second, since the Christian seeks to know and do God's revealed will (according to this explanation), but is not a legalist (which means he would be seeking to know and do the letter of the law), then the Christian must be ^{to} seeing to know and to ^{do} the "spirit of the law."

The mind of the flesh may easily convince itself that the commandments of the Lord don't matter just so one has the right 'spirit.' But since one looks nowhere for guidance except the ³ Spirit within him, it is easy to draw up one's standard of what constitutes right 'spirit' and rest in complacency while ignoring special commands of God.¹⁷

*Paragraph 1
Don't*

If it is legalism to insist that every command of Christ should be equally respected and obeyed, then let us all become legalists! For better this than to deny the plain affirmations of his word and thus, in effect to become infidels.¹⁸

The Holy Spirit saw absolutely no intrinsic conflict between the way of law and the way of love.

With him it is perfectly consistent to speak of law and liberty in the same breath and to join them in the same phrase (cf. Jas. 1:25). Indeed, there can be true liberty only where there is law; law is restraint; where there is no restraint, there is the most hopeless and abject slavery.¹⁹

In the same breath Jesus could say, "if a man love me, he will keep my words" (Jn. 14:23), not just the "spirit" of the command, but the command.

CONCLUSION

One of the strongest, most convincing characteristics of inspiration possessed by Scripture, is prophecy made and fulfilled. The Scriptures contain more than three hundred prophecies about Christ, and the events connected with Him. In Isaiah 53 we have more than twenty prophecies about Christ. In this lesson, based on Matthew 5:17-18, we have taken a few of the prophecies about Christ and showed that He completely fulfilled them. It seems that this clearly shows what Jesus had in mind when he said: "I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill."

ENDNOTES

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Behold The Pattern

James Meadows

“Jude, The servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called: Mercy unto you, and peace and love be multiplied. Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.” (Jude 1-4.)

This great text is the battle cry of the church. The great truths set forth in this text are demanding and challenging to our nature. It eliminates the idea of us contending for anything that is not “the faith.” It demands that we allow nothing to cause us to give less than all diligence in contending for “the faith.” It summons every member of the church for loyalty to the conflict between truth and error.

Jude gave all diligence to write about the “common salvation.” Just think how important that subject is. It is the “common salvation” because it is available to all, both Jew and Gentile, who will comply with the conditions thereof. John the Baptist came to turn the hearts of the children of Israel back to God (Luke 1:16). The twelve, during our Lord’s personal ministry, were to go “to the lost sheep of the house of Israel” (Matt. 10:6). But the great commission says “go teach all nations” (Matt. 28:19). The “grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men.” (Tit. 2:11). It is the “so great salvation” (Heb. 2:1-4), which if neglected will result in eternal damnation. Paul refers to “the common faith” (Tit. 1:4), and Peter addressed one of his epistles to those “that have obtained like precious faith” (II Pet. 1:1). But, great as the theme was on which he

purposed to write, Jude, upon learning that special dangers threatened “the faith,” “suspended his proposed treatise and wrote without delay to exhort his brethren to earnestly contend for the faith once for all delivered to the saints.”

What is the Faith?

A. Faith is used several ways in the Bible.

1. It is used in the subjective sense which is simply the act of believing a thing. “So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” (Rom. 10:17.)

2. Faith, sometimes means the conviction of the right or wrong of something. Paul clearly pointed out to the Romans that the eating of meats was not wrong in itself, but if one believed it to be wrong, then it would not be of “faith” to go ahead and eat it. “Hast thou faith? Have it to thyself before God. Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth. And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.” (Rom. 14:22, 23).

3. Faith is used in our text, and in many other verses, to mean that which is believed. “The ‘faith’ for which Jude’s readers were thus earnestly to contend, put objectively here for the gospel, is the sum of all that which Christians are to believe and obey.”

B. The faith means the gospel, the doctrine, the truth, the word of God, the whole of Christianity.

1. “...And a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.” (Acts 6:7). The apostles preached the gospel on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-40). The high priest accused them of filling “Jerusalem with your doctrine” (Acts 5:28). “Daily in the

temple, and in every house they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.” (Acts 5:42.) They said we will “give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.” (Acts 6:4). “The word of God increased in Jerusalem...” (Acts 6:7a.) The priests were “obedient to the faith.” Since the apostles were preaching the gospel, doctrine, Jesus Christ, and the word, then the faith must be the same.

2. “But Elymas the sorcerer (for so is his name by interpretation) withstood them, seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith.” (Acts 13:8). When Sergius Paulus called for Barnabas and Saul he “desired to hear the word of God,” (Acts 13:7), which is what they were preaching (Acts 13:5). In seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith Paul accused Elymas of perverting “the right ways of the Lord” (Acts 13:8). When the deputy saw what happened to Elymas he “believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord” (Acts 13:12). Obviously, “the word of God”; “faith”; “the right ways of the Lord”; and the “doctrine of the Lord” all refer to the same body of truth.

3. On the return part of the first missionary journey, Paul and his company stopped again at Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, “confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith” (Acts 14:22). When they first came to Antioch they preached “the word of God” or “the word of the Lord.” (Acts 13:44-49). They preached the gospel at Lystra and Derbe. (Acts 14:6,7). Surely, in admonishing the disciples to “continue in the faith,” Paul was admonishing them to continue in that which they had been taught and believed, namely, the “word of the Lord” or “the gospel.”

4. Paul declared that he preached “the faith which once he destroyed.” (Gal. 1:23). What did Paul once destroy? He tried to destroy that which Peter and the other apostles preached in Jerusalem which was “the word” (Acts 4:4) and “the doctrine”

(Acts 5:28). Thus “the faith,” “the word,” and “the doctrine” all refer to the same body of truth.

5. “But the scripture had concluded all under sin that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come we are no longer under a schoolmaster. For ye are all the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ you put on Christ.” (Gal. 3:22-27.) “In this instance, the word ‘faith’ is made to stand for the full Christian system of salvation; and so the affirmation of the apostle is that before the gospel or before the Christian Dispensation came the Jews were under the law...in the context...the word ‘faith’ occurs five (5) times and in each instance, in the original text, it is preceded by the article ‘the’ which means that the word ‘faith’ in all these passages is used in a specific and technical sense.”

Some Questions About The “No Pattern” Idea

First, why is there a need to talk about a pattern? There are many who reject the idea of a pattern today. Don White, editor of The Exegete openly doubts

“that primitive Christianity is the normative pattern for all ages. Nowhere does the New Testament provide explicit scriptural basis for restoration principles – no text explicitly states that later generations should follow the primitive church or restore it. Pattern theology is not supported linguistically by the New Testament.

In the early 1970’s a well known gospel preacher wrote these words:

There can be no scriptural fellowship between New Testament Christians and individuals or groups, which teach anything other

than the pure gospel of Christ, worship in any manner other than that authorized in the New Testament, organize themselves differently from the pattern of organization, set forth in Scripture, and/or live a worldly life.

On April 20-21, 1990, the same preacher, speaking to a local church in Arkansas, spoke these words:

Are we really looking for a pattern? We have taken Acts and tried to make it a prison, a rigid pattern. Acts is not meant to be a pattern. I reject pattern theology. The scripture is not a book of case law to be cited like a bunch of proof tests. The way to teach people about the Bible is not to quote a series of steps to salvation. I am not looking for a pattern. I am looking for a person.

Second, what/who says there is no pattern? Does the Bible teach there is no pattern to follow? If the Bible so teaches, does the Bible teaching that there is no pattern constitute a pattern for us to accept? If there is no pattern, am I "free" to reject the teaching (the pattern) that says there is no pattern, or am I legally bound to believe that there is no pattern?

Third, if there is no pattern for worship and service, are there perversions? Can the Lord's Supper be corrupted and made void? Paul taught that the Lord's Supper can be perverted and made void (I Cor. 11:23-34). Were the Corinthians bound to obey Paul's instructions? Were the Corinthians free to ignore Paul's instructions? Would the Lord accept the Corinthians' worship and service if they continued as they were?

Fourth, is there a pattern for moral behavior? Does the Bible teach or give limits to moral behavior? Is there such a thing as immoral behavior? If there is no such thing as immoral behavior, then how does a man differ from a bull, a dog, or a rooster? May I kill a man who says there is no pattern of moral behavior? Would I be immoral if I did?

Fifth, is Jesus a pattern for salvation? Does the Bible present Christ's life and death as a pattern of salvation; or are we free to follow Buddha rather than Christ? If

Jesus is Lord in any sense, must we do what he says? "And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say? (Luke 6:46). If Christ's blood is the basis and pattern of salvation, how do we determine that it is? If Christ is the ground of salvation and a pattern of deliverance, by what process do we learn there is no pattern for the conditions of salvation?

What Does The Old Testament Teach About A Pattern?

First, God gave Noah a pattern for building the ark. He was to build it out of gopher wood, make rooms therein, make it 450 feet long, 75 feet wide, and 45 feet high. There was to be a window and a door (Gen. 6:14-16). "Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he" (Gen. 6:22).

Second, God gave Moses a pattern for building the tabernacle.

And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them. According to all that I shew thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make it...And look that thou make them after their pattern which was shewed thee in the mount" (Exodus 25:8-9, 40, emp. J.M.).

The Hebrew writer shows that the tabernacle and its furniture were types and shadows.

"Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle; for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount" (Heb. 8:5).

Third, God gave David a pattern for the temple and its furniture, which David gave to Solomon.

Then David gave to Solomon his son the pattern of the porch, and of the houses thereof, and of the treasures thereof, and of the upper chambers thereof, and of the place of the mercy seat: And the pattern of all that he had by the spirit...All this, said David, the Lord made me understand in writing by his hand upon me, even all the works of this pattern. (I Chron. 28:11-12, 18, emp. J.M.).

Fourth, it was according to a pattern of action that Naaman was cleansed. “Go and wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean.” (II Kings 5:10). Naaman was cleansed of his leprosy, but he was almost ruined for three reasons. First, it was different from the way he thought it would be done. “Behold, I thought” (v.11). Second, he thought one way and one place as good as another. “Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel” (v. 12)? Third, it was just too simple. “...My father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, would thou not have done it” (v. 13)?

It was according to what God said all the way through the Old Testament. It is found some 661 times in the Old Testament. It isn't how many times this wording is found, but the punch it packs when speaking about how God wants things done; how He acted by instructions given, and how very careful man has been and must be to be pleasing to God!

What Does The New Testament Say About A Pattern?

“According to” was the pattern found in the Old Testament. The same language, “according to” is found some 127 times in the New Testament. The New Testament writers understood that when God spoke and said “according to” then that settled it and a pattern was given.

First, “they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine” (Acts 2:42). This enabled all of them to be “of one heart and of one soul” (Acts 4:32).

Second, the Romans had obeyed that “form of doctrine” (Rom. 6:17-18). The word here is tuπος, or pattern, or mold. “The gospel is the mold” (W.E. Vine). Arndt

and Ginguish defines tipos "form, figure, pattern... pattern of teaching". The form of doctrine which the Romans obeyed was the death, burial and resurrection of Christ (I Cor. 15:1-4; Rom. 6:3-4).

CHRIST LIVED
LUKE 2:1

EVER LIVETH
HEBREWS 7:25

DIED	BURIED	RAISED
John 19:30	John 19:42	Luke 24:6

EVERY ACCOUNTABLE
BEING HAS SINNED
Romans 3:23

TO WALK IN
NEWNESS OF LIFE

Baptized Into His Death	Buried With <u>Him In Baptism</u> Romans 6:3-4	Raised From Baptism
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Third, Paul admonished the saints at Rome to "...mark them which cause division and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them" (Rom. 16:17-18). If there is no New Testament pattern of doctrine then how could one determine who is causing division? If there is no set pattern of New Testament doctrine, then how could one ever be able to turn away from those who do not practice it?

Fourth, Paul urged the Galatians to "walk by this rule" (Gal. 6:16; cf. Phil. 3:16). Thayer defines kanoni, the word for "rule", as a "definitely bound or fixed space...the promise assigned to one...any rule or standard." They definitely had a pattern.

Fifth, the New Testament teaches there is a pattern for moral behavior.

Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived; neither fornication, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkard, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you; ^{but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified} but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God (I Cor. 6:8-11).

Now the works of the flesh are evident which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness. Idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contention, jealousies, out bursts

of wrath selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelleries, and the like, of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. (Galatians 5:19-21).

Sixth, Paul told Timothy that some would “depart from the faith” (I Tim. 4:1).

The “faith” denotes the truth preached by inspired men (Acts 6:7; Gal. 1:23; Jude 3). If the church has the option of continually modifying biblical truth, how could there be a falling away from the faith?

What Happens When Men Reject The Pattern?

First, consider what happened when Jereboam left the pattern (I Kgs. 12:25-34).

He introduced what might be termed “convenient religion.” He changed the place of worship from Jerusalem to Bethel and Dan (vv. 25-29). He changed the priesthood. He appointed priests of the “lowest of the people, which were not of the sons of Levi” (v. 31). He changed the time of worship from the seventh month to the eighth month (v. 33). All of this was not according to the pattern but that which he “devised of his own heart” (v. 33).

Second, when men reject the pattern they place women in position that God never intended. “Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And of they will learn anything let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for the women to speak in the church” (I Cor. 14:35-35). “Let the woman learn in silence with all subjections. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence” (I Tim. 2:11-12). Some churches now have women elders and deacons. Some churches allow women to lead public prayers

Third, when men reject the pattern the church is filled with unscripturally married people. According to God's pattern only three groups of people have the right to marry. First, those that have never been married and are physically and mentally able to assume the responsibilities of marriage (I Cor. 7:1-5; I Tim. 5:8). Second, the man or woman that has been married and his/her companion is dead (Rom. 7:1-3). Third, the man or woman whose companion is guilty of adultery (Matt. 19:1-9). Some are saying today that God's pattern is not bound on the alien sinner and that we live in a different culture.

Fourth, when men reject God's pattern for music, then mechanical instruments of music are introduced. God's pattern shows that vocal music is what he wants (Matt. 26:30; Acts 16:25; Rom. 15:9; I Cor. 14:15; Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16; Heb. 13:15; James 5:13). On the second weekend of February, 2007, the Richland Hill church of Christ in Texas (6,400 members), after three years of study, prayer and fasting, started a Saturday night meeting with instrumental music and the Lord's Supper.

Fifth, by rejecting the pattern Community Churches are springing up all over the country. The Saddlebark Community Church was started by Rich Warren, a Baptist preacher, and is being patterned by some Churches of Christ. The Willow Creek Community Church was started by Bill Hybels on October 12, 1973, at Park Ridge near Chicago. It now has more than 16,000 in attendance. Some gospel preachers have attended these churches to learn "how to grow churches."

What are some of their doctrines? Elders do not take positions in controversial matters. Instrumental music is used. There is a monthly observance of the Lord's supper. Women are elders.

They took surveys to see why the unsaved do not attend church services. They found the following: (a) Do not like to be bugged for money; (b) Church services are

boring, predictable, and routine; (c) The church is not relevant to life; and (d) Always leave church services feeling guilty (too negative about sin).

Conclusion

Sipscomb

During the Labscomp Spring lectures in 1957, Reuel Lemmons delivered a lecture entitled, "The Scriptures – Our Pattern". He stated:

"God has given us a pattern for obedience, a pattern for the church a Pattern for worship, and a pattern for work. Strict compliance with that pattern produces Christians only, the church of Christ only, and scriptural worship and scriptural work. The real legitimacy of Christianity rests in strict adherence to the pattern.

Either God's word is that pattern or there is no pattern . . . If God's word is intended to be a pattern it is a perfect pattern, for God cannot be charged with imperfection, and following it is important – yes, absolutely essential. If God's Word is not intended to be a pattern, then it doesn't matter what we are, or what we do, in religion, nor does it matter whether we are anything, or do anything".

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"Do All In The Name Of The Lord"

Introduction

1. It is my responsibility to discuss the song "Do All In The Name Of The Lord."
 - a. Written by Brother Austin Taylor.
 - b. Published 25 songbooks, wrote and published 200 songs, edited many songbooks for Firm Foundation.
 - c. Taught his first singing school at 18 and his last one at 92.
2. Brother Austin Taylor chosen to lead singing in the famous Music Hall Meeting in Houston, Texas in 1945. Roy Cogdill wrote these words about him.
3. The song is based on Colossians 3:17 and deals with the subject of authority.
4. The methodology planned is as follows:
 - a. An Exegesis of Col. 3:17.
 - b. The words of the song.
 - c. The essentiality of authority.
 - d. What is authority and what kinds are there?
 - e. How is Bible authority established?
 - f. The Bible teaches both generically and specifically.
 - g. Other standards cannot be accepted.
 - h. Conclusion.

Discussion

- I. An Exegesis of Colossians 3:17
 - A. Three essential words or phrases.
 1. "Do" shows that merely hearing God's word will not save – must do (Matt. 7:21; Luke 6:46; Jas. 2:22-25).
 2. "All" sums up every sector of life. There is no part of our life in which the authority of Christ is not to be recognized.
 3. "In the name of the Lord" means by his authority (Acts 2:36; Mt. 28:18; Eph. 1:18 ff).
 - B. "Doing all in the name of the Lord" provides a basic principle for Christian living that may be used in varying situations of life.
 1. Not a thus sayeth the Lord for everything.
 2. Must use principle and our senses (Heb. 5:12-14).
- II. The Words of The Song *CLERLY REVEAL WHY EVERYTHING MUST BE DONE IN THE NAME OF THE LORD*
 - A. First, "what you do in word or deed. . .do naught in name of man or creed." *THE LORD*
Everything must be done by the authority of Christ.
 - B. Second, "be not deceived by worldly greed. . .the Spirit says 'in word or deed.'"
Must not be moved by worldly greed by what the Spirit says.
 - C. Third, "if you are toiling for a crown. . .do not trust in world renown." A true crown does not come from the world but from doing all "in the name of the Lord."
 - D. Fourth, "till toils and labors here are done. . .dear Christian friends if you'd be one." By doing all "in the name of the Lord" our united efforts overcome all toils and cares.

III. The Essentiality of Authority

- A. Much, maybe all the confusion in the world today, comes from lack of respect for authority or the rejection of any standard.
1. The Catholic Church openly rejects the Scriptures as all-sufficient.
 2. The Mormon Church rejects the all-sufficiency of the Scriptures.
 3. "I have been convinced for a long time that the fundamental error of the religious world is a lack of respect for the Word of God. The need of divine authority for what is done in the realm of religion is no longer recognized" (Fry Wallace).
- B. Our Lord had the proper attitude toward authority (Mt. 21:23-27). Several truths here.
1. First, by what right do you have to act this way.
 2. Second, who gave you this authority?
 3. Third, Jesus' answer reveals several truths:
 - a. He was willing to answer if they were willing to receive.
 - b. How they treated the last revelation would determine their readiness to receive new revelation.
 - c. Their answer showed willful blindness and total dishonesty.
 4. Jesus refused to answer their question, because they were not interested in scriptural authority.
 5. Jesus' answer shows that he recognized the need of authority.

IV. What Is Authority And What Kinds Are There?

- A. Authority means "the right to command and enforce obedience. . ." (Webster).
"the right to exercise power" (Vine).
- B. First, there is primary authority.
1. This authority grows out of the relation of those who have the right to command and those whose duty it is to obey.
 2. God is the foundation of all primary authority (John 19:10-11).
 - a. The first time the word command is found in the Bible lays the foundation of Bible authority (Gen. 2:15-17).
 - b. This is a positive command and rests entirely on the Sovereignty of God.
 - c. Note this statement about authority.
- C. Second, there is delegated authority.
1. God delegated authority to Christ (Matt. 28:18; John 5:26b-27; Heb. 1:2).
 2. Christ delegated authority to the apostles and sent the Holy Spirit to guide them (Mt. 18:18; 16:19; John 14:26; 15:26; 16:13; Lk. 24:49; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4).
 - a. The Apostles claimed that the words they spoke came from God (I Cor. 2:6-13; Gal. 1:11-12).
 - b. The apostles delegated authority to no one, but are still ruling (Mt. 19:28; Lk. 10:16; Jn. 13:20; Eph. 2:20).

V. How Is Bible Authority Established?

- A. Bible authority is established by:
1. Direct command.
 2. Example.
 3. Implication or necessary inference.

4. Expedient.
 - B. What is meant by direct command? (Mk. 16:16; I Cor. 16:1-2)
 - C. What is meant by example and when binding? (Acts 20:7)
 1. J. D. Thomas states when one is binding.
 2. Gus Nichols states when one is binding.
 - D. Implication or necessary inference.
 1. The Bible "implies" and we "infer."
 2. Genesis 12:10 states that Abraham went into Egypt but says nothing about Lot going into Egypt, but Genesis 13:1 states "they" came out of Egypt.
 3. Note statement to prove this.
 - E. Expedient means to "accelerate the process."
 - F. The Lord's Supper illustrates these four ways of establishing Bible authority.
- VI. Bible Authority Is Established Both Specifically and Generically.
- A. Generic means that spoken in general terms, and specific refers to matters given in specific terms.
 - B. God's command to Noah to build the ark illustrates specific authority (Gen. 6:14-17).
 - C. God's command to Noah to build the ark illustrates generic authority.
 - D. God's command to Noah was both inclusive and exclusive.
- VII. Some Standards That Cannot Be Accepted.
- A. First, the voice of majority.
 - B. Second, the conscience.
 - C. Third, the beliefs and practices of parents.
 - D. Fourth, feelings.
 - E. Fifth, opinions
 - F. Sixth, human traditions.

Conclusion

1. Proper respect for God's word cannot be overemphasized.
2. Proper respect for Bible authority begins with a right attitude toward the Bible.

THIS IS FOR THE FORT WORTH LECTURES—YEAR 2002

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(King James Version)

“Do All In The Name of the Lord”

James Meadows

The Brown Trail Lectures have been highly respected for many years for their soundness, contents, and aid to all who read and study. I commend the lectureship committee for choosing the theme, “Hymns and Songs We Sing.” It is, in my estimation, very much needed.

It is my responsibility to discuss the song, “Do All In The Name of The Lord.” Brother Austin Taylor wrote both the song and the music. During his lifetime brother Taylor published twenty-five songbooks, wrote and published two hundred songs, and edited many songbooks for the Firm Foundation. He taught many singing schools, the first one when he was eighteen years of age, and his last one when he was ninety-one.

In January of 1945 brother Foy E. Wallace, Jr., preached in the famous Music Hall Meeting held in Houston, Texas. Brother Taylor, who wrote the song “Do All In The Name of the Lord,” was the song leader during that meeting. In the introduction of the book, **God’s Prophetic Word**, written by brother Wallace, brother Roy Cogdill wrote the following about brother Taylor:

It was thought appropriate in the great meeting to invite the man with whom brother Wallace had worked to direct the singing. Accordingly, brother Austin Taylor of Uvalde, Texas, was asked by the Houston churches to have charge of the song service. He first began to sing for brother Wallace when he was only a boy preacher. Through all the

subsequent years there has existed between these two a perfect understanding and they have worked together in every part of the land. They know each other, are a help and encouragement and a steadying influence to each other, and thus make a fine team.

Brother Taylor has long been one of the outstanding singers in the Lord's church. He knows and loves the truth and the cause, and has been able and willing through many years to render a real service toward building it up. He has edited and compiled many songbooks and more than a million copies of his hymnbooks have been sold. His full, mellow, melodious voice has lifted up praise to the honor and glory of God and inspired many hundreds of people to not only hear the gospel of Christ but to respond to it obediently. He exercised a fine influence and did a great work in the singing throughout these services in Houston. Those who have known and loved Austin Taylor for his own sake and for his work's sake will expect to hear his rich voice praising God in the eternal chorus around the throne.¹

The song "Do All In The Name of The Lord" expresses an extremely important admonition and contains lyrics easy to understand. It has to do with the subject of authority and is based on Colossians 3:17. "And whatsoever ye do in word or deed do all in the name of the Lord, giving thanks to God and the Father by him."²

The methodology planned in this lesson is as follows: (1) An Exegesis of Colossians 3:17; (2) the words of the song; (3) the essentiality of authority; (4) what is authority and what kinds are there; (5) how is Bible authority established; (6) the Bible teaches both generically and specifically; (7) accepting God's Word as the final authority means other standards are not acceptable; (8) conclusion.

Exegesis of Colossians 3:17

There are three essential words or phrases used in this verse. They are "do," "all," and "in the name of the Lord." "Do" clearly shows that merely hearing the word of God will not save anyone, but we must do it.

Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven (Matt. 7:21).

But be ye doers of the Word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed (Jas. 1:22-25).

And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say (Luke 6:46).

“All” sums up every sector of our life. There is no part of our life in which the authority of Christ is not to be recognized. “The sectors in which this applies are (1) that of personal morality and conduct, (2) the province of things done in public assemblies of Christians, (3) in the whole area of thought and action (word or deed), and (4) even in the secret purposes of the heart. In short ‘do all’ in the name of the Lord.”³

“In the name of the Lord” means by His authority. Peter concluded his sermon on Pentecost by declaring that God had made Jesus “both Lord and Christ” (Acts 2:36). The term “Lord” asserts the Savior’s authority (Mt. 28:18; Eph. 1:18ff). “Lord denotes ‘master, sovereign,’ one who has all authority in heaven or earth.”⁴ The term “Lord” is most often translated in the New Testament from the original, kurios, and the basic meaning is ownership with the authority to do as the owner decides. One is admitting absolute rulership, mastery, and control of one’s life when he speaks of Jesus as Lord.

Doing “all in the name of the Lord” provides a basic principle for Christian living that may be used in varying situations of life. God has not given a “Thou shalt” or “Thou shalt not” in every situation we face, but He has given principles that

apply to all situations. After answering the Corinthians' question about eating meats offered to idols, Paul sums up his advice in these words: "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God" (1 Cor. 10:31). By using our senses and applying God's universal principles, we are able "to discern between good and evil" (Heb. 5:14) in those areas where God has not specifically stated His will.

The words of the song clearly reveal why everything must be done in the name of the Lord. ✓ First, "whatever you do in word or deed...do nought in name of man or creed." Everything is to be done by the authority of Christ. ✓ Second, "be not deceived by worldly greed...The Spirit says 'in word or deed.'" Man must not be moved by worldly greed in what he does, but must listen to the Spirit who says "in word or deed." ✓ Third, "if you are toiling for a crown..."do not trust in world renown." A true crown does not come from the world but it comes from doing all "in the name of the Lord." ✓ Fourth, "till toils and labors here are done...dear Christian friends you'd be one." The toils and care of this world are great, but by doing things "in the name of the Lord" our united effort overcomes them.

The Essentiality of Authority

Our world is one of much confusion and great disturbance. Restlessness prevails on every hand. How does one explain it? Much, maybe all, of the confusion that prevails today is due to a lack of respect for authority, or a failure to accept any standard as an all-sufficient guide. The Catholic Church openly admits that she does not accept the scriptures as an all-sufficient guide. "We must, therefore, conclude that the scriptures alone cannot be a sufficient guide and rule of faith because they cannot, at any time, be within the reach of every inquirer; because they are not of themselves

clear and intelligible even in matters of highest importance, and because they do not contain all the truths necessary for salvation.”⁵

Several years ago brother Foy E. Wallace, Jr. wrote: “I have been convinced for a long time that the fundamental error of the religious world today is a lack of respect for the Word of God. The need of divine authority for what is done in the realm of religion is no longer recognized.”⁶

An incident in the life of our Lord illustrates in a wonderful way the proper attitude toward authority.

And when he was come into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came unto him as he was teaching, and said, By what authority doest thou these things? And who gave thee this authority? And Jesus answered and said unto them, I also will ask you one thing, which if ye tell me, I in like wise will tell you by what authority I do these things. The baptism of John, whence was it? From heaven, or of men? And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say unto us, Why did ye not then believe him? But if we shall say, Of men; we fear the people; for all hold John as a prophet. And they answered Jesus, and said, We cannot tell. And he said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things (Mt. 21:23-27).

There are several foundation truths necessary to understand this text.

First, when the chief priests and elders asked the question they wanted to know what right do you have to act in this way. What kind of authority do you possess? By whose agency was this authority bestowed?

Second, who were those that asked the question? They were representatives of the Sanhedrin and, therefore, representatives of the official authority of the Jewish people (cf. Mt. 2:4-5). Who gave you this authority? You did not come to us. What you did was not under our command and supervision. Matthew 16:21; 20:17-

19; 26:1-5, 14-15, 47, 59 reveal the character of these people who possessed authority, but used it wrongly. This explains why Jesus dealt with them as He did.

Third, Jesus' question reveals several truths: (1) He declared unto them that He was quite willing to tell them, if they were ready to receive the answer. He did not decline to declare His authority. He did not resent their interference. He wanted to see if they were prepared to receive the answer. (2) He wanted them to know that how they treated the last revelation would declare or determine their readiness to receive a new revelation. (3) Their answer revealed willful blindness and total dishonesty. They had seen John's ministry and its results.

In the face of all evidence they declared "we know not." If they were dishonest about John then they would be dishonest with Christ. Thus Jesus refused to answer their question because He knew they were not interested in scriptural authority. They were "concerned about ecclesiastical authority, authority that they had assumed" (Franklin Camp).

The chief priests and elders recognized the necessity of authority but were unwilling to accept the right authority. Jesus' answer to their question shows that He recognized the necessity of authority (John 6:38; Mt. 16:19).

What Is Authority, And What Kinds Are there?

Authority is "the right to command and enforce obedience; the right to act by virtue of office, station or relation; as, the authority of parent over child; authority of an officer" (Webster). Vine defines authority thus: "From the meaning of leave or permission, or liberty of doing as one pleases, it passed to that of the ability or strength

with which one is endowed, then to that of the power of authority, the right to exercise power....”⁷

Primary Authority

There is primary authority that grows out of the relation of those who have the right to command and those whose duty it is to obey. God is the fountain of all primary authority. At Jesus’ trial, Pilate said: “Speakest thou not unto me? Knowest thou not that I have the power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee” (John 19:10). Jesus answered, “Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above...” (John 19:11).

The first time the word command is found in the Bible is in Genesis 2:16. A basic principle of Bible authority can be learned by studying this passage. “And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat; But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die” (Gen. 2:15-17). This is a positive command. It rests entirely on the Sovereignty of God. “And the Lord God COMMANDED THE MAN SAYING” (Gen. 2:16) lays the foundation of Bible authority.

When God speaks it is a manifestation of his authority. The ultimate in respect for the authority of God is to accept it and submit to it because it is God speaking. Positive commands are the supreme test of our respect for the authority of God. God speaks and we obey. We do not pause to question or quibble. A failure to recognize the importance of positive commands plants the seeds of rebellion against the authority of God. The nature of God’s holiness assures us that there will be commands that are social and ethical but they are not the supreme test of the recognition of God’s authority. Obedience to positive commands rests simply on the fact that God said it. The obedience does not need to be propped up by human wisdom and social needs. The one that properly understands the

nature of positive commands and is obedient to them will never question anything else God says.⁸

Delegated Authority

There is delegated authority that can be given to another by the party holding primary authority. This is the right to command and enforce obedience. **First, God delegated authority to his Son.** Jesus prefaced the great Commission with "...all power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Mt. 28:18). Jesus said the Father gave "...to the Son to have life in himself; And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man" (John 5:26b-27). God "Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son..." (Heb. 1:2).

Second, Christ delegated authority to the apostles. "Verily I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall lose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (Mt. 18:18; cf. Mt. 16:19). In his prayer to God, Jesus said: "For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me, and they have received them..." (John 17:8). In order to avoid any mistake or error (because of the weaknesses and imperfections of the apostles) in receiving and communicating of God's will to man, Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to guide the apostles into all truth.

But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you (John 14:26).

But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me (John 15:26).

Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth; for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come (John 16:13).

He told the apostles to remain in Jerusalem "...until ye be endued with power from on high" (Luke 24:49). They were to receive this power when the Holy Spirit came on them (Acts 1:5). The apostles were "filled with the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:4) on Pentecost.

The apostles claimed that the words they spoke came from God.

Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought: But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual (I Cor. 2:6-13).

But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ (Gal. 1:11-12).

The apostles are still administering the authority they received because they delegated it to no one. "And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Mt. 19:28). One that receives the apostles and their teachings receives the Lord. "He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me" (Luke 10:16). "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth me; and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me" (John 13:20). Their teaching is Christ's teaching; their authority, the authority

of Christ. The apostolic authority today is in the words they spoke, because these words have the authority of God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit behind them.

How Is Bible Authority Established?

Bible authority is established by a (1) direct statement (or command), (2) example, (3) implication or necessary inferences, and we might add (4) expedient. There are some who are so "advanced in knowledge" that they ridicule the truth I have just stated.

Direct Statement

In most areas we have little trouble understanding the authoritative nature of a direct statement. "A direct statement may be a simple declaration of fact, it may be a command, it may be a prohibition, it may be the expression of a wish; or it may even be a question. Regardless of its form, the direct statement is a clear method of teaching."⁹ How do we know that baptism is for the remission of sins? The Bible directly states it (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38). How do we know that we are to give on the first day of the week? The Bible directly states it (I Cor. 16:1-2).

Example

The Bible also gives authority by an approved example. How does one determine when an example is binding and when one is not binding? Brother J. D. Thomas sets forth what he calls Pattern Principles for examples:

Any New Testament example that implies an underlying command, which requires specific action or attitude of its exemplary characters, establishes a pattern, which requires the same specific action or attitudes of people today.... Any New Testament example that does not imply an underlying command which would require specific action or attitude of the exemplary characters, establishes no pattern whatever, and serves only to illustrate matters that are purely optional for people today.¹⁰

Brother Gus Nichols often stated: "An example is binding when there is a stated or necessarily inferred background command for their doing what they did."

Implication or Necessary Inference

By implication we are simply talking about that which the Bible teaches without directly stating it. Using the meanings of the word imply ("to hint; suggest; intimate") and the word infer ("To conclude or decide from something known or assumed") we can clearly see that the Bible implies and we infer. Genesis 12:10 clearly states that Abram went down into Egypt. The Bible says nothing about Lot going into Egypt but we know that he did because Genesis 13:1 clearly states they came out of Egypt.

✓ Since there was a time previous to this when Lot was not in Egypt, and since it is now stated that Lot went up out of Egypt, the clear implication is that Lot had gone into Egypt. This necessary conclusion is what is referred to as necessary inference. Though there is no direct statement to the effect that Lot went into Egypt, the Bible teaches as certainly that Lot went into Egypt as it teaches he came out of Egypt.¹¹

Expedient

In "expedient" there is the inherent idea of advantage. To "expedite" means to accelerate the process. There is no expediency where there is no obligation. In other words I cannot seek to justify something by arbitrarily calling it an "expedient." The songbook is expedient because we are obligated to sing (Eph. 5:19). The building is expedient because we are obligated to assemble (Heb. 10:25).

The Lord's Supper Defines and Illustrates Bible Authority

1. Express Command: "This do in remembrance of me" (I Cor. 11:23-24). (Observance).
2. Approved Example: "And upon the first day of the week when the disciples came together to break bread" (Acts 20:7). (Time of observance).

3. Implication: "The first day of the week...to break bread" (Acts 20:7). (Frequency of observance).
4. Expedient: Any hour within the first day of the week.

The Bible Teaches Both Generically and Specifically

Generic authority means that given or spoken in general terms. **Specific authority** simply refers to those matters given in specific terms.

God's command to Noah to build the ark illustrates specific authority. God commanded Noah to make "thee an ark of gopher wood" (Gen. 6:14). This is specific authority. If God had told Noah to build something then he could have built a house, barn, or boat and still obeyed God. But an ark is specific and excludes everything else. God gave Noah several more specifics (Gen. 6:14-17). "Make thee an ark of gopher wood"; "pitch it within and without with pitch"; "the length of it shall be three hundred cubits"; the breadth of it fifty cubits"; "the height of it thirty cubits"; "a window shall thou make to the ark"; "and the door of the ark"; the ark was to have "lower, second, and third stories."

God's command to Noah to build the ark also illustrates generic authority. God didn't tell Noah how to cut the wood, how to get it to the place of the building, or what size trees to use. He didn't tell him how many rooms or what size rooms. He told him to place a door in the side of the ark, but He didn't tell him where or what size the door was to be. The command to build included all these things, but they were left to Noah's judgment.

God's command to Noah was both inclusive and exclusive. God did not specifically tell Noah not to use pine wood, but He told him to use gopher wood. That

excluded every other kind of wood. God did not specifically tell Noah to use tools to cut the wood and build the ark, but they are included in the command to build.

Accepting God's Word As The Final Authority Means Other Standards Are Unacceptable

First, the voice of the majority is not a trustworthy guide. Often only the minority pleases God. Only eight souls were saved from the flood (I Pet. 3:20-21). Jesus taught that "many" walk the broad way (Mt. 7:13-14). The fact that the majority is for something does not necessarily prove it wrong, but this is not the standard of authority. "Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil..." (Ex. 23:2a).

Second, conscience is not a safe religious guide. Saul, before his conversion, lived a strict conscientious, religious life (Acts 23:1; cf. Phil. 3:6); acted in strict obedience to his conscience (Acts 26:9; I Tim. 1:13). To affirm that a good conscience is sufficient is to place a premium on persecuting the church. The conscience is a creature of education. It approves or disapproves according to the way we have been taught. A defiled conscience (Tit. 1:15) and a seared conscience (I Tim. 4:1-3) would not be a reliable guide. Romans 14:22-23 clearly teaches that one must have a clear conscience to please God, but a clear conscience is not always a seal of spiritual security.

Third, we cannot be governed by the beliefs and practices of parents in religious matters. Many people are what they are religiously because of their parents' beliefs. Parents may be in error. Each person has a personal obligation (Rom. 14:12). "My parents were honest." If so, they would have accepted any additional spiritual truth

they learned. Be as honest as you believe your parents were and accept the truth that you have learned.

Fourth, we must reject feeling as a safe religious guide. Error when believed will produce the same feelings as truth, if one believes it is the truth. Jacob believed that Joseph was dead, when he saw the blood on Joseph's coat. He rent "his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his loins, and mourned for his son many days...but he refused to be comforted..." (Gen. 37:34-35). Would his feelings have been any different if what he believed had been the truth? Feelings have a place in religion but must never be used as the standard of authority.

Fifth, we must not walk by opinion. An opinion may seem right but proven wrong (Prov. 14:12). If opinion was a safe guide then every man would be a law unto himself. What is right would vary with every individual (cf. Jud. 21:25). The Christian must "walk by faith" (II Cor. 5:7)—not opinion. Christians must not be governed by what appears to be right, but what does God's word say.

Sixth, human traditions must not be regarded as expressions of God's will. But are not Christians to observe traditions? Yes! The term "traditions" is sometimes used to mean the commandments of God (II Thess. 3:6, 15) and sometimes the commandments of men (Mk. 7:7-8). Jesus strongly condemned men for adopting human traditions (Mt. 15:1-9; Mk. 7:1-13).

Conclusion

Proper respect for Christ and his word must be emphasized. When men disrespect the law they disrespect the persons who made it. When men disregard

God's law by following other guides they disrespect God and reveal a determination to rebel against His authority (Psa. 119:161).

Proper respect for Bible authority begins with the right attitude toward the Bible (Psa. 119); accepts the Bible as the standard of authority; searches for proof of its authority (I Thess. 5:21; I John 4:1) and follows it to Christ.

ENDNOTES

¹Foy E. Wallace, Jr., **God's Prophetic Word** (Lufkin, Texas: The Roy E. Cogdill Publishing Co., 1946), p. IX-X.

²All Scripture quotations are from the King James Version unless otherwise indicated.

³James Burton Coffman, **Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians** (Abilene, Tex.: Abilene Christian University Press, 1977), Vol. VIII, p. 380.

⁴Gareth L. Reese, **Acts** (Joplin, MO., College Press, 1976), p. 72.

⁵Joseph Henry Thayer, "kurios," in **A Greek English Lexicon of The New Testament** (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1958), p. 365.

⁶James C. Gibbons, **The Faith of Our Fathers** (New York: John Murphy Co., n.d.), pp. 89-90.

⁷Foy E. Wallace, Jr., **Bulwarks of The Faith** (Oklahoma City, OK, 1951), p. 229.

⁸W. E. Vine, **Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words** (Westwood, N.J.: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1962), p. 89.

⁹Franklin Camp, **Palmetto Messenger**, "Authority," July 1997, p. 3.

¹⁰Bobby Duncan, **Lessons In Lyrics**, "Do All In The Name of the Lord" (Pulaski, Tn.: Sain Publications, 1998), p. 391.

¹¹J. P. Thomas, **We Be Brethren** (Abilene, Tex.: Biblical Research Press, 1958), p. 91.

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Abortion was permissible in the Old

Testament. "If men strive, and hurt a woman with child, so that her fruit depart from her, and yet no mischief follow: he shall be surely punished, according as the woman's husband will lay upon him; and he shall pay as the judges determine. And if any mischief follow then thou shalt give life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe" (Ex. 21:22-24).

First, consider the views of those who use these verses to prove that abortion was permissible in the Old Testament because God does not consider the fetus as a soul.

A. "A second factor suggestion that abortion was permissible is that God does not regard the fetus as a soul, no matter how far gestation has progressed. The law plainly exacts: 'If a man kills any human life he will be put to death' (Lev. 24:17). But according to Exodus 21:22-24 the

destruction of a fetus is not a capital offense. The divine law reads: "When men struggle together and one of them pushes a pregnant woman and she suffers a miscarriage but no other harm happens, he shall be fined according as the woman's husband may exact from him.... But if harm does ensue, then you shall impose soul for soul... clearly then, in contrast to the mother, the fetus is not reckoned as a soul. The money

compensation seems to have been imposed not to protect the fetus but rather to compensate the father for his loss." (Bruce Walthe, Christianity Today, "The Old Testament and Birth Control," Nov. 8, 1968.)

- B. "It can be inferred here, that the fetus was not considered a human life or 'life for life' would have been demanded as it was for the mother's life or at least a 'fetus for fetus' as was done under Assyrian law."

("When Does Life Begin?", Eternity, Feb. 1971)

C. "Often when men strive, a wife tries to intervene and gets hurt. If the woman was pregnant, and lost her child, the man who hurt her must pay a fine to her husband as required by the judges. Since the death of the child was accidental, the death penalty was not imposed.

However, if further harm resulted, such as the death of the mother, the death

penalty was applicable, unless the slayer could prove his act was unintentional (Cf. 13,14) (Leo G. Cox, Beacon Bible Commentary, Beacon Hill I, 253)

D. All these statements either state or imply three things:

1. That verse 22 refers to a miscarriage, the death of the unborn child.
2. That this supposed death of the fetus is the injury for which the guilty party is only fined, while injury to the

mother is considered to be further harm serious enough to invoke the lex talionis (eye for eye, etc.)

3. Thus, "abortion was permissible in the Old Testament."

Second, There are some serious objections to using Exodus 21:22-24 to prove that abortion was permissible in the Old Testament.

A. "There is absolutely no linguistic justification for translating verse 22 to refer to a miscarriage." (Abortion and

the Mosaic Law" Christianity Today

March 16, 1973)

- 1) The clause "so that her fruit depart,"
in both the KJV and ASV literally
reads "And her children come out."
- 2) The verb is yatza which has the
common meaning of "to go out, to go
forth, to come forth."
 - a) It is often used to refer to the
ordinary birth of children either as
coming forth from the loins of the

father (Gen. 15:4; 46:26; I Kings 8:19; Isa. 39:7), or as coming forth from the womb of the mother (Gen. 25:25; 38:28,29; Job 1:21; Eccle. 5:15, Jer. 1:5; 20:18).

b) "In no case is the word used to indicate a miscarriage." In Num. 12:12 it refers to a still-born child but a stillbirth is not a miscarriage.

3) A common word for child or offspring

10

is the noun yeled. (Plural here)

"A second reason it refers to a premature birth and not a miscarriage is that there is a Hebrew word, Shachol, that specifically refers to the event of miscarriage."

- 1) The word shachol is used in Exodus 23:26 and Hosea to refer to miscarriage among human beings.
- 2) It is used in Genesis 31:38 and Job 21:10 to refer to miscarriage among animals.

3) In 2 Kings 2:19,21 and Mal. 3:11 it refers to the land and plants that do not produce mature fruit.

The expression "so that her fruit depart from her" (Ex. 21:22) means nothing more than the birth of a child. "The irregularity of the situation is the fact that the birth is prematurely and maliciously induced."

(Cottrell)

The contrast here is not between any harm done to the child and any harm done to the

mother but "A situation in which harm comes to neither mother nor child, and a situation in which either one is harmed." (Cottrell)

- 1) The premature birth of a child is not considered harm. A fine is levied possibly because of danger to which both are exposed.
- 2) The child is born prematurely, but unharmed, and no harm comes to the mother either.

Those who use this text to prove abortion add

the word "other" or "further."

- 1) There is absolutely no authority for adding words "other" or "further" in verse 22.
- 2) The word "other" or "further" makes the verse say that the fetus is killed, but no "other mischief" follows -- that is, the mother is not harmed.
- 3) But the "life for life" applies if either the mother or the premature child dies.

Life Begins at Conception

Karl Barth said, "The unborn child is from the

very first a child, it is still developing and has no independent life, but it is a man and not a thing, nor a mere part of the mother's body.... He who destroys germinating life kills a man."

Dr. Heather Morris, Canadian obstetrician and gynecologist, who practices at Women's College Hospital, in Toronto, said, "Abortion is a situation in which life is taken. Human life starts at conception. A complete unique human being is the result." (Christian

Crusade Weekly, May 21, 1972, p. 6)

"Every basic characteristic the human being will ever have is contained in the genes at conception."

Dr. William Lynch, Boston gynecologist and obstetrician said, "You can't have it both ways. Medical scientists claim that they are creating life in a test tube. You can't have something else in the womb."

Basil in the 4th Century wrote "Whoever deliberately commits abortion is subject to the

penalty for homicide."

Prof. Otto Piper (Princeton) said, "We have no right to destroy new life."

"The result has been a curious avoidance of the scientific fact, which everyone really knows, that human life begins at conception."

(The Journal of the California State Medical Association, Sept. 1970)

"...concerning when life begins.... But from the moment of union of the germ cells, there is under normal development a living, definite,

going concern." (Dr. Landrum B. Shettles, a physician at New York's Presbyterian Hospital)

In 1967 the First International Congress on Abortion was held in Washington, D.C.

There were authorities in the fields of medicine, law, ethics, and the social sciences.

Their unanimous conclusion was (19-1): "The majority of our group could find no point in time between the union of sperm and egg, or at least the blastocyst stage (this is shortly after fertilization), and the birth of the infant

at which point we could say that this was not human life."

Some Reasons Why Abortion is Contrary to God's Will:

A. There is life and a person before birth.

1. The heartbeat of the unborn fetus begins between the 18th and 25th day. (James M. Tanner, et al, Growth, Life Science Library, Time-Life Books, p. 64)
2. Electric brain waves (electro-

encephalograph) have been recorded as early as 43 days. (J. W. Stitt, J. Washington Academy of Science, Vol. 59, 1969, p. 46)

3. Electrocardiogram recordings can be taken at nine or ten weeks. (James M. Tanner, IBED)
4. Actual skeletal movements of the unknown baby begins at six weeks. The mother cannot feel them, however, at this time. ("The prenatal origin of behavior,"

Hooker, Davenport, University of Kansas Press, 1952)

5. At nine or ten weeks he squints, swallows, moves his tongue, and if you stroke his palm he will make a tight fist. At eleven to twelve weeks, he is sucking his thumb vigorously." (A Helligers, M.D., "Fetal Development," 31, Theological Studies, 3.7, 1970, p. 26)

The Scriptures show there is life and a person before birth.

1. "And Isaac intreated the Lord for his wife, because she was barren, and the Lord was intreated to him, and Rebekah his wife conceived. And the children struggled together within her; and she said, if it be so, why am I thus?..." (Gen. 25:21,22)
 - A. These unborn children (Heb. "Ben") merited the same designation as the "born" children of Keturah in Ben. 25:4.
 - B. To have terminated her pregnancy by

abortion would have been tantamount to genocide.

2. "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations" (Jer. 1:5). He was set apart and ordained a prophet before he came forth out of the womb.
3. "For thou hast possessed my reins: Thou has covered me in mother's womb. I will

praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well. My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth" (Psa. 139:13-15).

A. "Lowest part of the earth" here is a hebrew expression to describe the dark interior of the womb.

B. He regards himself as having been a

self even before he was conscious of himself.

- C. "I, the person, was covered by thy hand, oh, Lord, in my mother's womb; I was made in secret and curiously wrought in the inner recesses of my mother's body."
- D. "...it seems that the psalmist did not think of his humanity as uniquely tied to the amount of birth. The events leading up to birth are a kind of primal

history of the self."

"And, behold, thy cousin Elizabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren. For with God nothing shall be impossible. And Mary said, behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her. And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Juda; and entered into the

house of Zacharias, and saluted Elizabeth.

And it came to pass, that then Elizabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the holy ghost: and she spake out with a loud voice, and said, blessed are thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. And whence is this to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For, lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb with joy" (Luke

1:36-44).

- A. "This is the sixth month of her" v. 36
- B. "The babe leaped in her womb" V.41
- C. "The babe leaped in her womb" V. 44
- D. He leaped (movement indicates life).
- E. He was called a babe (Green, Brephose)
 - 1) Brephos (Greek) is used in the N.T. to identify a human infant either born or unborn.
 - a) "Ye shall find the babe..." (Born)

Luke 2:12

b) "The babe lying in a manger"

(Born) Luke 2:16

c) "And they brought unto him also

infants..." (Born) Luke 18:15

2) Luke, a physician and inspired man

used this same word, Brephos, to

describe the infants put to death in

Egypt by Pharaoh.

a) "They cast out their young children

(Green, Brephos) to the end they

might not live" Acts 7:19

b) "If the parents of John the baptizer had secured the services of an abortionist during the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy they would have been doing the same thing that was done by Pharaoh recorded in Exodus 1:15ff; they would have been casting out their babe (Gr., Brephos) to the end that he might not live" (Abortion, Clarence Johnson, Searching the

The consequences of "Abortion on demand" are tremendous.

1. "There is a host of evidence some people prefer an abortion every year to a pill every day" (Dr. Andre Hellengers). They switch from contraception to abortion.
2. Promiscuity is another consequence. Abortion "removes the greatest deterrent to sexual immorality among the youth of our country" (G. L. Teague, The Jackson

Sun, Jan. 31, 1973). Most of the abortions of our country have been performed on unmarried women.

3. Experiments are run "on live-born fetus" taken by hysterectomy in many cases.
4. It forces doctors to violate their hippocrates oath. "For the benefit of my patients I will abstain from what is deleterious and mischievous, I will give no deadly medicine to anyone if asked nor suggest any such counsel in like manner. I

will not give a woman a pessary to produce abortion.

5. The psychological effect of an abortion are frequently more severe than those that accompany an unwanted pregnancy. The feeling of guilt rises up constantly to plague the woman who has compounded one serious mistake with another. "It is not as harmless and casual event as many in the pro-abortion crowd insist: A psychological price is paid." (Dr. Julius

Fogal, Columbus Hospital, Washington, DC).

6. Abortion is the taking of an innocent human being.
 - A. From the moment of conception we have a human being with great potential, not just a potential human being.
 - B. "Once a human life has been formed by the joining of sperm and ovum man becomes morally responsible when he

34

**destroys that life" (Abortion, Tom C.
Brown, Lesson 812).**

①

ABORTION

INTRODUCTION

One of the greatest moral questions of our day is the question of abortion. Why do we have the problem? We have turned away from God, the Bible and any authoritative standard of right and wrong. We have "deified man, humanized God, air-conditioned hell, and made heaven the welfare state in our brave, new world."

In this study I propose to observe some thoughts on the following: (1) What is the meaning of abortion?; (2) What are the reasons why a woman might want an abortion?; (3) What are some arguments for abortion?; (4) Why is abortion contrary to God's will?; and (5) Some consequences of abortion on demand; (6) Conclusion.

WHAT IS THE MEANING OF ABORTION?

Abort means "to bring forth premature or still-born offspring"¹ "The termination of a pregnancy at any time before the fetus has gained viability."²

There are two kinds of abortion. First, there is spontaneous abortion which is "an abortion occurring naturally." Second, there is induced abortion which is "an abortion which is precipitated artificially and purposely." There are two kinds of induced abortion. There is therapeutic abortion which is "an abortion induced artificially and purposely in order to save the life of the mother or in the interest of maternal health." Non-therapeutic abortion is "an abortion performed for reasons other than to save the life or preserve the health of the mother."

WHAT ARE SOME REASONS WHY A WOMAN MIGHT WANT AN ABORTION?

Bernard Ramm³ contends that the real issue is not "when is a person a person" or "when does a fetus cease to be a tissue and become a person," but "why should any

Christian girl want an abortion?" Or why "should any woman in the 20th Century want an abortion?"

The reasons why people seek abortions can be divided into four categories. First, those who are legitimately pregnant, but because of weariness, illness, overcrowding, poverty, etc. feel they cannot face another pregnancy. Second, the single, separated, divorced, or widowed, for whom this illegitimate pregnancy spells shame and degradation. Third, the Roman matron afraid for her figure, the unmarried woman unprepared to settle down, and the professional woman whose career is in jeopardy. Fourth, the ill and dying for whom abortion can offer life. There are many reasons given for abortion, but "they boil down to the fact for the most part that the child is simply not wanted."

WHAT ARE SOME ARGUMENTS GIVEN IN FAVOR OF ABORTION?

First, there are so "many children born deformed or mentally incompetent." Only about one in ten pregnancies will have babies with serious impairments. Who has the right to decide the sickly will not live? Since about half such cases can be corrected, how will one decide which ones cannot? But, granting that defective babies should be destroyed, does it follow that nine normal pregnancies should be aborted along with one abnormal? Wouldn't it be 90% more humane to wait until all ten are born and then kill the bad one?

Second, "abortions are performed anyway so it's preferable that they be legal." Deformed children are sometimes killed anyway, so why not make that legal?

Third, "abortion should be beyond law—it should be a matter of individual conscience." Where is the stopping point in the application of this principle?

Fourth, abortion was permissible in the Old Testament. The verses often used to

try to prove this point are Exodus 21:22-24:

If men strive, and hurt a woman with child, so that her fruit depart from her, and yet no mischief follow: he shall be surely punished, according as the woman's husband will lay upon him; and he shall pay as the judges determine. And if any mischief follow then thou shalt give life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe.

Note some of the arguments made by those who believe the Old Testament supports abortion.

A second factor suggesting that abortion was permissible is that God does not regard the fetus as a soul, no matter how far gestation has progressed. The law plainly exacts: 'If a man kills any human life he will be put to death' (Lev. 24:17). But according to Exodus 21:22-24 the destruction of a fetus is not a capital offense. The divine law reads: 'When men struggle together and one of them pushes a pregnant woman and she suffers a miscarriage but no other harm happens, he shall be fined according as the woman's husband may exact from him...but if harm does ensue, then you shall impose soul for soul....' Clearly then, in contrast to the mother, the fetus is not reckoned as a soul. The money compensation seems to have been imposed not to protect the fetus but rather to compensate the father for his loss.⁴

"It can be inferred here, that the fetus was not considered a human life or 'life for life' would have been demanded as it was for the mother's life or at least a 'fetus for fetus' as was done under Assyrian law."⁵

These statements either state or imply three things (we are told): (1) that verse 22 refers to a miscarriage, the death of the unborn child; (2) that this supposed death of the fetus is the injury for which the guilty party is only fined; (3) while injury to the mother is considered to be further harm serious enough to invoke the lex talionis (eye for eye, etc.).

There are some serious objections to using Exodus 21:22-24 to prove that abortion was permissible in the Old Testament. First, there is "absolutely no linguistic justification for translating verse 22 to refer to a miscarriage."⁶ The clause "so that her

fruit depart," in both KJV and ASV literally reads "and her children come out." The verb is yatza which has the common meaning of "to go out, to go forth, to come forth." It is often used to refer to the ordinary birth of children either as coming forth from the loins of the father (Gen. 15:4; 46:26; 1 Kings 8:19; Isa. 39:7), or as coming forth from the womb of the mother (Gen. 25:25; 38:28-29; Job 1:21; Eccle. 5:15; Jer. 1:5; 20:18). In no case is the word used to indicate a miscarriage. In Numbers 12:12 it refers to a still-born child but a still-born child is not a miscarriage.

Second, these verses refer to a premature birth and not to a miscarriage. There is a Hebrew word, shachol, that specifically refers to the event of miscarriage. The word shachol is used in Exodus 23:26 and Hosea to refer to a miscarriage among human beings. It is used in Genesis 31:38 and Job 21:10 to refer to miscarriage among animals. The expression "so that her fruit depart from her" (Ex. 21:22) means nothing more than the birth of a child. The irregularity of the situation is the fact that the birth is prematurely and maliciously induced. The contrast here is not between any harm done to the child and any harm done to the mother, but "a situation in which harm comes neither to the mother nor the child." The premature birth of a child is not considered harm. A fine is levied possibly because of danger to which both are exposed. The child is born prematurely, but unharmed, and no harm comes to the mother either. Those who use this text to prove abortion add the word "other" or "further." There is absolutely no authority for adding the words "other" or "further" in verse 22. The word "other" or "further" makes the verse say that the fetus is killed, but no "other mischief" follows—that is the mother is not harmed. But the "life for life" applies if either the mother or the premature child dies.

SOME REASONS WHY ABORTION IS CONTRARY TO GOD'S WILL

First, there is life and a person before birth. "The heartbeat of the unborn fetus begins between the 18th and 25th day."⁷ "Electric brain waves (electroencephalograph) have been recorded as early as 43 days."⁸ Electrocardiogram recordings can be taken at nine or ten weeks.⁹ "Actual skeletal movements of the unknown baby begin at six weeks. The mother cannot feel them, however, at this time."¹⁰ "At nine or ten weeks he squints, swallows, moves his tongue, and if you stroke his palm he will make a tight fist. At eleven to twelve weeks, he is sucking his thumb vigorously."¹¹

Second, life begins at conception. Dr. Heather Morris, Canadian obstetrician and gynecologist, who practices at Women's College Hospital in Toronto said: "Abortion is a situation in which life is taken. Human life starts at conception."¹² "The result has been a curious avoidance of the scientific fact, which everyone knows, that human life begins at conception."¹³ In 1967 the First International Congress on Abortion was held in Washington, DC. There were authorities in the fields of medicine, law, ethics, and the social sciences. Their unanimous conclusion (19-1): "The majority of our group could find no point in time between the union of sperm and egg, or at least the blastocyst state (this is shortly after fertilization), and the birth of the infant at which point we could say that this was no human life."

Third, the scriptures show there is life and a person before birth. "And Isaac entreated the Lord for his wife, because she was barren, and the Lord was entreated to him, and Rebekah his wife conceived. And the children struggled together within her; and she said, if it be so, why am I thus?..." (Gen. 25:21-22). These unborn children (Heb. ben) merited the same designation as the "born" children of Keturah in Genesis

25:4. To have terminated her pregnancy by abortion would have been tantamount to genocide. "For thou hast possessed my reins: Thou has covered me in my mother's womb. I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well. My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth" (Psa. 139:13-15). "Lowest part of the earth" here is a Hebrew expression to describe the dark interior of the womb. He regards himself as having been a self even before he was conscious of himself. "I, the person, was covered by thy hand, oh, Lord, in my mother's womb; I was made in secret and curiously wrought in the inner recesses of my mother's body." It seems that the Psalmist did not think of his humanity as uniquely tied to the moment of birth. The events leading up to birth are a kind of primal history of the self.

Luke 1:36 through 44 reveals Mary's visit to Elizabeth when she was six months pregnant. Notice some statements that are made in this connection that bear heavily on life before birth. (1) "This is the sixth month with her" (v. 36); (2) "The babe leaped in her womb" (v. 41); "The babe leaped in her womb" (v. 44). He leaped (movement indicates life). He was called a babe (Green, Brephose). Brephos (Greek) is used in the New Testament to identify a human infant either born or unborn. "Ye shall find the babe..." (born, Lk. 2:12). "And they brought unto him also infants..." (born, Lk. 2:16). Luke, a physician and an inspired man, used this same word, brephos, to describe the infants put to death in Egypt by Pharaoh. "...they cast out their young children (Green, brephos) to the end they might not live" (Acts 7:19).

If the parents of John the baptizer had secured the services of an abortionist during the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy they would have been doing the same thing that was done by Pharaoh recorded in Exodus 1:15ff; they would have been casting out their babe (Green, brephos) to the end that he

might not live.¹⁴

THE CONSEQUENCES OF "ABORTION ON DEMAND" ARE TREMENDOUS

First, there is much evidence to show that some people prefer an abortion every year to a pill every day. Second, promiscuity is another consequence. Third, experiments are run "on live-born fetus" taken by hysterectomy in many cases. Fourth, it forces doctors to violate their Hippocratic Oath. Fifth, the psychological effects of an abortion are frequently more severe than those that accompany an unwanted pregnancy. Sixth, abortion is the taking of an innocent human life.

CONCLUSION

Tom Brown once stated: "Abortion on demand is an assault on Biblical morality which every Christian must abhor and reject."

Abortion, in the main, is the logical consequence of a far greater problem—the permissive nature of man—in our society, at least, the natural has gained ascendancy over the once held spiritual values of Biblical morality...outlawing prayer and Bible reading, capital punishment, and endorsing abortion are stark evidences that the body politic is embracing the humanistic creed.¹⁵

Medicine without an ethic; the law with a norm; and the religious community without a theology of life and death, man and nature; will leave people without a defense. This is particularly true in a world in which so many are willing to sacrifice the other, rather than sacrifice for the other.¹⁶

Abortion does not solve the problem. God's word, not emotions, must be the standard in all decisions. God's word condemns abortion is no uncertain terms.

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14. Clarence Johnson, "Abortion," Searching The Scriptures, p. 11.
15. David A. Noebel, "Slaughter of The Innocent," Christian Crusade, Tulsa, Oklahoma, May 21, 1972.
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THE BIBLICAL DOCTRINE OF ETERNAL HELL

Introduction

1. Newsweek (1991) reports 70% of Americans believe in heaven and half think they will get there.
2. Only about half of the people believe in hell and only 6% think they have a good or excellent chance of getting there.
 - a. Martin Marty, American church historian observed, "Hell disappeared. And no one noticed" (Newsweek).
 - b. "Today, hell is theology's H-word, a subject too trite for serious scholarship" (Newsweek).
 - c. Most statistics indicate that experts have done away with hell.
 - d. Half the population in the United States still believe in it, "but few anticipate a destiny there."
3. In this study let's consider:
 - a. Definition of words.
 - b. What did the O.T. prophets, the Lord and the apostles teach about hell?
 - c. When will hell begin and what will be the nature of it?
 - d. Who will be in hell?
 - e. Are there some who deny eternal punishment in hell?
 - f. Conclusion.

Discussion

I. Definition of Words.

A. Four words in Hebrew and Greek text - Sheol, Hades, Tartarus, Gehenna--KJV translates all of them hell in most instances.

B. Sheol

1. Appears 65 times in O.T. (only one of the four in the O.T.).
2. The Septuagint translators never translated it Gehenna (the lake of fire) or grave.
3. Sixty-one times ^{THEY} he translated it Hades and it is always singular.
4. It is sometimes used to mean a state of conscious existence (Gen. 37:35).
5. It is sometimes used to designate where the wicked are (Deut. 32:22).
6. It is used or shows a temporary existence (Psa. 16:10).
7. It designates the place where the spirit passes at death.

C. Hades

1. Hades in the N.T. and Sheol in the O.T. refer to the same place (Psa. 16:10; Acts 2:27).
2. Hades appears 11 times in the N.T. (Mt. 11:23; 16:18; Lk. 10:15; 16:23; Acts 2:27, 34; 1 Cor. 15:55; Rev. 1:18; 6:8; 20:13-14).
3. Hades means unseen and when applied to the dead means the unseen state of the dead.

- 4. Hades is divided into two parts--Paradise and Tartarus (Lk. 23:43; Acts 2:27,31; Lk. 16:19-31; 2 Pet. 2:4).
- 5. There is punishment for sin in Hades (Lk. 16:22-23).
 - a. The punishment in Hades will end.
 - b. In Hades there is the disembodied spirit, but both body and spirit in hell (Mt. 10:28).
 - c. Hades will end at the judgment (Rev. 20:11-15).

D. Tartarus (2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6).

E. Hell (Gehenna)

- 1. It appears 12 times in the N.T. (Mt. 5:22,29,30; 10:28; 18:9; 23:15,33; Mk. 9:43,45,47; Lk. 12:5; Jas. 3:6).
- 2. Literally the place of "Hinnom or the valley of Hinnom" (2 Kgs. 23:10).
- 3. Our Lord used the term 11 of the 12 times it is mentioned.

(F. Eternal and everlasting

- 1. Eternal, everlasting occur 75 times in the N.T.
- 2. The Greek word is aionios in the original and has no limitations. It is exhaustive of eternity.
- 3. The Bible use of the words eternal and everlasting show hell is unending (Mt. 18:8; 25:46; 2 Thess. 1:9; 2 Pet. 2:17; Jude 13; Rev. 14:10-11).
- 4. Some try to get around this meaning by asserting that the wicked will be annihilated (cease to exist).
 - a. God will destroy (Mt. 10:28).
 - b. Jesus used the word apollumi (used 92 times in the N.T.).
 - c. The idea of annihilation is never found in the word apollumi.
 - (1) The prodigal son was "lost" (apollumi) (Lk. 15:32). Did he cease to exist?
 - (2) Jesus came to seek and save the "lost" (apollumi) (Lk. 19:10). Did he come to seek people who did not exist?
 - (3) The same word is used to describe the eternity of heaven as hell (1 John 2:25; John 3:16; Mt. 25:46).)

II. What Did the Old Testament Prophets, the Lord and the Apostles Teach about Hell?

- A. David clearly believed in hell (Psa. 9:17).
- B. Daniel clearly believed in hell (Dan. 12:2).
- C. The Lord believed in hell (Mt. 10:28).
- D. John the Baptist described hell in Matt. 3:11-12).
- E. Paul (2 Thess. 1:6-8), Peter (2 Pet. 2:4-9), Jude (Jude 6-7) and John (Rev.

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20:14-15; 21:8; 22:15) believed in hell.

III. When Will Hell Begin and What Will Be The Nature of It?

- A. Some think hell begins here on earth.
- B. Some think hell begins at death.
- C. The Bible teaches that hell begins after the judgment day.
 - 1. Jesus speaks of "that day" (Mt. 7:22).
 - 2. Sentence begins at "the day of judgment" (Mt. 11:22).
 - 3. Jesus speaks of the last day (Jn. 12:48).
 - 4. God hath appointed a day to judge (Acts 17:30-31).
 - 5. We must all appear before the judgment (2 Cor. 5:10).
- D. At the judgment the wicked will be condemned to eternal punishment.
 - 1. At the judgment there will be condemnation (Jn. 5:28-29).
 - 2. The punishment after judgment is represented by words and phrases of utmost pain and desolation.
 - a. Fire (2 Thess. 1:7-9).
 - b. Darkness (Mt. 25:30).
 - c. Weeping and gnashing of teeth (Mt. 13:40-42).
 - 3. "Unquenchable fire," "where their worm dieth not," and "the smoke of their torment" definitely implies consciousness" (Mk. 9:44; 9:48; Rev. 14:11).

IV. Who Will Be In Hell?

- A. The devil will be there (Mt.25:41; Rev. 20:10).
- B. Those who satisfy the lusts of the flesh (Rev. 21:8; Rom. 1:20-32; Gal. 5:19-21).
- C. Hypocrites (Matt. 23:15; 24:48-51).
- D. Ignorant and disobedient (2 Thess. 1:7-9).
- E. Religious people (Mt. 7:21-23; 7:15).

V. Are There Some Who Deny Eternal Punishment in Hell? (Overhead projection).

- A. Max King
- B. Steven Clark Goad
- C. Curtis Dickinson

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D. Edward Fudge

E. F. LeGard Smith

F. Seventh Day Adventists

G. Jehovah's Witnesses

Conclusion

DENIAL OF ETERNAL PUNISHMENT
 Matthew 10:28; 13:40-42; 25:46
 JAMES MENDOWS

INTRODUCTION:

1. Read or quote the text.
2. One of the most controversial subjects of our time (and in the past) is that of "eternal" or "everlasting" punishment of the wicked.
 - a. Does it mean there will be conscious, unending punishment?
 - b. Does it mean annihilation?
 - c. Does it mean "eternal in its results" but not in its "duration"?
3. In this lesson I propose to observe:
 - a. What is the meaning of the words "forever," "everlasting," and "eternal" as used in the Bible?
 - b. Who are those who deny eternal punishment?
 - c. What does the Bible teach about eternal punishment?

DISCUSSION:

I. WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THE WORDS "FOREVER," "EVERLASTING," AND "ETERNAL" AS USED IN THE BIBLE?

- A. The word "forever" is sometimes used in the Bible to refer to things that have an end.
 1. The sabbath was a sign between God and the children of Israel "forever" (Exod. 31:13-17)--The qualifying phrase is "throughout your generations" (v. 13,16).
 2. God gave the earth to Israel "For ever" (Deut. 4:40) and the priests of the tribe of Levi were to minister "for ever" (Deut. 18:5). That is, as long as the nation of Israel existed.
 3. Rehoboam was told that if he would treat the children of Israel right, "then they will be thy servants for ever" (1 Kgs. 12:7)--that is, as long as he lived and was king.
- B. The word "everlasting" is sometimes used in the sense of limited duration.
 1. God promised Abraham that he would establish his covenant with him and "his seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant" (Gen. 17:7-8)--that covenant was later broken by their sins.
 2. God promised Jacob that I "will give this land to thy seed after thee for an everlasting possession" (Gen. 48:4)--yet that land was later taken away due to their sins.

"The Scriptures speak of eternal punishment and eternal life, or everlasting punishment and everlasting life. Therefore, many conclude that those being punished must live and endure punishment as long as the saints live and enjoy eternal life. But this is as illogical as it is unscriptural. The word 'eternal' is an adjective used to describe the word it modifies. In

1. He does not deny that the Bible teaches "eternal punishment" but he says it refers to the effect or the result, not the length of time.

C. Brother Curtis Dickinson denies eternal punishment.

3. He states that Moses E. Lard, printed an article in 1879 by the title, "Do The Holy Scriptures Teach the Endlessness of Future Punishment?" and drew many of the same conclusions that he has drawn.⁴

2. Steven states that in a conversation with brother Jimmy Allen, Jimmy informed him--"I am 'rethinking' my traditional position on hell."³

1. "Jesus teaches that God will destroy both soul and body in hell, but we keep us alive forever and ever and heat up the flames and darken the darkness, and keep open the pit so that we will be tormented and tortured forever. There is not one Scripture that teaches such in all of the Bible! It is a doctrine that found its origin in Catholicism and Phariseism, but not one taught by our Saviour."²

B. Steven Clark Goad, a brother in Christ, makes the following comment about Matthew 10:28:

2. He stated the following about 2 Peter 3:7:

Thus, the world reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men (2 Pet. 3:7) was the Jewish world. Fire is a symbol denoting the severity of God's judgment and destruction.... The fire of 2 Pet. 3:10 is no more literal than the fire of Luke 12:49. Other passages involving the symbolic fire in the destruction of Judaism are Matt. 3:12; 13:40,42; and 2 Thess. 1:8.¹

1. He believes that everything came to an end in A.D. 70.

A. Max King (a brother in Christ), the proponent of the A.D. 70 Theory, denies eternal punishment.

II. WHO ARE SOME THAT DENY ETERNAL PUNISHMENT?

C. It is true that the Bible sometimes uses the word "forever," "everlasting" and "eternal" to refer to things that have an end, but is that its use when connected with the punishment of the wicked? We shall see.

one case it describes life, and means that life is fixed, age-abiding or final. In the other case it describes the effect of the punishment. For the penalty is not punishing but punishment, and the punishment is death. Therefore eternal has to do with death, and not the means of bringing about that death."⁵

2. Jude 7 says the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah suffered "the vengeance of eternal fire."--"We readily understand that it means eternal in its effect and result. We are to understand the same thing with regard to the fire that destroys the wicked. It will be eternal in its ultimate and final result. Thus, everlasting death, everlasting destruction, everlasting punishment, all indicate that the unbelieving sinner is not to continue in some miserable existence, but that his life is to come to an end in the final death...."⁶

D. Brother Edward Fudge, in his book The Fire that Consumes, denies everlasting punishment because he believes the wicked will be annihilated.

1. The word annihilate means to "reduce to utter ruin or non-existence; destroy utterly."

2. The word annihilation means "the act or an instance of annihilating; extinction; destruction."

3. Annihilationism is "the belief that the souls of the wicked are annihilated after death."

4. Fudge believes that humans are only potentially immortal. "Conditional immortality" is the view that all humans are created mortal "but those who later respond to the gospel are given immortality." Humans gain immortality by grace, not by creation."⁷

5. Since the wicked do not gain immortality then there could not be eternal punishment.

6. He believes that the wicked are resurrected, judged, and then extinguished (annihilated). He prefers the word "extinction" to "annihilation."

7. He does not deny the conscious suffering of the wicked in the next life, nor degrees of punishment, nor the eternality of this torment. The result of the punishment is eternal, not the punishment itself--eternal punishment, not eternal punishing.

a. Since he questions God's justice in allowing the wicked to experience conscious suffering for eternity, one may also question his affirmation of the wicked receiving temporary suffering.
 b. "If everlasting suffering is sadistic, what about forcing those who will eventually be annihilated to suffer even temporarily?"

c. If death is annihilation, then God would have to recreate a replica to bless or punish.

d. Also, if death is annihilation, then one annihilation is worse than another. "If one died (was annihilated) for violating Moses' law, how much worse punishment (annihilation) will be deserved by one who has spurned the Son of God (Heb. 10:28ff)."

8. If there is no continuing conscious, sensible torment, might there be no continuing conscious bliss or joy? If punishment is irreversible annihilation might not blessedness be a state of annihilation also? If not, why not?

E. Brother F. LaGard, in his book Who Is My Brother, denies hell in the sense that it means unending, conscious punishment. "Finally, there is an equally yawning gap between believing that the nature of eternal punishment in hell may be something other than continuing, conscious burning and not believing in the reality of hell itself."⁸

1. The idea of unending torment for the wicked is not endorsed by brother Smith.

2. One can believe in anything when he is allowed to define his own terms.

F. The Seventh-Day Adventists deny eternal punishment:

1. They admit that "...eternal punishment for the ungodly, are plainly taught in the Scriptures."⁹

2. They admit that the words "everlasting" and "eternal" are used in the N.T. to describe the fate of the wicked and list such passages as Matthew 25:41; 25:46; Mark 3:29; 2 Thess. 1:9 and Jude 7.

3. But they then state the following:

In view of this, it might be inferred that if the 'eternal life' referred to is forever and ever, will not the 'everlasting punishment' be for the same duration, inasmuch as the same Greek word is used in both instances? Decidedly not! The eternal life will continue throughout the ceaseless ages of eternity; and the punishment will also be eternal--not eternal duration of conscious suffering, however, but punishment that is complete and final. The end of those who thus suffer is the second death. This death will be eternal, from which there will not, and cannot, be any resurrection.... Let us repeat: In the expression 'eternal punishment,' just as in 'eternal redemption' and 'eternal judgment,' the Bible is referring to all eternity--not as of process, but as of result. It is not an endless process of punishment, but an effectual punishment, which will be final and forever (αἰώνιος).¹⁰

C. The Jehovah's Witnesses deny eternal punishment.

1. They state: "Consistent with this basic truth, not once in any of its verses does the Bible say that either human or animal souls are immortal, deathless, cannot be destroyed or cannot perish."¹¹
2. Again, "Is hell a hot place? Do sheol and hades refer to some place where the wicked suffer after death? It is plain they do not, for we have already seen that the dead are not conscious and therefore cannot suffer."¹²

- a. To prove this point they quote Ecclesiastes 9:5: "...for the dead know not anything...."

- b. But where the dead know not anything is ignored by Jehovah's Witnesses--"under the sun" which appears in the following verses in Ecclesiastes: (1:3,9,14; 2:11,17,18,19,20,22; 3:16; 4:1,3,7,15; 5:13,18; 6:1,12; 8:9,15,17; 9:3,6,9,11,13; 10:5). The dead know not anything under the sun because they are no longer under the sun, but that says absolutely nothing about their conscious or unconscious state.

3. "The Bible 'hell' is actually mankind's grave."¹³

4. "The doctrine of a burning hell where the wicked are tortured eternally after death cannot be true, mainly for four reasons: (1) Because it is wholly unscriptural; (2) because it is unreasonable; (3) because it is contrary to God's love; and (4) because it is repugnant to justice."¹⁴

5. Jehovah's Witnesses teach (as some brethren are doing) that eternal or everlasting, when used in connection with punishment of the wicked means it is "eternal in the sense that it is done and over with, will never be repeated, and the results are forever."¹⁵ They say:

a. "Everlasting shows no recovery is possible."¹⁶

b. "Gehenna means a condition of death from which there is no resurrection."¹⁷

III. WHAT DOES THE BIBLE TEACH ABOUT ETERNAL PUNISHMENT?

- A. James Freeman Clarke in his book, Orthodoxy: Its Truths and Errors, gives this definition of everlasting punishment (even though he denies everlasting, conscious punishment): "It is, that the moment of death decides and forever decides, the destiny of man; that those who die impotent, unbelieving, and unconverted are forever lost, without the possibility of return; that those thus lost are to suffer forever and ever, without end, the most grievous torments in

soul and body.¹⁸

B. In Matthew 10:28 Jesus affirmed that God will "destroy" both body and soul in hell (Gehenna).

1. He employed the word apollumi (used 92 times in the N.T.). It is translated by such words as "destroy," "perish," "loss," and "lost."

a. The prodigal son while in the far country was "lost" (apoloos) (Lk. 15:32). He didn't cease to exist.

b. Jesus came to seek and save the "lost" (apoloos) (Lk. 19:10). He didn't come to seek those that didn't exist.

c. Regarding apollumi Vine says, "The idea is not extinction but ruin, loss, not of being, but of well-being."¹⁹

d. In connection with Matthew 10:28, Thayer defines apollumi: "to devote or give over to eternal misery."

2. "In every instance where the word apollumi is found in the New Testament, something other than annihilation is being described."²⁰

C. There are a number of expressions used in the Bible that "can only imply the concept of conscious agony."²¹

1. Mark 9:44 describes it as a place of "unquenchable fire"--fire being a metaphor for "the extreme penal torments which the wicked are to undergo after their life on earth" (Thayer, p. 558).

2. Jesus described hell as a place "where their worm dies not" (Mk. 9:48). "The never-dying worm is a symbol of the unending "torment of the damned" (Arndt/Gingrich, 765).

3. "And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever; and they have no rest day nor night..." (Rev. 14:11; 20:10).

a. Torment certainly implies awareness (cf. Rev. 9:5; 11:10).

b. Punishment implies consciousness.

--"It would be absurd to describe those who no longer exist as being punished."²²

--"...if they go into punishment, they continue to exist; for that which ceases to be suffers."²³

- Torture from the Greek word basanizo, that means "to vex with grievous pains (of body and mind) to torment" (Thayer).
4. The fire is unquenchable (Matt. 3:12).
- a. "The Greek word for 'unquenchable' is abestos, a term which denotes that which cannot be extinguished" (Wayne Jackson).
- b. The worm (gnawing anguish) "dies not"--which means: "...their punishment after death will never cease..." (Thayer, 580).
- c. The punishment of the wicked is "eternal."
5. "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal" (Matt. 25:46).
- a. Our Saviour used the Greek word aiōnios to show both the duration of the life of the righteous and the punishment of the wicked.
- b. Christ used the word aiōnios 26 times--22 times to describe the blessed, holy and eternal life held out as a reward for his faithful disciples--and four times to show the duration of condemnation and punishment of the wicked.
- (1) In every one of these instances our Lord used aiōnios in the strict sense of absolute, endless duration.
- (2) Aiōnios means "without end, never to cease, everlasting" (Thayer).
- c. Examples of the use of aiōnios:
- (1) To the future life of the righteous (John 3:16; 12:25).
- (2) To the future state of the wicked (Matt. 18:8; Mark 3:29; Matt. 25:41,46).
- d. "If one holds that the punishment is not eternal, he would have to contend, if consistent, that the life for the righteous is not eternal. If one ends the other ends. If one is everlasting so is the other."²⁴
- D. It is obvious that the Bible teaches future punishment.
1. There is punishment for sin after death (Matt. 10:28).
- a. There is something to fear.

5. The punishment after the judgment is represented by words and phrases expressive of the utmost pain and desolation.
 - a. At the judgment death and hades will be no more (1 Cor. 15:54ff; Rev. 20:13-14).
 - b. At the judgment there will be condemnation (John 5:28-29)--
Condemnation implies punishment.
 - c. The ungodly will be condemned to punishment which lies beyond the final judgment (2 Pet. 2:9; 3:7).

4. At the judgment, the wicked will be condemned to punishment which lies beyond it in eternity.
 - a. At the judgment death and hades will be no more (1 Cor. 15:54ff; Rev. 20:13-14).
 - b. At the judgment there will be condemnation (John 5:28-29)--
Condemnation implies punishment.
 - c. The ungodly will be condemned to punishment which lies beyond the final judgment (2 Pet. 2:9; 3:7).

3. There will be a universal judgment at the end of the world (Heb. 9:27-28).
 - a. This judgment takes place after death (Matt. 12:41-42).
 - b. This judgment will take place after the resurrection.
 - c. The day of judgment and the perdition of ungodly men is identified with the day when the earth is reserved for fire (2 Pet. 3:7ff).
 - d. This judgment will be universal (Mt. 25:31).

2. There is punishment for sin in Hades (Luke 16:19-31).
 - a. The rich man died and was buried.
 - b. He was in torments.
 - c. His torments were in consequence of his sins.
 - d. Others who will not repent will meet the same fate.
 - e. This incident shows in unmistakable terms that there is torment in Hades.

1. If this does not take place then what is there to fear--this is proof of punishment for sin.
 - a. The fear comes after death.
 - b. The consequences of not fearing God is to be "cast into hell."
 - c. If this does not take place then what is there to fear--this is proof of punishment for sin.

- a. Fire--Matt. 25:41; 2 Thess. 1:7-9.
- b. This punishment in fire will begin to take place at the revelation of Jesus Christ (2 Thess. 1:9; Rev. 21:5-8).
- c. Darkness (Matt. 25:30).
- d. Weeping and gnashing of teeth (Matt. 13:40-42).
- e. Destruction of body and soul in hell (Mt. 10:28; Mk. 19:43-48).

6. The punishment after the judgment will be endless. Two states:

- a. Hades and hell--they differ.
- (1) Hades--disembodied spirit.
- (2) Hell--Body and spirit.

b. They differ in duration.

- (1) Hades--Terminated at resurrection.
- (2) Hell--Never ends.

CONCLUSION:

- 1. Hell is a real place.
- 2. Hell is a place of endless, conscious suffering.
- 3. Hell is a place where you don't want to go.
- 4. Become a Christian today (2 Cor. 6:2).

OTHER HELPFUL SOURCES:

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- 2. J. W. McGarvey, "Destiny of the Wicked," Lord's Quarterly, Vol. 2, pp. 424-442.

ENDNOTES

- 1. Max King, The Spirit of Prophecy (Warren, Ohio: Warren Printing Incorporated, 1971), p. 131.
- 2. Steven Clark Goad, in a paper entitled "Believe In Heaven and Hell: A Non-Traditional View, 325 Village Drive, Blythe, CA.

3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. Curtis Dickinson, What The Bible Teaches About Immortality and Future Punishment (Lewisville, Texas: Curtis Dickinson, 1984), p. 28.
6. Ibid., p. 30.
7. Edward Fudge, The Fire that Consumes.
8. F. LaGard Smith, Who Is My Brother (Malibu, Calif.: Cotswold Publishing, 1997), p. 196.
9. (Seventh-Day Adventists Answer Questions on Doctrine, Washington, D.C., Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1957, p. 533).
10. Ibid., pp. 539-40.
11. The Truth that Leads to Eternal Life, p. 37.
12. Ibid., p. 41.
13. Ibid., p. 42.
14. Let God Be True (New York: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, Inc., 1946 Edit.), p. 82.
15. Raymond Kelcy, The Spiritual Sword, "Punishment of the Wicked," Vol. 6, October, 1974, No. 1, p. 31.
16. Make Sure Of All Things (Brooklyn: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, 1953), p. 163.
17. Rutherford, Creation, p. 286.
18. James Freeman Clarke, Orthodoxy: Its Truths and Errors (Boston: American Unitarian Association, 1902), pp. 353-54.
19. W. E. Vine, Amplified Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words (Iowa Falls: World, 1991), p. 211.
20. Robert Morey, Death and the Afterlife (Minneapolis: Bethany, 1984), p. 90.
21. Wayne Jackson, Christian Courier, January, 1998, Vol. 33, No. 9, p. 35.
22. Ibid., p. 35.
23. Adam Clarke, Clarke's Commentary (Nashville, Abingdon, n.d.), Vol. V.

Translations

James Meadows

Introduction

1. One of the most controversial themes of our time is the issue of "modern versions."
2. In this issue, as well as most religious issues, extremism is usually the rule.
 - a. There are those who vigorously promote anything that claims the name Bible.
 - b. Then there is the other extreme.
 - (1) Some contend that the use of any version, "save that of the King James (1611) smacks of liberalism. A few years back a Baptist preacher wrote: "The King James Version of the Bible is God's inspired and preserved word. All other English speaking versions are translations based on corrupt New Testament Greek Texts."
 - (2) A few years back another person wrote: "I am non-convinced that the ASV (American Standard Version - 1901) is not a better translation at all, but in fact it is not even the word of God."
 - (3) Again, "We cannot thank God for the ASV, for He had nothing to do with it. It came from the devil."
 - c. "Some have even taken the extreme position that the use of a particular Bible version should be made a test of fellowship" (Wayne Jackson, The "Bible Translation" Controversy, p. 1).
 - (1) Wayne Jackson says "this is a very faulty viewpoint and it will not stand under careful investigation..." (p. 1).
 - (2) N. B. Hardeman, co-founder of Freed-Hardeman University, wrote: "The law of expedience is the law of accomplishing an end in the best way under the conditions prevailing, A few illustrations will suffice: the building or buying of a meeting house, a home for the preacher, the Lord's table, the manner of serving the Supper, the method of taking up the collection, the manner of selecting an elder, the translating and printing of the Bible, the orphan's home, home for the aged, the maintaining of Bible schools, etc. These are circumstances of the gospel. There is no command for any of these items. The execution of them is left to the judgment of each congregation, and no preacher has the right to dictate what they shall do in matters of this kind" (Gospel Advocate, October 23, 1947).
 - (3) Brother Claude Gardner, former president of Freed-Hardeman University, one who uses the King James Version and says he does not have "any intention of changing, wrote: "However, we cannot adopt the erroneous position of one official translation and then proceed to 'outlaw' the reading and studying of every other translation" (Translations by Claude Gardner).
 - (4) Robert Taylor, Jr., who has done as much writing about translations as any man in the brotherhood, and who uses the King James Version or the American Standard (1901) wrote: "We do not share the view that the King James' Version is the only one Bible students should use. If we did, we would not have invested money in the several translations and versions we have before us as this article is written. We do have some strong objections

- reliable way of determining the best Greek text is by means of the 'critical' method. By this procedure, the scholar can compare ancient Greek manuscripts, 'church fathers,' and internal evidence, and thus attempt to restore, as precisely as possible, the original New Testament documents" (Wayne Jackson, p. 3).
- B. Second, what is the translator's theology? What is his attitude toward the Scriptures?
1. It is possible for a liberal scholar to translate faithfully.
 2. But one who believes in the inspiration of the Bible will be more highly motivated to fidelity to the text.
- C. Third, there is what might be called the philosophy of translation.
1. One view called Formal Equivalence means the attempt to translate "the words and nuances of the original as literally as possible" providing clarity is conveyed in English. This was the view of those who produced the KJV and ERV/ASV.
 2. Then there is what is known as Dynamic Equivalence. The DE attempts to convey the meaning of the text, "in free and idiomatic English without much regard for the exact wording of the original" (Wayne Jackson, p. 5).
- D. Fourth, there are some translation difficulties.
1. "It must be realized, of course, that an absolutely word-for-word translation is an impossibility for a number of reasons" (Jackson, p. 6).
 - a. First, the word order of the Greek N.T. is frequently quite different from the mode of the English expression.
 - b. Second, sometimes the literal translation of a Greek word would make no sense to an English reader. Consider "seed-picker" in Acts 17:18.
 - c. Third, it is not always possible to translate the same Greek word uniformly in all occurrences. Consider Acts 1:18 and Phil. 1:8 ("tender mercies"—ASV).
- E. Fifth, in view of the selection of the best text, attitude toward Bible inspiration, translation philosophy, and inherent translation difficulties, it should be obvious to every clear-thinking person:
1. There is no perfect version. Perfection is claimed only for the original manuscripts.
 2. "There are bound to be disagreements among sincere Bible students concerning the relative values of the various versions and how these versions will be employed in one's study and teaching efforts" (Jackson, p. 6-7).
- a. "The precise manner in which one uses translations in his personal study and teaching is a matter of individual judgment" (Jackson, p. 7).
 - b. "A Bible translator is not inspired of God. In any translation there is the possibility of translating bias or errors of judgment. All versions reveal these occasional weaknesses—some more than others, of course. Versions vary, therefore, in their usefulness in degree" (Jackson, p. 7).

- some have been giving.
- c. Novices who have commenced their Bible study with some of the "looser" versions should not be 'beat over the head' and humiliated just because they have not yet learned to use a more reliable version.
 - d. In the final analysis, translation selection is a matter of Christian liberty" (Jackson, p. 20).
3. The ETSP allows the students to use one of the following: KJV, ASV, NKJV, NASV.
- a. If you have any problem with this you need to talk to the elders who decided it and the staff endorses it.
 - b. If someone uses a different translation from you then let's allow them that Christian liberty without any more criticizing and condemning.

PROMISE KEEPERS

By James Meadows

INTRODUCTION:

1. The founders of Promise Keepers were Dr. Dave Wardell and Bill McCartney.
 - a. Dave Wardell:
 - (1) Had been assistant professor in the Physical Education Department at the University of Colorado.
 - (2) He was also state director of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes.
 - b. Bill McCartney:
 - (1) He was head football coach of the University of Colorado.
 - (2) He took the football program from an unknown to the head of the football world in many ways.
2. The idea of Promise Keepers was conceived as Bill and Dave were driving to a meeting of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes. Bill asked Dave, "What would you do if money was not an issue, and you could do anything you wanted with your life, what would you do?" (Bill McCartney, From Ashes to Glory [Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1995], p. 285.)
 - a. Dave said: "I would discipline men one on one. I would meet with them in restaurants or wherever, and I would lead them into a deeper walk with Christ" (McCartney, *Ibid.*, p. 285).
 - b. David then asked the same question and Bill said: "More than anything God has put in it my heart to witness a tremendous outpouring of His Spirit upon men. I envision men coming together in large numbers in the name of Jesus, worshipping and celebrating their faith together. I long to see men openly proclaiming their love for Christ and their commitment to their families" (McCartney, *Ibid.*, p. 285).
3. The Promise Keepers' Organization claims that their movement originated in the mind of God.
 - a. They refer to what's happening with Promise Keepers as "a sovereign move of God's Spirit" (Letter from Memphis Christian Men's Committee of Promise Keepers, November 17, 1995).
 - b. They claim, "God has positioned Promise Keepers to seize this opportunity and to ignite a worldwide movement calling men to conviction, integrity and action" (*Ibid.*, p. 1).
 - c. They say, "We believe that we have a God-given mission to unite Christian men who are separated by race, geography, culture, denomination, and economics" (*Ibid.*, p. 4).
 - d. They think that "God wants Promise Keepers to be a spark in His hand to ignite a worldwide movement calling men to reconciliation, discipleship, and godliness" (*Ibid.*, p. 12).
4. There is a close association between Promise Keepers and John Wimber's Vineyard Fellowship.
 - a. "The Vineyard Movement strongly affirms the availability today of miraculous signs, wonders and direct revelations from God" (B. J. Clarke, Power, Feb. 1997, p. 1).
 - b. James Ryle is the "Pastor" of this church and he claims that God "told him that the Beatles were anointed to bring forth a worldwide revival and "usher in (God's) Spirit" (*Ibid.*, p. 1). (God removed his band from the Beatles in 1970).
 - c. Randy Phillips, President of Promise Keepers and Mr. Ryle "believe that God has

anointed Promise Keepers in the same way that He allegedly anointed the Beatles" (Bill Randles, "An Open Letter To Bill McCartney," published in "Return To The World" Magazine).

- d. Knowing they believe God is leading the way "helps one to understand why the Promise Keepers talk so much of receiving messages and nudges from the Holy Spirit" (Clash, op. cit., p. 1).
- e. Bill McCartney, founder of Promise Keepers is a member of the Boulder Valley Fellowship (a satellite church of the Vineyard Fellowship). Mr. Ryle is one of the elite members of the Promise Keepers Board of Directors.

(Photo of John Randles at Vineyard Fellowship)

5. How it came about:

- a. The name Promise Keeper came from the meaning of the word integrity--"Utter sincerity, moral soundness, honesty, and candor with nothing artificial and no empty promises." They liked the word promise--"the simple truth that a man of integrity is a man who keeps his promises" (McCartney, Ibid., p. 287).
- b. They began to call their friends and soon had 70 men recruiting others.
- c. In 1991 over 4,200 men gathered in Boulder, Colorado for the first conference.
- d. "Promise Keepers has mushroomed each year since its inception" (McCartney, Ibid., p. 287).

(1) In 1992, 22,500 men met at Folsom Stadium.

(2) "On July 31, 1993, over 55,000 men met in a silent, pitch-black stadium and watched a single candle burn. Then it lit another. Each of these lit others. And soon the flames spread across the stadium like wildfire, symbolizing the incredible impact men can make on each other..." (Seven Promises of a Promise Keeper, Different authors [Colorado Springs: Family Publishing, 1994], on back cover.)

(3) In 1994, they drew over 275,000 in seven different locations, from every state.

(4) On July 18-19, 1997, they drew 45,824 at \$60 per person or \$2.9 million plus. *(St. Louis)*

(5) They drew approximately 35,000 at Knoxville in 1997. *June-*

(6) "The group has gone from 29 staff members in 1993 to 150 full-time employees in 1994, and in that same period, its annual budget has risen from \$4 million to \$22 million" (Christianity Today, Feb. 6, 1995, 28). *Total attendance (1997) - 700,000 - income \$87 m.*

(6) "Though the original group was led by McCartney and other members of the Charismatic Vineyard Church, the men promptly sought to take the group across denominational borders" (Christianity Today, Feb. 6, 1995, p. 23).

6. In this study we want to consider:

DISCUSSION:

- I. WHAT IS PROMISE KEEPERS? WHAT ARE THEY TRYING TO ACCOMPLISH? IS IT WORTHWHILE? IS THERE SOMETHING WE CAN LEARN FROM THEM?
 - A. Picture the beginning of marriage and all the promises that are made at that point. Many times, over the long run, the promises are forgotten.
 - B. When the child is born many promises are made, but a career, etc., take you away and you forget the promises.
 - C. Consider what is happening in America today to our homes:
 - 1. We are living in a culture of perpetual decline.
 - a. Since 1960 violent crimes in America have grown nearly 600%.
 - b. Illegitimate births have increased 400%.

- c. Tonight 40% of our children will sleep in houses where their fathers do not live.
 - d. We have entered into a place in America where the father is absent. This causes many other problems.
 - e. There are several reasons why the father is absent.
 - (1) Teenage girls often become pregnant and the boy doesn't marry the girl.
 - (2) Sometimes the teenage boy cannot support the family and so he just leaves.
 - (3) There is divorce--about half walk away from their marriages.
 - (4) The changing role of fatherhood. Father is away from home and his responsibility is passed on to the mother.
 - (5) Death. Sometimes the father dies.
 - (6) Then sometimes fathers are absent when they are present. "Harvard University has demonstrated, in research, that fathers spend, on average, less than 37 seconds a day of meaningful interaction with children. It is not only father absence that we're combating, but fathers who are in the home but do not know how to be involved in the lives of their children" (Christian Chronicle, August, 1995).
 - f. Why are we surprised then when such groups as Promise Keepers arise. They saw a need and they wanted to fill it. This doesn't justify some of the things they are teaching and doing, but it shows why they came about.
 - g. You see many movements arise because we are not doing our job.
 - (1) When Promise Keepers movement arose it grew from 70 in 1990 to over 55,000 in 1993 because there were so many men who realized they were not doing their job and wanted to improve.
 - (2) Why are so many in the church interested in this movement? Because they realize they are not doing their job and want to improve.
 - h. The feminist movement arose to some extent because we have produced a nation of "sissified" men--men who "abdicate their role as spiritually pure leaders, thus forcing women to fill the vacuum."
 - (1) In a black community women run the show to a large degree.
 - (2) 60% of black children grow up without a father and by 2,000 that percent will rise to 70%.
 - (3) When they go off to school 83% are taught by women.
 - (4) Some men have the concept that manhood has to do with how many women they have conquered and how many children they have sired. As a result of this, sex without commitment, the American public spends more than \$20 billion each year taking care of children with mothers but no father.
 - i. Mothers have a responsibility to the children, but the Bible still teaches (Eph. 6:4).
2. We are living in a culture where most people are not sure where the line is between right and wrong.

- a. In 1966 Joseph Fletcher wrote Situation Ethics. His basic premise was that there is nothing that's universally good or bad, right or wrong.
- b. What was only a philosophical discussion in 1966 has become, in 1995, the basis for morals in our society. "THIRTY five years ago...few people questioned that chastity was a good thing, that homosexual conduct was wrong, and that it was never right to lie, cheat, steal or commit adultery. But today, our ethics and morals are no longer based on Jerusalem; they're based on Sodom and Gomorrah." (Gary J. Oliver, Seven Promises of a Promise Keeper, "Black-and-White Living in a Gray World" [Colorado Springs: Focus on the Family Publishing, 1994], p. 84.)
- D. Even though they emphasize it is for all men, the movement "shows that 93 percent were white; African-American, Hispanic, Asian-American, and Native American attendees collectively made up only 7 percent of the total" (Christianity Today, Feb. 6, 1995, p. 23).

II. WHAT IS THE NATURE OF THE PROMISE KEEPERS MOVEMENT AND WHAT DO THEY BELIEVE AND WHO DO THEY INCLUDE?

A. They believe in the direct operation of the Holy Spirit.

- 1. Randy Phillips, President of Promise Keepers, made the following statement: "After the final session of the prayer summit, I was surprised by the Lord. That's the only way that I can put it. While my wife and I were dining with the chairman of the board of Promise Keepers, Dale Schlafer, and his wife, the Holy Spirit prompted men in a unique and unmistakable way. The words were not audible, but the impression was clear. The sense of the Lord's urging was that we were experiencing a sovereign move of his Spirit to restore the spiritual identity of His sons" (Seven Promises of A Promise Keeper, pp. 3,4).
- 2. One Promise Keeper's speaker looked over his audience and said: "...My heart pounded as they took their seats and I gave them the words I felt God had inspired me to say" (Seven Promises of A Promise Keeper, p. 33).
- 3. In the 1991 conference in Boulder, Colorado, McCartney recalls an incident that deeply affected him: Only about 4,000 of us were gathered that year, but we already had dreams of filling Folsom Field with 50,000 men. . . . As I got up to address the men at the end of that conference, I looked out over the crowd, and I noticed that it was overwhelmingly white. The absence of men of color somehow hit me between the eyes, and in that moment, the Spirit of God clearly said to my spirit, 'You can fill that stadium, but if men of other races aren't there, I won't be there either' (Christianity Today, Feb. 6, 1995, p. 23).

B. They believe the Holy Spirit speaks directly to the human mind, separate and apart from the Word of God.

- 1. "Silently and individually pray: 'Lord, is there anything in my life grieving you?' (If there is something, the Holy Spirit will bring it to mind quickly" (The Promise Keepers at work, p. 37).
- 2. "If the members are too quiet: let them think! The Spirit could be surfacing

some issues" (Brothers: Calling Men Into Vital Relationships, p. 85).

C. They believe the Holy Spirit assists the Bible student in understanding and interpreting the scriptures.

1. "Keep a notebook handy, and jot down thoughts the Holy Spirit brings to your mind as you read..." (Go The Distance—The Making of A Promise Keeper, p. 68).
2. "My Bible study can never be the same after today. From now on, I must depend upon the Holy Spirit to teach me and give me understanding" (The Promise Keeper At Work, p. 33).

D. They believe in the joining of all denominations into one body.

1. "And, now, all across the country, men are crossing the socioeconomic, racial, and denominational barriers that have traditionally kept us from being one Body moving in unison under the leadership of Jesus Christ. . . . In July 1993, men of all colors and denominations sang, "let the Walls Fall Down" and then embraced each other as brothers in Christ. . ." (Seven Promises of a Promise Keeper, p. 7).
2. "The Body of Christ comprises a wide diversity of members. There are many denominations, various styles of worship, and representatives from all walks of life. . . . But the Bible says there is only one Body. Jesus prayed that we all might be one. As men who are Promise Keepers, we must determine to break beyond the barriers and comfort zones and get to know other members of that Body" (Ibid., p. 156).
3. Bill McCartney said: "Now I don't mean to suggest that all cultural differences and denominational distinctives are going to disappear. But what I know is that Almighty God wants to bring Christian men regardless of their ethnic origin, denominational background, or style of worship. There's only one criterion for this kind of unity: to love Jesus and be born of the Spirit of God. Can we look one another in the eye--black, white, red, brown, yellow, Baptist, Presbyterian, Assemblies of God, Catholic, and so on--and together on this common ground: We believe in salvation through Christ alone, and we have made Him the Lord of our lives" (Ibid., pp. 161-162).
4. A Lutheran speaks: "It's wonderful, all these men praising God together.... But this conference is about working on ourselves. There is room for theological differences." (Taken from an article entitled, "Promise Keepers Here Share Camaraderie and Faith in God—Past—Dispatch, July 20, 1997).
5. A Baptist speaks: "My practice of interfaith cooperation allows me to affirm Jesus even as I defend full religious liberty for my Jewish? Muslim or Ba'Hai friends...whom I have come to love" (Ibid.).
6. A Muslim speaks: He said the Promise Keepers welcomed him and then commented "It's not made a difference to me. All religions believe in God."

E. They believe that the seven promises "are meant to guide us toward the life of Christ and to transform us within so that we might see transformation in our homes, among our friends, in our churches, and, ultimately, in our nation" (Seven Promises, p. 9).

F. They believe that this book (Seven Promises of a Promise Keeper) "is our

trumpet call. This book gives us our marching orders" (Ibid. p. 9).

G. They do not believe what the Bible teaches about how to become a Christian, but they have their own plan.

1. The Bible teaches (Acts 16:25-34).
2. They teach:

ARE YOU SURE YOU'RE A CHRISTIAN?

You need to do five things to become a part of God's family. If you haven't already done these, I urge you, if you're sincerely ready, to do them now:

1. Admit you are sinful. "I am a sinner."
2. Repent. Be willing to turn from your sin, and with God's help, start living to please him.
3. Believe that Jesus Christ died on the cross and rose again.
4. Receive, through prayer, Jesus Christ into your heart and life. Pray something like this from the sincerity of your heart: Dear Lord Jesus, I know I am a sinner. I believe you died for my sins and then rose from the grave. Right now, I turn from my sins and open the door of my heart and life. I receive you as my personal Lord and Savior. Thank you for saving me. Amen.
5. Then tell a believing friend and a pastor about your commitment" (Seven Promises of a Promise Keeper, p. 10).--This was adapted from a book entitled New Believer's Growth Book, by Greg Laurie (Riverside, Calif.: Harvest Ministries, 1985), p. 8.

H. They believe that the Promise Keeper's first priority is worship, but their idea of worship is different from that described in the New Testament.

1. "It's Saturday, and the stadium is filled with 65,000 wildly enthusiastic men. They're doing the wave, they're cheering, they're scarfing down hot dogs" is the description given by David Briggs, Associated Press writer.
2. ". . . They stamp their feet after each promise. . . Throughout the weekend, the men periodically will do a Christian wave, challenging the other side of the stadium with chants such as 'I love Jesus, How about you?' and toss beach balls and paper airplanes around the stadium."
3. "A Promise Keeper's rally is usually held in a football stadium and features top-of-the-lungs screams, yells and shouts; singing accompanied by trumpets, clanging cymbals, tinkling brass, bass drums, and bongos is a major part of the hoopla. . . and call it worship" (Firm Foundation, October, 1995, p. 26).
4. Edward Gilbreath, in Christianity Today, February 6, 1995, under "Manhood's Great Awakening" writes: "I'm among 52,000 men packed into gritty Folsom Stadium in Boulder, Colorado. I am not at a football game or wrestle-mania XVII. What is playing on this July weekend is a meeting of Promise Keepers, and according to the advertising, the home team is the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. I've been in huge crowds before, but not one made up entirely of hairy, sweaty, and emotionally uninhibited Christian males. The legion of masculine voices sings, shouts, chants, cries; Frisbees, footballs, and plastic-foam planes constantly zoom overhead. Amens, hallelujahs, and praise the Lords sing out to affirm the steady lineup

of preachers and speakers. Periodically, swarms of bodies go up and down throughout the stadium to create a human wave. And between speakers, the stadium spontaneously breaks out into deafening macho chants: "We love Jesus; yes, we do! We love Jesus; how 'bout you?" (Christianity Today, Feb. 6, 1995, p. 21).

III. WHAT ARE THE SEVEN PROMISES OF PROMISE KEEPERS?

- A. "A Promise Keeper is committed to honoring Jesus Christ through worship, prayer, and obedience to His word, in the power of the Holy Spirit."
1. These are things the Christian is supposed to be already doing. If being a Christian has not accomplished these matters, it is not the fault of Christianity, but of the individual.
 2. They emphasize obedience to his word, but in their worship and action they are disobedient to his word.
 3. In view of knowing that they believe in the direct operation of the Holy Spirit, then "in the power of the Holy Spirit" means a direct operation of the Holy Spirit.
- B. "A Promise Keeper is committed to pursuing vital relationships with a few other men, understanding that he needs brothers to help him keep his promises."
1. Again it is not the fault of Christianity if Christians are not helping one another, but it is because we are not doing our job. How many really care about what is happening to someone else?
 2. The scriptures teach, in principle, that we are our brother's keeper.
- C. "A Promise Keeper is committed to practicing spiritual, moral, ethical, and sexual purity."
1. No problem here.
 2. A Christian already does this.
- D. "A Promise Keeper is committed to building strong marriages and families through love, protection and biblical values."
1. The Bible clearly teaches that Christian men are to be doing all of these (Eph. 5:22ff).
 2. It is because men are not doing these things that they are seeking help somewhere else.
- E. "A Promise Keeper is committed to supporting the mission of the church by honoring his pastor and by actively giving his time and resources."
1. It is not to be denied that we fail many times to honor those to whom honor is due, but this is not the fault of Christianity.
 2. When they speak of the church they are not speaking of the New Testament church but denominationalism in general. They believe that all denominations make up the church.
- F. "A Promise Keeper is committed to reaching beyond any racial and denominational barriers to demonstrate power of biblical unity."
1. Every Christian that believes the Bible believes that we must strive for unity (Eph. 4:1-3).
 2. But Promise Keepers are advocating the joining of all denominations into the "Body of Christ." They do not recognize the difference between the New Testament church and denominations.

G. "A Promise Keeper is committed to influencing his world, being obedient to the Great Commandment (see Mark 12:30-31) and the Great Commission (see Matthew 28:19-20)."

1. The Christian is already carrying out the Great Commission.
2. Does this organization of Promise Keepers really believe this statement about the Great Commission?
3. Would they teach the Great Commission as Jesus taught it. The answer is obviously no.

IV. WHAT IMPACT HAS PROMISE KEEPERS HAD UPON CHURCHES OF CHRIST?

- A. Promise Keepers has "ignited an explosion of men's ministries in churches of Christ" (Christian Chronicle, August, 1995, pp. 14-15).
- B. Robert Cross, a deacon for the Rochester, Michigan Church of Christ, attended the Promise Keepers conference in Dallas in 1994 and in the Silverdome in 1995--He wrote: "Men have longed to find close friendships in a Christian environment for a long, long time. We just haven't had the opportunity and privilege to really share. To be in one of these stadia full of men worshipping God is very awe inspiring. We're able to share in a macho kind of way--it's very loud, very sportsy kind of orientation, yelling, clapping, singing as loud as your voice will allow you to--that's not present in many church activities because of our conservative nature." (F.F.)
- C. The Quail Springs Church of Christ in Oklahoma City has about 60 men meeting in weekly small group sessions. Alan Phillips, a deacon said, "We hold each other accountable to the commitments we make as fathers and husbands."
- D. The Garnett Road and Quail Springs congregations each hosted Steve Farrar's Point Man conferences, which drew hundreds of men from the Church of Christ and from denominational groups.
- E. Walt Erwin, deacon at Garnett Road, also has directed a Wake-Up Call, of the 300 smaller Promise Keeper conferences held each year, which drew audiences of 19,000 radically diverse men with Christian beliefs." (F.F.)
- F. Lyman Mereness, Minister of Mattison, Ill., church, said "the impact of the Promise Keepers conferences does not fade after a few days. The last two years we have come straight from the airport to the building and baptized one man each year. It's been that type of impact weekend."
- G. Jerry Tallman, minister of the Rochester Church of Christ who attended the Promise Keepers conference at the Silverdome, says he doesn't agree with everything Promise Keepers practices, but he thinks the movement is positive nevertheless. He says, "The major thrust of excitement for me was to see what Jesus prayed in John 17 can be achieved--that we would all be one and lay aside our differences. We can center in on the focal point--that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and Lord of our lives. The other issues, many of them very important, need to be discussed and dealt with, but the place to start is good. I would love to go to Boulder and talk with the Promise Keepers leaders. If they are what they claim to be--men of integrity--I think they would seriously consider looking at the Bible. . . . I loosely treat it like going to a restaurant or to a smorgasbord. I choose to pick the food that nourishes me, that I feel good about and that I want." (F.F.)

- H. Walt Erwin, deacon at the Garnett Road Church of Christ, in Tulsa, Okla., agrees that it has its weakness, but it is producing a wave of men who are rededicating their lives to Jesus. He gives an example: "While walking out of the Dallas conference, an elder from our church grabbed me, gave me a giant hug, and said 'I just want to thank you. This is the most awesome experience I've ever had in my life. If you hadn't persisted and kept edging me on to come, I would have missed one of the most spiritual uplifts I've ever had in my entire life.'" (F.F.)
- I. The Richland Hills Church of Christ in Fort Worth, Texas, sponsored a Promise Keepers program which featured Charles Swindoll as one of the main speakers.
- J. Bill Davidson, who preaches for the church in Clearwater, Florida, reports, in his bulletin, that one area church, where he lives, "Paid the admission price (\$55 per person) for any male member who wished to attend this meeting." Bill made this comment, "I was appalled when I heard this report and it came from a very reliable source. It is beyond me that any eldership would agree for the church to pay the admission price, and in essence affirm that Christianity is failing and that something else is needed to help these brethren be what they ought to be anyway. Again, it is not the fault of Christianity that men are failing in their responsibilities as husbands and fathers."
- K. Bill Davidson also tells about another church in north Florida extolling the convention held in St. Petersburg: "Promise Keepers is a Christ-centered ministry dedicated to uniting men through vital relationships to become Godly influences in their world."
1. "Christ-centered."
 2. Christ is not in a system that does not teach the terms of salvation set forth in the New Testament.
 3. Christ does not "have anything to do with a system which says in essence that Christianity is insufficient and that one needs something else (Promise Keepers) to enable him to be what he ought to be" (Bill Davidson, article on the church bulletin of Clearwater, Florida).
- L. In the bulletin (Vol. 3, No. 26, June 28, 1995) of the Northeast Church of Christ in Taylors, SC, we read these words:
- Please be in prayer about men who are considering going to the Promise Keepers Men's Conference in Dallas October 27-28. A church in Irving, Tx, has offered free housing to all men from the Northeast Church who attend the event. The Northeast Church has a small block of tickets reserved for this event.

CONCLUSION:

1. Christians cannot be a part of the Promise Keepers movement and still be faithful to the Lord.
2. If Christianity does not cause men (and women) to keep their promises, it is not because Christianity has failed, but the individual has failed to practice the teachings of Christianity.

"THE BIBLE IS GOD'S FINAL REVELATION"

James Meadows

Introduction

1. The Bible is God's Word.
2. The Bible has withstood the years of time.
3. There will be no more revelation.
4. Why do we say this?

Discussion

I. It Claims to be Complete.

- A. Miracles were given for the purpose of confirming the Word of God (Mk. 16:17-20; John 20:30-31; Heb. 2:1-4).
- B. Miracles were to cease when "that which is perfect" is come (1 Cor. 13:8-13).
- C. Miracles were to cease when we come to "the unity of the faith" (Eph. 4:7-16).

II. It Claims to be Able to Furnish Man Unto All Good Works (2 Tim. 3:16-17).

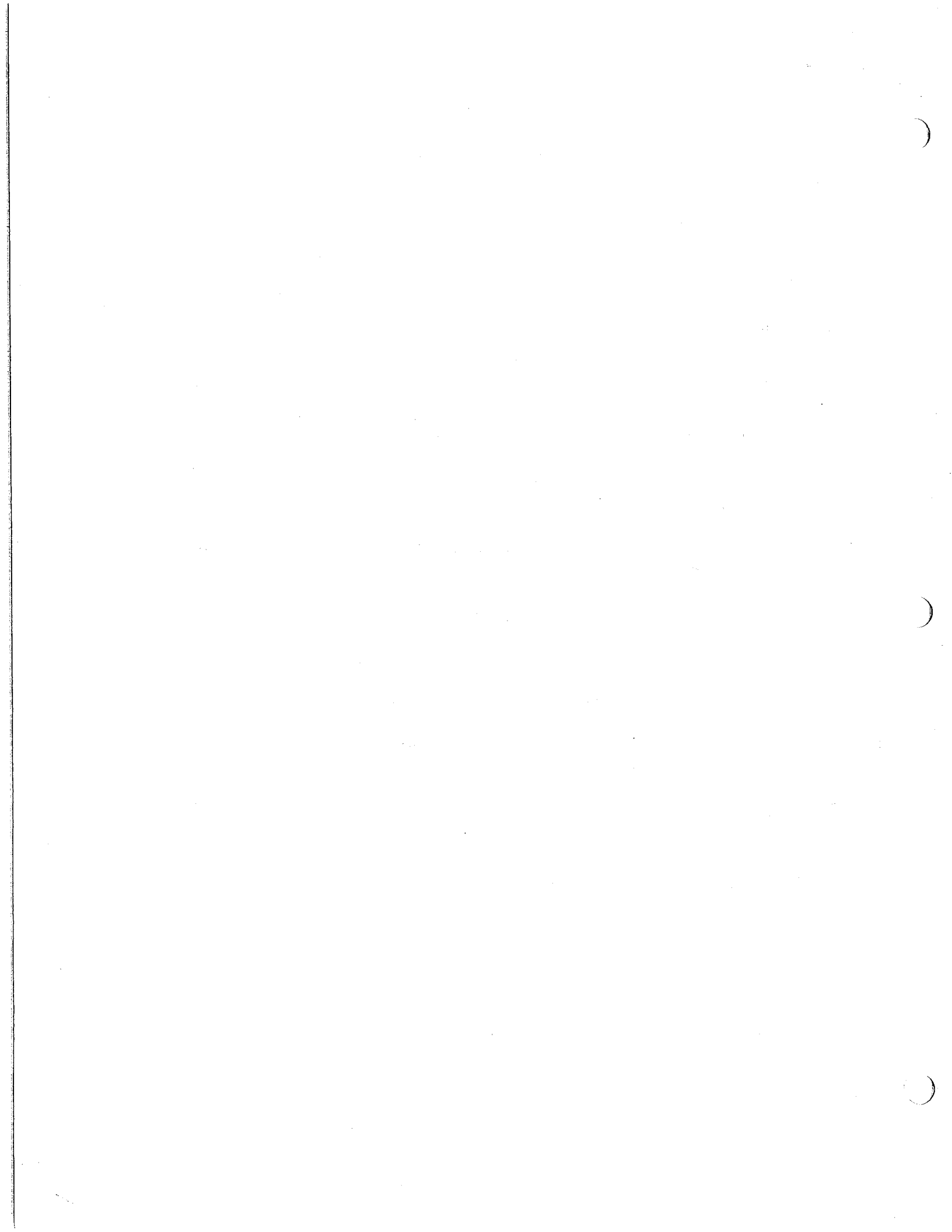
III. It Claims to Contain All That is Necessary to Life and Godliness (2 Pet. 1:3-4).

IV. It Claims to be The Faith Once Delivered (Jude 3).

V. It Claims Warnings Against Adding to or Taking from the Word of God (Deut. 4:2; Prov. 30:6; Gal. 1:6-12; Rev. 22:18-19).

Conclusion

1. God's revelation is complete and must be believed.
2. God's revelation can lead us to heaven.



Attacks on the Bible
Matt. 21:23-27

Introduction

1. "Most Americans say they want guidance from God or the Bible, but few believe in moral absolutes, according to a new survey by the Gallup Organization" (Religious News Services).
 - a. 70 percent agreed with this statement. "There are few moral absolutes; what is right or wrong usually varies from situation to situation.
 - b. 70 percent said they believe it is important to "do what God or Scripture says when choosing between right and wrong, but 63 percent of the group reject the concept of moral absolutes."
2. One of the most tragic episodes of the Old Testament involves the inexcusable disobedience of King Saul (1 Samuel 15:1-23). Cf. Ex. 17:8-14; Dt. 25:17-19.
 - a. Saul's rebellion was as the sin of witchcraft.
 - b. Saul's sin of disobedience was the direct result of his lack of respect for authority and rebellion against authority.
3. It is of paramount importance that men be brought to regard the Bible as the sole standard of authority in religion - many do not.
 - a. The Catholic Church openly admits that she does not think the scriptures sufficient. "We must therefore, conclude that the Scriptures alone cannot be a sufficient guide and rule of faith because they cannot, at any time be within the reach of every inquiry; because they are not of themselves clear and intelligible even in matters of highest importance, and because they do not contain all the truths necessary for salvation" (James C. Gibbons, Faith of our Fathers, pp. 89-90).
 - b. "Thou fool, that shall say a Bible, we have got a Bible, and we need no more Bible" (The Book of Mormon, 2-Nephi 29:36; Utah Edition).
4. Our age is predominantly a skeptical and questioning age.
 - a. It is true skeptics have appeared in ages past but they were few in number and largely rejected by society.
 - b. "Today, in many circles, it is regarded as the smart and sophisticated thing to appear skeptical; and, in many instances, unbelief has arrayed herself in the robes of priestcraft, and now preaches from the pulpit" (Guy N. Woods, Gospel Advocate, Dec. 27, 1956, p. 1002).
5. Today if one says "I believe in the inspiration of the Bible" he should be asked what he means by inspiration.
 - a. There are some who define inspiration as "genius." The writers of the New Testament were inspired as Shakespeare, Gray, Bryant and Milton. This denies supernatural intervention. This is "natural" inspiration.
 - b. Another false theory is "partial" inspiration. "The Bible contains the word of God," implying some is not the word of God.
6. "Modernism seeks to create the impression that the Bible merely contains the word of God along with a large admixture of error; that its authors were wholly dependent on their own fallible judgment in setting out the matters which it teaches, and that the only inspiration it possesses is its ability to 'inspre' its readers" (Guy N. Woods, Gospel Advocate, Dec. 27, 1956, p. 1002).

7. In view of the fact that lack of respect for the Word of God, among both old and young, we propose to study:
 - a. The Meaning of Inspiration.
 - b. The Bible Claims to be the Word of God.
 - c. Authority and How It Is Established.
 - d. Accepting the Bible as Authority Means There are Certain Standards We Cannot Accept.
 - e. Some attacks that are being made on the Bible.
 - (1) New Hermeneutics.
 - (2) No pattern.
 - (3) No objective truth - based on culture.

Discussion

I. What Is The Meaning of Inspiration?

A. Inspiration means a "breathing in."

1. Derived from two Latin words - "in" and "spiro" which mean to "blow or breathe into."
2. The Greek word translated "inspiration" in 2 Tim. 3:16 is "theopneustos."
 - a. "Theos" - God.
 - b. "pneustos" - breathed.
 - c. "God breathed into the minds of the inspired writers the message which they, in turn, faithfully set down upon the sacred pages of the New Testament" (Jimmy Allen).
3. "Inspiration means that influence which God exercised through the Holy Spirit over the minds of Biblical writers to make them infallible in the receiving and recording of his will" (B. C. Goodpasture).
4. "Inspiration is that which enabled the writer to speak or record information, revelation, or that which he knew" (Frank Van Dyke). The Scriptures consist of two different kinds of records:
 - a. "Truths directly revealed by God to the writers which they could not have learned from any other source (e.g. the story of creation, etc.)."
 - b. "Events which the writer observed himself, and sayings, which he himself heard (e.g., Moses' account of the Exodus, Paul's account of his sufferings, etc.)" (Perry Cotham, Gospel Advocate, August 4, 1949, p. 482).
 - c. Thus not all Scripture is Revelation from God, but "all Scripture is inspired of God."
5. "Actually, every Bible book is God-breathed (theopneustos, 2 Tim. 3:16), a figurative way of saying that God's power went into the human instrument and caused him to produce the book" (Hugo McCord).
6. Inspiration is "that inexplicable power which the divine Spirit put forth of old on the authors of Holy Scripture in order to their guidance even in the employment of the words they used, and to preserve them alike from all error and from all omission" (Henry Thiessen, Introduction to the New Testament, page 79).

B. Inspiration was limited to "the communication of divine truth on certain topics by divine authority" (B. C. Goodpasture). In other words, there were certain things inspiration did not do to or for those that received it, namely:

1. It did not impart omniscience (all knowledge).
 - a. Paul didn't know how many he baptized at Corinth, 1 Cor. 1:16.
 - b. He had to send to Thessalonica to learn about their faith, 1 Thess. 3:5.
2. It did not render them immune to bodily afflictions, 2 Cor. 11:23-28.
3. It did not make them incapable of sinning.
 - a. The man of God sinned, 1 Kgs. 13.
 - b. David spoke by the Spirit of God but he sinned, 2 Sam. 12.
 - c. Paul gave diligence lest he fall short, 1 Cor. 9:27.
 - d. Peter sinned, Gal. 2:11-13.
4. It does not vouch for the truthfulness of all the statements it quotes.
 - a. Satan's statement to Eve is not true, Gen. 3:4. It is true he said this, but what he said is not the truth.
 - b. Inspiration does not lie, but it records some lies, 1 Sam. 31:4,5; 2 Sam. 1:1-10.

II. The Bible Claims to be the Word of God

A. Some people deride this argument because they say it begs the question. "We believe the Bible to be inspired because it makes the claim and we believe the claim because it is inspired, and therefore, true."

1. But the claim of a book or person is just part of the evidence.
2. If it didn't make the claim one would be going beyond the evidence to make such a claim for it.

B. Some 3800 times the Bible lays claim to being the word of God.

1. Such expressions as "God spoke," "the Lord testified saying," etc. appears 2500 times in the Old Testament - 100 times in Jeremiah and 28 times in Malachi.
2. The New Testament abounds with claims of being the word of God.
 - a. It claims to be a record of things Jesus did, John 20:30,31.
 - b. It claims to be the truth which the apostles spoke, John 16:13; Lk. 24:49; Acts 1:8; Acts 2:1-4.
 - c. It claims to be the mind of God spoken in words chosen by God, 1 Cor. 2:6-13.
 - d. It claims to be inspired of God, 2 Tim. 3:16,17.
 - e. It claims to be given by men moved by the Holy Spirit (although this verse refers primarily to O.T. the truth applies to New) 2 Pet. 1:20,21.
 - f. It claims to be the perfect, complete will of God, 1 Cor. 13:8-13; Jas. 1:25; Jude 3.

C. Either the Bible is what it claims to be or its the greatest fraud man has ever known about. Such claims challenge one to complete faith and surrender or complete rejection.

III. Authority and How It Is Established

- A. It is "the right to command and enforce obedience; the right to act by virtue of office, station, or relation; as the authority of parent over child..." (Webster).
- B. "From the meaning of leave or permission or liberty of doing as one pleases, it passed to that of the ability or strength which one is endued, then to that of the power of authority" (Vine).
- C. There are two kinds of authority:
 - 1. Primary: This grows out of the relation of those who have the right to command and those whose duty it is to obey. God is the fountain of all primary authority (Cf. John 19:10-11; Romans 13:1).
 - 2. Delegated: This is the right to command and enforce obedience which can be given to another by the party holding primary authority.
 - a. God delegated authority to His Son (John 5:26-27; 8:42; 14:24; Hebrews 1:1-2).
 - b. Christ, through the Holy Spirit, delegated authority to the apostles (Matthew 16:19; 18:18; John 17:6-9; Acts 10:39-43).
 - c. The apostles delegated authority to no one, but are still exercising it through their words (Matthew 19:28; Luke 10:16; John 13:20).

IV. Accepting the Bible as Authority Means There are Certain Standards We Cannot Accept

- A. The voice of the majority cannot be accepted as a trustworthy guide.
 - 1. There are many today (even in the church) who are advocating that we try to find out what the majority want and then give it to them.
 - 2. It was the minority who obeyed and pleased God at the time of the flood (Genesis 6:22; 1 Peter 3:20).
 - 3. Multitudes are traveling the broad way (Matthew 7:13-14).
 - 4. There will always be those that will give you what you want (2 Timothy 4:1-4).
- B. The conscience is not an infallibly safe religious guide.
 - 1. Man must have the approval of his conscience to please God (Romans 14:22-23) but the fact that one has the approval of his conscience does not mean he is right (Acts 23:1).
 - 2. The conscience will approve or disapprove according to its education.
 - 3. One's conscience can be seared (1 Timothy 4:1-4) and defiled (Titus 1:15). Would such be a safe guide?
- C. Feelings are not a safe religious guide.
 - 1. Mormons profess to believe in the Book of Mormon and Joseph Smith because they prayed about it and God confirmed it by a "burning in their breasts."
 - 2. The philosophy call "subjectivism" ("a doctrine that individual feeling...is the ultimate criterion of the good and the right"--Webster) is pleasing to many (even some brethren) today.
 - 3. Furthermore, error when believed to be the truth will produce the same feelings as the truth, if one believes it to be the truth (Cf. Genesis 37:29-36; 45:25-28).
- D. Walking by what appears to be right cannot be an accepted standard.

1. In the days of the judges "every man did that which was right in his own eyes" (Judges 17:6; 21:25).
 2. Today, many are asserting that the New Testament epistles are a "collection of love letters, and love letters do not contain rules." There is no pattern.
 3. Many things appear right unto man, but are the ways of death (Proverbs 14:12).
 4. The Christian walks by faith, not sight (2 Corinthians 5:7).
 5. God has always given a pattern to His people (Genesis 6:22; Exodus 25:9,40; Hebrews 8:5).
 6. Jeremiah preached that "the way of man is not in himself," that a mortal is incapable of directing "his steps" (Jeremiah 10:23).
 7. But human arrogance says, "Man is the measure of all things" (Protagorus, a fifth century B.C. Greek philosopher).
- E. Human traditions and commandments of men cannot be regarded as expressions of God's will.
1. Commandments of men render one's worship vain (Matthew 15:9).
 2. Commandments of men make void the commandments of God (Mark 7:7-9).
 3. Commandments of men turn from the truth (Titus 1:14).
 4. We cannot accept a belief because:
 - a. We trust the one teaching it. Teachers err; Apollos did (Acts 18:23-28).
 - b. It is asserted to be true. Typical assertions: Peter was first pope; there are living apostles today; Christians should keep the Sabbath; instrumental music is right in Christian worship, etc.
 - c. It is urged with great zeal (consider the zeal of Mormons and Jehovah's Witnesses).

V. What Are Some Attacks That Are Being Made Upon The Bible Today?

A. First, the "new hermeneutics" is one attack upon the Bible.

1. Hermeneutic means or has to do with the interpretation of the Bible. The "new hermeneutic" means a new way of interpreting the Bible.
2. The new hermeneutic contains several basic premises (Wayne Jackson, FHU Lectures, 1991, pp. 174-176).
 - a. "First, it argues that Christianity is rather 'plastic' religion." We must maintain the basic doctrine of Christ, but one may adapt the Christian system to the cultures."
 - (1) The evidence does not indicate that the basic forms of Christianity could be altered to fit the culture.
 - Immersion in water, an obligation to the "end of the world" (Matt. 28:18-20).
 - As long as saints eat the bread and drink the cup they show the Lord's death "till he come" (1 Cor. 11:26).
 - (2) Woman's subordination to man is based on the creation principle (1 Tim. 2:12-15), not culture.
 - b. Second, the "new hermeneutic" alleges that no conclusion which has

been reached as a result of logical reasoning can be made a test of fellowship. Only things explicitly spelled out in the scriptures are fellowship matters." If we reject logic, consider:

- (1) Is the observance of the Lord's supper each first day of the week a matter of Christian doctrine? If so, how does one determine this without logic? (1 Cor. 16:2; Acts 20:7)
 - (2) Is there just one church? Where does the Bible explicitly say that? How can one arrive at that conclusion without logic? (1 Cor. 12:20; Eph. 4:4; 1:22-23; Col. 1:18).
- c. Third, it suggests that the principle of respecting the 'silence of the scriptures is erroneous."
- (1) Anything the Bible does not specifically prohibit is allowed (Martin Luther's premise).
 - (2) The Hebrew writer argues that Jesus could not be a priest on earth (wrong tribe--Judah) of which the Old Testament "spoke nothing" (was silent) regarding priest from this tribe (Heb. 8:4; 7:14).
 - (3) Nadab and Abihu offered "strange fire" before the Lord which he commanded them not (was silent" (Lev. 10:1) "had not authorized" (NIV).
- d. "Fourth, this new interpretative procedure asserts that our contention that 'necessary inference' and 'approved apostolic example' are legitimate methods of establishing Bible authority is a reflection of a 'clumsy' approach to hermeneutics which has resulted in a 'profusion of splits and faction' in the body of Christ."
- (1) Did the church at Troas drink the fruit of the vine? (Acts 20:7). It is only by "necessary inference" that one can conclude they did?
 - (2) May women partake of the Lord's supper? Only necessary inference authorizes such participation (Acts 11:17ff).
 - (3) Does "apostolic example" establish authority?
 - (a) Peter used this method before his Jewish brethren (Acts 11:15-17).
 - (b) When are examples binding? "Our rational powers are used, of course, in determining the applicability today of an example, just as they are in determining the applicability of commands. We have no difficulty recognizing that the command, 'Go wash in the pool of Siloam,' is not a command for us today. We use the same reasoning in dealing with biblical example" (James O. Baird).
- e. Fifth, the apostles of the 'new hermeneutic' disdain the concept that we are under the law to Christ...the New Testament is to be viewed as a series of 'love letters.'"
- (1) The Old Testament foretold the coming of a new law (Isa. 2:2-4; Jer. 31:31-34).
 - (2) The New Testament affirms that we are under the law of Christ (1 Cor. 9:21; Gal. 6:2; Cf. Heb. 7:12).

who do not practice it?" (Wayne Jackson).

10. The Bible teaches a pattern of moral behavior (Gal. 5:19-21; 1 Cor. 6:13-19). If there is no pattern for moral behavior then is there immoral behavior? If there is no immoral behavior then "how does man differ from a bull, a dog, or a rooster? May I kill a man who says there is no pattern of moral behavior? Would I be immoral if I did?" (Larry Hafley).
11. Paul admonished Timothy to "hold fast the form (pattern) of sound words..." (2 Tim. 1:13). He was to teach these same truths to faithful men (2 Tim. 2:2). They were not to teach a "different doctrine" (1 Tim. 1:13). He was to "continue in the things he had learned" (2 Tim. 3:14). How could he "hold fast" sound words, teach the same truths, and abide in the same truths, if there was no pattern and if these truths were constantly changing?
12. "God has given us a pattern for obedience, a pattern for the church, a pattern for worship, and a pattern for work. Strict compliance with that pattern produces Christians only, the Church of Christ only, and Scriptural worship and Scriptural work. The real legitimacy of Christianity rests in strict adherence to the pattern" (Reuel Lemmons, Lipscomb's Lectures, 1957).

Conclusion

1. God's word is the standard for us to follow.
2. If we cannot follow it as a standard, then what can we use?
3. Proper respect for Bible authority.
 - a. Begins with the right attitude toward the Bible (Psa. 119).
 - b. Accepts the Bible as the standard.
 - c. Searches for proof of its authority (1 Thess. 5:21; 1 Jn. 4:1).
 - d. Will lead one to salvation (Rom. 1:16).

- f. "The 'new hermeneutic' concept, however, undermines the very basis of biblical authority" (Wayne Jackson).
- B. Second, the idea that there is no pattern for us to follow today.
1. "There can be no spiritual fellowship between New Testament Christians and individual group which teach anything other than the pure Gospel of Christ, worship in any manner other than that authorized in the New Testament, organize themselves differently from the pattern of organization set forth in Scripture and/or live a worldly life" (Rubel Shelly, Liberalism's Threat to the Faith, 1970's, p. 19).
 2. But April 20-21, 1990, Rubel Shelly said: "Are we really looking for a pattern? ...We've taken Acts and tried to make it a prison...a rigid pattern. Acts was never meant to be a pattern...I reject pattern theology..." (Tapes of Speeches at Missouri Street, West Memphis, Arkansas).
 3. Don White, editor of The Exegete openly doubts "that primitive Christianity is the normative pattern for all ages.... Pattern theology is not supported linguistically by the New Testament."
 4. What says there is no pattern? Does the Bible teach there is no pattern? (Several thoughts from Larry Ray Hafley.)
 - a. If so, does the Bible's teaching that there is no pattern constitute a pattern for us to accept?
 - b. If there is no pattern, am I "free" to reject the teaching (pattern) that says there is no pattern?
 - c. Am I bound legally to believe there is no pattern?
 5. Are there any perversions since there are no patterns for worship and service? Paul told the Corinthians that they were corrupting the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. 11:17-34). He told them some changes they needed to make. Were they obligated to obey what Paul said or were they free to ignore what he said?
 6. Paul urged the Galatians to "walk by this rule..." (Gal. 6:16; cf. Phil. 3:16). Thayer defines hanon, the word for "rule," as "a definitely bound or fixed space...the province assigned to one...any rule or standard."
 7. Moses, was instructed by God, in constructing the tabernacle, to "make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount" (Heb. 8:5). Thayer defines tupos, pattern, as "the pattern in conformity to which a thing must be made" (Acts 7:44; Heb. 8:5; Exodus 25:40). "Do we as recipients of the 'better covenant' (Heb. 7:22; 8:6), have a lesser responsibility as we minister to God in his church, of which the tabernacle was but a type?" (Cf. Heb. 9:1-10) (Wayne Jackson)
 8. The Romans had been made "free from sin" by "obeying from the heart that form (pattern) of doctrine (Rom. 6:17-18). The word here is tupos, or pattern, or mold. "The gospel is the mold" (W. E. Vine). Arndt and Gingrich define tupos as "form, figure, pattern...pattern of teaching."
 9. Paul admonished the saints at Rome to "...mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them" (Rom. 16:17). "If there is no set pattern of New Testament doctrine, how could one every be required to "turn away from" those

"MATTHEW 24"

INTRODUCTION:

1. One of the most misused and abused chapters in the word of God is Matthew 24.
2. It is upon the contents of this chapter that many false teachers base their doctrine.
 - a. The "so-called prophetic teachers" use the signs to try to decide the day when the Lord will come again.
 - b. The Premillennialists use it to set up the literal reign of Christ in Palestine one day.
 - c. Some members of the church follow the line of confusion taught and add to the confusion.
3. It shall be our purpose in this study on Matthew 24 to observe every point:
 - a. To see what is being taught by our Lord.
 - b. To gain the great lessons that will be helpful to us in great Christian living.

DISCUSSION:

I. THE KEY TO MATTHEW 24 IS VERSE 34. "THIS GENERATION SHALL NOT PASS, TILL ALL THESE THINGS BE FULFILLED."

- A. Kik says "If the literal and well-defined meaning of this verse be accepted, then we shall quite readily perceive that the verse divided the entire chapter into two main sections."
 1. Section One speaks of events which were to befall the generation at the time our Lord lived.
 2. Section Two relates to events connected with his second coming.
- B. The term "this generation" plays a very important part in understanding all that precedes this verse.
 1. Some argue that "this generation" refers to "that race"--Jesus meant to say that the race of the Jews would not pass till this was fulfilled. (But this would have Jesus saying "Your race will not pass away until that which will happen to you does happen.)
 2. The evident meaning of the term is that the generation living at the time of Christ would not pass till all these things came to pass. The use of the term throughout Matthew confirms this:
 - a. In Matthew 1:17 the term is used to mean the average life-time of a man.
 - b. Jesus said "But whereunto shall I liken this generation?" (Matt. 11:16) He was speaking of those who lived in his day that criticized John.
 - c. In Matthew 12:38-45 He used the term generation four times to mean the present generation.
 - (1) "An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign" v. 39.
 - (2) "The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation." v. 41
 - (3) "The queen of the south shall rise up in judgment with this generation." v. 42
 - (4) "Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation." v. 45
 - d. In Matthew 23:36 Jesus said "All these things shall come upon this generation."

C. Jesus makes it very plain that the things he talked about would happen to that generation.

II. THE "TRANSITION TEXT" OF MATTHEW 24 IS VERSE 36. "BUT OF THAT DAY AND HOUR KNOWETH NO MAN. . ."

- A. It was very obvious to the apostles that Jesus was turning to a new subject at this point by his use of the expression "that day."
 - B. "That day and hour" are common expressions in the scriptures to refer to the final judgment.
 1. "Many shall say to me in that day. . ." Matt. 7:21.
 2. "But I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you." Matt. 11:22.
 3. "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming. . ." Jn. 5:28.
 4. "For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord. . ." I Thess. 5:2
- Cf. II Tim. 1:12.

C. The difference in emphasis in the two sections shows verse 36 to be the "transition text."

1. In Section One (24:4-35) Jesus is very definite of the events and the time of his judgment against the Jews.
 - a. He tells of some definite things which are to precede this coming--false christs, wars, earthquakes, famines, persecutions, etc.
 - b. Then he gives four explicit signs by which they would know the end was come.
 - (1) The gospels would "be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations." v. 14.
 - (2) The abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel. v. 15.
 - (3) The great tribulation. vv. 16-29a.
 - (4) The sun and moon would be darkened and the stars would fall from heaven. v. 29.
2. But in Section Two every thing is very indefinite.
 - a. "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only." 24:36.
 - b. "Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come." 24:42
 - c. "Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh." Matt. 24:44.
 - d. "The Lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of." 24:50.
 - e. "Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh." Matt. 25:13.
 - f. As there were no signs when the flood come so there will be none previous to the Lord's second coming. 24:37-39.
 - g. Also Jesus compares his second coming to a thief who gives no warning. 24:43.
 - h. The emphasis in the second section is that of delay.
 - (1) The evil servant was able to say "My Lord delayeth his coming." 24:48.
 - (2) In the parable of the Ten virgins the bridegroom tarrieth. 25:5.
 - (3) The parable of the talents says "After a long time the Lord of those servants cometh." 25:19.

III. MATTHEW 24 IS THE CULMINATION OF A SERIES OF PROPHECIES AGAINST THE JEWISH NATION.

- A. John the Baptist had warned the Jews that the ax was laid unto the root of the trees. Matt. 3:10.
 1. They did not repent and Matthew 24 states how and when the ax would fall.
 2. Jesus connects what John said with his warning by using almost the same words. Matt. 23:33.
- B. The warnings of Matthew 21 teach the Jews would not possess the kingdom of God.
 1. In the parable of the man who had two sons Jesus declared "Verily I say unto you," (21:31).
 2. In the parable of the wicked husbandman Jesus said, "The kingdom of God shall be taken from you and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." Matt. 21:43.
- C. The final debate between Jesus and the Jewish leaders is recorded in Matthew 22.
 1. He silenced the Pharisees and Herodians.
 2. Then silenced the Sadducees.
 3. Later he silenced the Pharisees again, never to receive another question.
- D. Matthew 23, Jesus sums up the sins of the Jewish nation and gives his verdict-- "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate." 23:38.
 1. In a series of woes Jesus denounces their sins. 23:13-29.
 2. In verse 32 he declares "Fill up the measure of your fathers."
 - a. Their fathers had killed and persecuted the prophets. 23:34.
 - b. Now they were filling the cup to overflowing by crucifying the son of God and "all these things shall come upon this generation." Matt. 23:36.
 3. The temple was no longer "My house" (Matt. 21:13) but "your house" (23:38), as it was forsaken by God.
 4. Thus the language of Matthew 24 is not too strong.
- E. Having stated these things Jesus departed from the temple.

IV. HIS DISCIPLES CAME AND ASKED HIM SOME QUESTIONS.

- A. Jesus declared that the desolation of the temple meant utter destruction. 24:1,2.

- B. The disciples asked two questions on this occasion.
1. The first question was when would these things be and what would be the sign.
 - a. Mark says "Tell us, when shall these things be? And what shall be the sign when these things are all about to be accomplished?" Mk. 13:4.
 - b. Luke writes "Master, when therefore shall these things be? and what shall be the sign when these things are about to come to pass?" Lk. 21:7.
 2. The second question was when "the end of the world" (Matt. 24:3c) would be.
- C. Jesus answers the first question in Matthew 24:4-35 and the second in Matthew 24:36 - 25:46.

V. SOME GENERAL SIGNS OF THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM OR SIGNS THAT MIGHT DECEIVE.

- A. Warnings about false Messiah. vv. 4,5.
1. Acts 5:33-37 reveals two false individuals that did arise.
 2. Josephus mentions many pretenders that arose.
- B. There were also predictions of wars, famines, and earthquakes. vv. 6-8.
1. History records many wars and outbreaks in the Roman empire from the death of Christ to the fall of Jerusalem.
 2. Severe famines are mentioned in the book of Acts. Acts 11:28.
 3. Earthquakes abounded during the period of time, the best known occurring Feb. 5 A. D. 63 at Pompeii.
- C. There was a warning regarding the severe persecutions of Christians. vv. 9-13.
1. The apostles were put in prison and beaten. Acts 4 & 5.
 2. Stephen was stoned to death. Acts 6 & 7.
 3. There was a great persecution against the church. Acts 8 & 9.
 4. James was beheaded. Acts 12:1.
 5. Paul speaks often of his co-workers turning away from him. II Tim. 1:15; II Tim. 4:10,16.
 6. Many false teachers would arise to deceive. Cf. Acts 20:29; Rom. 16:17,18; II Pet. 2:1; I Jn. 4:1.
- D. The last general sign was that the gospel would be preached to all the world before the time. v. 14; Cf. Col. 1:6,23.

VI. SOME SPECIFIC SIGNS OF THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM AND FURTHER SIGNS OF DECEPTION.

- A. "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation. . . stand in the holy place." 24:15.
1. Daniel spoke of this abomination and used the term three times (Dan. 9:27; 11:31; 12:11) and it is connected with idolatry.
 2. The parallel passage in Luke (Lk. 21:20) shows that the "abomination of desolation" referred to the Roman army compassing Jerusalem.
 3. When they saw this sign they were to flee into the mountains. 24:16.
It was to be quick:
 - a. Those on the housetop were not to go down to get anything. 24:17.
 - b. Those in the field were not to return for their clothes. 24:18.
 - c. There might be some hindrances to a quick flight:
 - (1) A woman might be with child. 24:19a.
 - (2) Some have been giving suck. 24:19b.
 - (3) It might be in the winter time when travel would be difficult. 24:20a.
 - (4) It might be on the sabbath day when the gates of the city would be shut and the Jews in the country would not help them. 24:20b.
- B. Jesus also warned of "great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be." 24:21.
1. Josephus' description shows that 97,000 were taken captive and slain, and 1,100,000 died. Even women ate their own children.
 2. The expression "nor ever shall be" shows there would be more time after this event.
 3. The tribulation was so great that had the days not been shortened all flesh would have died. 24:22. Josephus says for some reason the Roman army withdrew for a time and every Christian in Jerusalem escaped to safety. They seem to have done this when Cestius Gallus attacked the city in A. D. 66, but for some unknown reason withdraw and all the Christians fled to Pella.
- C. Jesus again warns of false Christs and false prophets trying to deceive the very elect during the time of the seige. Matt. 24:23-26.

- D. Jesus then reminds them of the suddenness and visibility of his coming. 24:27 (This language could apply to the destruction of Jerusalem as well as the final judgment.)
- E. The sureness of it is next described by the eagles gathering to a dead carcass. 24:28.
 - 1. The eagles (birds of prey) are sure to gather where there is a dead carcass.
 - 2. Jesus seems to use the language figuratively here--"As a dead body attracts vultures so would Jerusalem, the center of the Jewish nation, attract those who would devour it." (Kik, p. 67)
 - 3. The Old Testament uses the term eagle to describe a foreign nation coming to punish the Jewish nation. Deut. 28:49; Hosea 8:1; Hab. 1:8; Jer. 48:40.
 - 4. The Romans army was coming to destroy Jerusalem as an eagle because of her deadness in God's sight.

VII. THE LORD NEXT USES SOME FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE TO SHOW THE COMPLETE DOWNFALL OF JUDAISM.

- A. The things described here were to take place "Immediately after the tribulation of those days." Matt. 24:29a.
- B. It would not be thought strange that such language is used here since such is used throughout the Bible to picture the destruction of nations.
 - 1. In describing the downfall of Babylon God said "For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine." Isa. 13:10.
 - 2. In describing the destruction of Idumea God said, "And all the hosts of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll. . ." Isa. 34:4,5.
 - 3. The same type language is used in describing the downfall of Pharaoh and Egypt Ezek. 32:7,8.
 - 4. Similiar language is used in Peter's quotation of Joel's prophecy. Joel 2:28-32; Acts 2:15-20.
 - 5. If such language was used to describe the downfall of heathen nations one should not be surprised that God used such to describe the downfall of Judaism.
- C. The language of verse 30 can well describe the Lord's coming in judgment but it is not to be limited to such.
 - 1. "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven. . ."
 - a. It does not say "then shall appear the Son of man in heaven" but "the sign of the Son of man."
 - b. The disciples would understand that when these things did happen it was a further sign or evidence that he was in heaven with all power.
 - 2. "And then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn" refers to the mourning of the Jews scattered through the world upon learning of the destruction of the temple and Jerusalem.
 - 3. "And they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory."
 - a. Every time the coming of the Lord is mentioned in the Bible it does not refer to his second coming.
 - b. The context must determine what coming, and how, is talked about.
 - (1) Isaiah 19:1 told of the Lord coming in the clouds into Egypt.
 - (2) A comparison of Matthew 16:28; 26:64 and Mark 9:1 clearly shows a coming which is not the second coming, but in the kingdom on Pentecost.
- D. The language of verse 31 likewise can describe the final judgment, but is not to be limited to such.
 - 1. The term "aggelos" from which angel is translated does not always mean heavenly beings. John the Baptist was called an "aggelos" (messenger).
 - 2. A comparison of this verse with Luke 13:29 shows that it is no more than a prophecy of the spread of the gospel to all parts of the world.
- E. "If the preceding language referred to the second coming one must understand Jesus to be telling his disciples that when they saw the sun and moon darkened and the stars falling around them, they would know his second coming was at the doors! Or, when they saw him coming in the clouds, and the angels gathering the elect from the four winds, they would know the second coming was at the door. Such signs would appear to be too late to be helpful if vs. 29 and 31 are to be understood

as literal references to his second coming. That coming would be past instead of being "nigh", as in the parable of the fig tree." (Hazelip, F.W.C.C.L., p. 115)

VIII. JESUS GIVES TWO FINAL THOUGHTS TO SHOW THE DISCIPLES EXACTLY HOW AND WHEN

- A. The parable of the fig tree. Just as you know summer is nigh when you see leaves on the fig tree so when you "see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors." 24:33.
- B. "This generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled." 24:34,35.

IX. "BUT OF THAT DAY AND HOUR, . . ." 24:36. (THIS IS THE TRANSITION VERSE.)

- A. The change of expressions shows that a new subject is now discussed.
1. In the first sections the plural "days" is used. 24:19,22,29.
 2. In the second section the singular is employed. 24:36,42,44,50; 25:13.
- B. Matthew's use of the term "the day" would immediately reveal to the apostles what the Lord had in mind.
1. Jesus said "Many will say to me in that day. . ." Matt. 7:22.
 2. Again "But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment. . ." Matt. 11:22.
 3. "But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment. . ." Matt. 11:24.
 4. Jesus again said, "That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment." Matt. 12:36.
- C. Nowhere in the New Testament is the plural "the days" or "those days" applied to Christ's second coming or the judgment.
- D. Furthermore the expression "the last days" does not refer to a short period just before his second coming. dv. II Tim. 3:1.
1. Hebrews 1:1,2 shows that it refers to the Christian dispensation.
 2. Peter spoke of the last days on Pentecost and mentioned they were in the last days. Acts 2:16,17.

X. "KNOWETH NO MAN, NO, NOT THE ANGELS OF HEAVEN, BUT MY FATHER ONLY." 24:36b.

- A. It is sheer folly then for anyone to speculate and prophesy about when the Lord will come.
- B. The second coming of Christ will be "as the days of Noe were." 24:37.
1. People were going about the normal activities of life in the days that were before the flood." 24:38.
 2. Just as people then "knew not" the precise time when the flood came, so men do not know the precise time of Christ's coming, but will continue in every-day affairs unconcerned. 24:39
 3. People didn't heed Noah's warnings in the days before the flood so people don't heed the warnings about the judgment today. II Pet. 2:5.
- C. The second coming will not only be sudden and unexpected, but a time of separation. 24:40,41.
1. Two shall be in the field - one taken, the other left. v. 40.
 2. Two women grinding - one taken, the other left. v. 41.

XI. PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS DRAWN FROM THE UNCERTAINTY OF THE LAST DAY.

- A. To live without watchfulness invites disaster. 24:42,43.
1. One never knows when a thief may come and the only sure guard against such is to maintain a constant watch.
 2. In like manner, one knows not what hour the Lord comes, thus the only way to be ready is to watch all the time.
- B. The spirit that leads to disaster is the spirit that says there is plenty of time. 24:48,49.
1. The servant in the parable said there is plenty of time - "My Lord delayeth his coming."
 2. "There is a fable which tells of three apprentice devils who were coming to this earth to finish their apprenticeships. They were talking to Satan, the chief of the devils about their plans to tempt and to ruin men. The first said, 'I will tell them that there is no God.' Satan said, 'That will not delude many, for they know that there is a God.' The second said, 'I will tell men that there is no hell.' Satan answered, 'You will deceive no one that way; men know even now that there is a hell for sin.' The third said, 'I will tell men that there is no hurry.' 'Go,' said Satan, 'and you will ruin men by the thousand.'

- a. The most dangerous of all delusions is that there is plenty of time.
- b. "The most dangerous day in a man's life is when he learns that there is such a word as tomorrow."

3. There are many today who like the wicked servant are saying, "There is plenty of time."

C. Rejection or reward, in the judgment, will be based on failure or fidelity to duty.

1. The faithful servant is the one the Lord finds doing his duty when he comes. Matt. 24:45-47.
2. The evil servant is the one that keeps putting off his duty and is caught unaware when the Lord comes. Matt. 24:50,51.

CONCLUSION:

1. The complete fulfillment of the signs in the destruction of Jerusalem should impress us that the prophecies regarding the second coming and judgment will also be fulfilled.
2. Are you ready? Are you watching? Do you live each moment of each day as if it were your last?
3. "Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come."