



HANUKKAH

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(NOTE: The views expressed in the following articles are not necessarily endorsed by the British-Israel World Federation (Victorian Headquarters) Inc.)

PSALM 100 - A PSALM OF PRAISE

Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all ye lands.

**Serve the LORD with gladness: come before his
presence with singing.**

**Know ye that the LORD he is God:
it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves;
we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.**

**Enter into his gates with thanksgiving,
and into his courts with praise:
be thankful unto him, and bless his name.**

**For the LORD is good; his mercy is everlasting;
and his truth endureth to all generations.**

**Let us begin our new year with praise, praise for the great
Promises of God which have already been fulfilled:-**

- The Coming Seed [Jesus Christ] Who would release mankind from the sovereignty of Satan (Gen. 3:15); and in Whom all the families of the earth would be blessed (Gen. 28:14; Jn. 1:10-14).
- The multitudinous seed of Abraham through Isaac and Jacob/Israel, who would develop into “*a nation and a company of nations*” to be God’s witnesses, taking the Gospel to the ends of the earth, and constituting His Servant Nation forever. (Gen. 35:11; Isa. 43:10-12; 52:10).
- The preservation of the Throne of the Lord as the Throne of David over Israel (2 Sam. 7) until He comes to rule.

And let us also praise Him for the promises yet to be fulfilled:-

- The return of Christ to gather His “Church” - the members of His “Body” at the First Resurrection (1 Thes. 4:13-18).
- His return as Judge and King to take the Throne of His father David and rule the earth in equity and peace (Isa. 9:6-7; Isa. 60:1-3; Mic. 4:1-4; Luke 1:31-33).

Let us also put our trust in Him, prayerfully, in the days ahead, as our Israel nations reap the final consequences of their apostasy, and may we pray constantly that our people will be brought to repentance and turn in faith to our great God and our Redeemer, Jesus Christ.

REFLECTIONS ON CHRISTMAS

After a short historical account of Christmas celebrations *The Good News, November/December, 2003* goes on:

[Quote] In more modern times many Christians have become concerned about the commercialization of the day that is supposed to celebrate the birth of the Son of God. With parades featuring Santa Claus sponsored by department stores, half-price sales, and incessant TV and radio commercials, Christmas obviously has become more about the accountant’s bottom line than about worshipping God.

Many people approach the yuletide season with a vague longing for a Christmas that is more spiritual and less commercial. But is our fast-paced, greed-filled rendition

of Christmas the real problem, or is there something wrong with Christmas itself? Christmas has become such a central holiday of our culture that it is difficult to get anyone to step back and evaluate its Christian validity. You be the judge. Here are the facts.

Jesus wasn't born on December 25. Christ's apostles rejected pagan ceremonies and rituals in their worship and told other Christians to likewise avoid them. The early Church didn't observe Jesus' birthday. The selection of December 25 as Christ's supposed date of birth was based on the dates of the Roman Saturnalia and Brumalia - a time for worshipping the god Saturn.

Most Christmas customs - decorating the evergreen tree, use of mistletoe, exchanging gifts, Santa Claus - come not from the Bible but from ancient pagan religions. For centuries Christianity tried unsuccessfully to rid itself of the paganism of Christmas. Throughout its history Christmas has inspired drunken parties, and the modern holiday is more about convincing children to harass their parents to buy toys than worshipping Christ.

What is your verdict? Some say, "But we can't take Christmas away from the children." Others: "As long as it brings people to Jesus, what does it matter?"

Paul's instructions to the Christians at Corinth were to avoid having anything to do with pagan religious customs. (Ref. 1 Cor. 10:19-21). He continues his instructions in his next letter to the Corinthians:

Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? (2 Cor. 6:14-16)

Paul's point is very pertinent to Christmas. How can we claim to be honouring God with pagan customs and traditions that He forbids in His Word?

The crucial question is: How can we put Jesus Christ back into the season when He was never part of it to begin with?.....

[End quote]

It is certainly true that December 25 has been an important date on the pagan calendar, that the Christmas celebration is now dominated by Economic Babylon, and that the giving of gifts has no relation to the celebration of the giving of the Greatest Gift, when God

"gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. (Jn. 3:16)

However, as discussed in the *Monthly Notes December 1994*, Dr. Bullinger, in his Appendix No. 179 to the Companion Bible, shows that **December 25** (Western reckoning) was actually the day on which Our Lord Jesus Christ was "begotten of the Holy Ghost" as described in Matt. 1:18,20 and Luke 1:26-31, 35, 38; and that His birth took place on **September 29** in the following year.

(This is the traditional Church calendar date for His birth which, because of the distortion caused by the difference between the Julian and Gregorian calendars, deviates slightly from the **actual date which was October 4/5, in 4 BC.**)

These two aspects of Our Lord's Incarnation are summed up in the statement made in John 1:14 that "...the Word was **made flesh** (His *begetting* by the Holy Ghost) and **dwelt - or tabernacled** - among us (His *birth and life* as a human being)." The early Apostolic Church's association of December 25 with Our Lord was to commemorate His Divine begetting, the *Incarnation* itself, the day when **The Word became flesh**.

**"Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be,
seeing I know not a man?"**

**And the angel answered and said unto her,
the Holy Ghost shall come upon thee,
and the power of the Highest shall over-shadow thee:
therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee
shall be called the Son of God."**

(Luke 1:34-35)

Our Lord's **real birthday**, according to the **Hebrew Calendar**, was 15th Tisri, thus corresponding with the first day of the **Feast of Tabernacles** (Lev. 23:34).

From very early Christian times the "**Festival of Michael and All Angels**" (**Michaelmas**) has been held on September 29, celebrating the appearance of the angelic host to the shepherds, on the night of His birth.

"And she brought forth her firstborn son.....

And there were in the same country

shepherds abiding in the field,

keeping watch over their flock by night.

**And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them,
and the glory of the Lord shone round about them:
and they were sore afraid.**

**And the angel said unto them, Fear not;
for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy,
which shall be to all people.**

**For unto you is born this day in the city of David
a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.....**

**And suddenly there was with the angel
a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,
Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace, good will toward men."**

(Luke 2:7-14)

We are told in Luke 1:26-27,35 that it was the **Angel Gabriel** who announced Our Lord's begetting but we are not told the name of the angel who announced His birth (Luke 2:7-14 cf Heb. 1:6). However, as the Angel was accompanied by the heavenly host it was assumed that the announcing angel was the Archangel Michael. Hence the title: **"Festival of Michael and All Angels"**.

The earliest reference to December 25 as the nativity date is found in a writing by Clement of Alexandria which dates from the beginning of 3rd Century AD. By then the significance of the 'begetting' and 'birth' dates had become obscured by the inclusion of pagan celebrations in the church calendar. December 25 was also an ancient pagan festival associated with the birthday of the Egyptian god Horus (Osiris) and when the Christian Church became the Church of the Roman Empire various festival days of the old religions originating in Egypt and Babylon were incorporated. Thus the true birthday of Our Lord came to be celebrated as Michaelmas while His begettal day, December 25, came to be celebrated as His birthday.

We can rejoice, therefore, on December 25 that the Word of God, He by Whom all things were made and in Whom is the fountain of life, was indeed made flesh in order to fulfil the Scriptures, and so implement the Father's great purpose of conquering Death (Heb. 2:9) and establishing His victorious Kingdom in Satan's own domain.

"And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary:
for thou hast found favour with God.

And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring
forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS.

He shall be great and shall be called the Son of the Highest:
and the Lord God shall give unto him
the throne of his father David:

And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever;
and of his kingdom there shall be no end."

(Luke 1:30-33)

(Ed.)

HANUKKAH - THE FEAST OF DEDICATION

And it was at Jerusalem the **Feast of the Dedication**,
and it was winter. And Jesus walked in the temple in
Solomon's porch. (Jn. 10:22-23)

The **Feast of Dedication**, also known as the **Festival of Lights** when candles are lit throughout Jewry, is not a Biblical Feast laid down by the Lord God. But it has been a Jewish national celebration since the Jews gained both political independence from Syria and religious freedom, under the leadership of the Maccabees 164 BC.

Palestine had come under the sovereignty of **Babylon** in 604 BC then, with the conquest of Babylon by Medo Persia in 539 BC, Palestine became part of the **Persian Empire**. After this fell to Alexander the Great, Palestine came under the **Greek Empire** in 332 BC.

The ambition of Alexander and his successors was to spread Hellenic (Greek) culture in the East. He built cities on a magnificent scale. He settled masses of homeless Greek soldiers, dislodged by the political troubles of the period and drifting as mercenaries in the West, as well as his own Macedonian veterans, in cities at all the critical points of the world's highways as far as India.

In Syria/Palestine, however, an old city system had existed - *"And I have given you a land for which ye did not labour, and cities which ye built not, and ye dwell in them; of the vineyards and olive yards which ye planted not do ye eat."* (Jos.24:13)

Here, rather than the creation of new cities, their work was mostly to convert existing cities to the more developed Hellenic type, often with an accompanying change of name, and settle them with citizens of Greek or Macedonian blood.

For example, the City of Samaria was repeopled by Alexander with Macedonians. In the Damascus of Paul's day, though Arabs in native dress and Jews with fringes and phylacteries would have been seen in the streets, the citizens of the upper class would have been to all appearances Greek. Greek would have been spoken widely and Greek temples, halls and colonnades would have made up the environment.

In these cities public and social life followed more or less the Greek pattern, with their gymnasiums forming social centres, and their festivals celebrated in stadium, hippodrome and theatre. The fertile soil of Palestine provided for a sumptuous life style of rich foods, wine, and entertainment. In Syria/Palestine Hellenism tended to become debased. *"The games, the shows, the abandonment of a life which ran riot in a gratification of the senses, grosser or more refined, these made up too much of the Hellenism which changed the face of Syria in the last centuries before Christ."*

Seeping through the different peoples of Palestine the powerful, subtle and transforming influence of Hellenism reached Jerusalem. When Hellenism and Hebraism met the resistance offered by the Jews contrasted with the readiness with which the orientals usually adopted the new way of life.

In the 3rd century BC (300-200 BC) a considerable number of Jews resided in Egypt and it is from this time that the Septuagint Version (Greek Translation) of the Old Testament Scriptures became popular among Greek speaking Jews throughout the Hellenic world. The Samaritan Schism occurred at this time with the Samaritans separating from the Jews, creating their own Temple on Mt. Gerizim instead of at Jerusalem, and adopting the Pentateuch as their Scriptures.

The priestly class at Jerusalem grew rich upon the offerings of the people and the Jewish State was ruled by a sometimes predatory aristocracy of great families under the presidency of the High Priest, who was subject to Egypt.

In the 2nd century BC there were centred in Jerusalem a class of people called **hakamim** - *wise men* or **sopherim** - *scribes*, who cultivated the "wisdom" literature and

presided over schools for research and teaching, studying the broad principles which governed the action of individuals and of society. The later New Testament Scribes were "mainly legal, fixing indefatigable minuteness, according to the tradition of the elders, how the general commands of the Law were to be applied to the infinitely various circumstances of life", and showing off their expertise in legal subtlety. 2

The Hebrew Wise Men of the 2nd century BC reflected the "mental habit, the circle of ideas, which marked the solid central law-abiding mass of the citizens of Jerusalem." They extolled the old virtues of respectability, propriety, moderation, prudence, honesty, and the control of passions and the tongue, and were gravely conscious of the abiding Presence of the Lord God. They believed that the keeping of the Commandments led to a good name and a happy end to life. 2

However, the influence of the corrupt Hellenism of 2nd century Syria/Palestine had made noticeable inroads into the society of Jerusalem, especially into the ranks of the priestly aristocracy. For them the public offices of the religious Jewish state had become objects of worldly intrigue.

Against the rich men of Jerusalem and their Hellenising party, those who were for the old ways, for the righteousness of the Law, closed ranks in rigid opposition. From this opposition arose a religious sect/party known as the **Hasidim** - "those in whom conscience is sensitive and spiritual affections quick and warm" - who came mainly from the poorer class.

When after Alexander's death in 323 BC his empire became divided among his generals Palestine belonged for over 100 years to the Ptolemy dynasty of Egypt. Finally, in 175 BC, it came under the sovereignty of the House of Seleucus, Antiochus IV Epiphanes the ruler of Syria, whose forces had been victors at the battle of Panium over the army of Ptolemy V in 198 BC. The accession of this self styled god-king made a great difference at Jerusalem. Contenders arose for the High Priesthood from a desire for power and wealth, and Jerusalem seethed with discontent.

With the intent of subduing any opposition to his rule Antiochus entered Jerusalem with an army massacring many, stripped off the gold from the front of the Temple, and carried off the sacred golden furniture and vessels.

As part of the population, particularly the ruling class, had adopted Hellenism he determined to extinguish the eccentric Jewish religion once and for all. "The political organisation of the state after the pattern of a Greek republic was carried through by a royal commissioner, and Jehovah having been identified with the Olympian Zeus, the temple service was recast in Greek forms, with an image of the god..... A garrison of the king's troops occupied the citadel; and under their eye Jerusalem held its new political assemblies and sacrificed animals forbidden by Moses to its transfigured divinity."

But many would not conform, who left the city and thronged into the country towns and villages. Torture and death followed after those who kept the old rules for food, circumcision, etc., and many died refusing to disobey the Law of God. Fugitives, however, escaped into tracts of wild country where many survived.

These hunted people suddenly determined to fight the aggressors. This was due to the influence of a family - an old and faithful priest Matthathias and his five sons, who were members of the priestly class of the **House of Hashmon**. They called upon the people to fight even on the Sabbath Day. The strongest leader of the five sons was **Judas Maccabeus**, the captain of the guerilla bands, who made himself master of the Judean countryside. Thus began the **Maccabean Revolt** which continued until Antiochus' death c. 165 BC.

The change in the following political situation allowed terms to be made by the Jewish insurgents with the regent Lysias. The ban on the Jewish religion was removed, the adherents of the Law were permitted to return to Jerusalem and the old worship of Jehovah was restored.

"The old altar of burnt offering, over which the heathen altar had been built, could not be used again. Its stones were put away in a place on the Temple hill. A new altar was made, and on the 25th Chislev, 164 BC - the very day, it is said, when the profanation had taken place three years before - the smoke of the first sacrifice went up from it to the Lord."

It is this rededication of the Temple in 164 BC which is celebrated by **Hanukkah - the Feast of Dedication - the Festival of Lights**.

Thus ended the first struggle between the Seleucid government and the sons of Hashmon (Grk. *Hasmonaeans*), who had become the acknowledged leaders of the bulk of the Palestinian Jews. Judas Maccabeus and his bands were fighting for, and had won, religious liberty. From this point their warfare was to change from being defensive to aggressive as they continued to fight on for political and dynastic ambition. The Hasidim, the godly ones, whose zeal for the Law and opposition to all Hellenistic innovations had led them to support the Maccabees, gradually withdrew their support.

By our Lord's day, the Jews - again a subject people - were hoping for the Messiah to come, the promised King, who would lead them against the Romans to victory and freedom. It was on this same **Feast of Dedication** that the Lord Jesus was walking in Solomon's Porch.

Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly.

Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me. But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. (Jn 10:22-28)

But His deliverance was not be from political oppression but from the slavery of sin and death, to eternal life in the Kingdom of God. (Ed.)

THE NEO CHRISTIANITY OF OUR DAY

The intellectual ferment of the **18th Century AD** set the stage for the 19th Century when everything was questioned. Mental, moral and spiritual revolutions altered the thinking of society, reshaped its basic concepts, breaking its cohesion and destroying accepted standards which had developed over hundreds of years.

This so-called "enlightenment" stemmed from the thinking of a group of European intellectuals who generated philosophies which have been used by Satan in his battle for the minds of men.

The most fundamental of all changes has been to the Christian religion, which has become recognizable only by its outward shell while the life of Christianity has gone from within. That life was derived from the belief that the **One Living God** has revealed Himself in His inspired and infallible Word, the Bible.

No wonder Our Lord is portrayed in Revelation 3:20 as standing outside the Church knocking to come in!

The steady deterioration in the power and influence of the professing Church can be blamed on the introduction of Religious Liberalism which was later developed into Higher Criticism by Julius Wellhausen (b.1844), a German intellectual. He was a rationalist Old Testament scholar and theologian who claimed to present Christians with a new and better way of understanding the Bible.

Until then the Bible was trusted as the infallible and inerrant Word of God, dependable for doctrine, correction and instruction in righteousness. Wellhausen taught that the Bible, rather than being the Word of God was a collection of human documents and myths compiled to illustrate certain truths and that rather than **Divine inspiration, evolutionary thinking** was the basis of the Old Testament's development.

From 1878, added to the influences of Darwinism and Marxism, a spirit of doubt, spiritual disquiet and distrust of God spread through the churches, schools and homes of Europe and abroad. From then as David Breese has said on p.84 of his book 'Seven Men Who Rule the World from the Grave': "Revelation (of God) was doubted, then denied and rationalism took its place".

The change was so fundamental and the results so deadly and long-standing that Wellhausen can be regarded as one of the 19th Century "thinkers" who still rule the world from the grave.

Throughout the 20th Century the disease of doubt and disbelief has spread worldwide as a pseudo-Christianity has replaced the faith once delivered to the saints.

J. Grescham Machen writing in 'Christianity and

'Liberalism', says: "The great redemptive religion which has always been known as Christianity is battling against a totally diverse type of religious belief, which is only the more destructive of the Christian faith because it makes use of traditional Christian terminology." This belief is dominated by humanism in which human and secular interests take precedence over the spiritual requirements of our Holy God.

Perhaps the gravest result of this perversion of Christianity is the decline in Bible reading and study. This is in sharp contrast with the period of the Reformation when Bibles were treasured and read eagerly, sometimes at great personal cost.

The Holy Spirit speaks to us and teaches us as we read and study God's Written Word, but as individuals have cast aside their Bibles the nation has become more and more apostate, finally producing the results we see around us today.

Good advice is to read the Bible itself and don't rely too much on what others say and write about it. The Bible is its own interpreter if read honestly and sensibly. Read it through from the beginning as other books are read, then study it one Book at a time, or by broad subjects, etc. Too many Christians fit into the category described below by Dr. Amos R. Wells:-

I supposed I knew my Bible, reading piecemeal, hit or miss,
Now a bit of John or Matthew, now a snatch of Genesis,
Certain chapters of Isaiah, certain Psalms (the 23rd),
Twelfth of Romans, First of Proverbs -

Yes, I thought I knew the Word!

But I found that thorough reading was a different thing to do,
And the way was unfamiliar when I read the Bible through.

You who like to play at Bible, dip and dabble, here and there,
Just before you kneel, aweary, and yawn through a hurried
prayer,

You who treat the Crown of Writings as you treat no other
book -

Just a paragraph disjointed, just a crude, impatient look -
Try a worthier procedure, try a broad and steady view;
You will kneel in very rapture, when you read the Bible

through!"

(Ed.)

IS THE OLD TESTAMENT JUDAIC?

The following statement appeared in a publication received in the mail:

“Social Credit is practical Christianity, that is New Testament Christianity, and not the arid, wrathful, and vengeful wastes of the Old Testament. The Old (Judaic) and the New (Christian) contain diametrically opposed messages.

That is, Judaism is incompatible with Christianity.”

While the last sentence is certainly true the rest of the statement demonstrates an alarming ignorance of the content and teaching of the O.T.

The Hebrew Bible (O.T.), known also as the Scriptures is the written Word of God.

The N.T. tells us that **All Scripture is given by inspiration of God**” (2 Tim. 3:16) and at the time this was written the N.T. Scriptures had not been compiled. The N.T. refers to the O.T. writings many times either as “the Scripture” or “the Scriptures”. Speaking to the Chief Priests and Elders of the people our Lord Jesus Christ Himself referred to them saying:

“Ye do err not knowing the SCRIPTURES nor the power of God.” Matt. 22:29)

The Hebrew Bible is a record of **Israelite** religion. It also includes **Israelite** history both past and future - given prophetically by the Prophets. It proclaims the character of Israel’s God and contains the unfolding revelation of His Person and His Purpose in and for this planet.

It includes the Ordinances of Worship which typified and foreshadowed every aspect of the sacrificial work of the Coming One whose perfect life and obedience to God would enable Him to become the **Lamb of God** as typified in the Passover. The atoning sacrifice of this Lamb, who the N.T. identifies as Jesus Christ the Son of God, has made possible the future establishment of the prophesied Kingdom of God on earth. The O.T. prophesies a later time when the sovereignty of Israel’s King will extend worldwide:

“And it shall come to pass in the last days that theLord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto 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.

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 any more.” (Isa. 2:1-4)

The N.T. is also Scripture written by inspiration of God. It records the life and teachings, death and resurrection of Our Lord Jesus Christ Who perfectly fulfilled the symbolism of the O.T. Ordinances of Worship. He thereby made it possible for fallen men to receive salvation and fallen Israel to be restored again as a righteous nation under their Redeemer King when He returns again to judge the earth in fulfilment of the O.T. prophecies. (e.g. Isa. 9:6-7 and Jer. 31:31-37)

Speaking to the two at Emmaus (Luke 24:13) the risen Lord said:

“O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: ought not Christ (the Messiah) to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them IN ALL THE SCRIPTURES (the O.T.) the things concerning himself.” (Luke 24:25-27)

The N.T. extends the teachings of the Hebrew Bible (O.T.) stressing the spiritual aspects. Our Lord said:

“Think not that I am come to destroy the LAW OR THE PROPHETS (i.e. the O.T.): I am not come to destroy but to fulfil.” (Matt. 5:17)

It should be noted that the meaning of the word translated “fulfil” means to fill up, complete, fully preach. It has been said that Christ brought a fuller revelation of God, not a revelation of a better God. He quoted freely from the O.T. as did the later writers of the Epistles.

The O.T. is the Written Word of God upon which the “Christian” N.T. is based and from which it quotes many times. The Old and New Testaments contain **THE SAME** messages. They proclaim the need for **repentance of wrong doing** (Ezek. 18:30; Acts. 3:19-21), for **belief** (2 Chron. 20:20; Mark 5:36), for **faith** (Hab. 2:4; Heb. 11:6), and for **living in obedience to God** (Exod. 19:5-6; Acts 5:32). Both proclaim salvation through faith in the atoning sacrifice of the Saviour (the Lamb of God) and His future rule on earth as King of Kings.

The following quotations demonstrate that the O.T. is hardly an “arid, wrathful, vengeful waste”:

“Ye shall not steal, neither deal falsely, neither lie one to another. And ye shall not swear by my name falsely, neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God:Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbour, neither rob him..... Thou shalt not curse the deaf, nor put a stumbling block before the blind, but shalt fear thy God:..... Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment: thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honour the person of the mighty: but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbour. Thou shalt not go up and down as a talebearer among thy people:..... Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart:..... Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but *THOU SHALT LOVE THY NEIGHBOUR AS THYSELF: I am the Lord.*” (Lev. 19:11-18)

“But if a man be just, and do that which is lawful and right And hath not oppressed any, but hath restored to the debtor his pledge, hath spoiled none by violence, hath given his bread to the hungry, and hath covered the naked with a garment; he that hath not given forth upon usury, neither hath taken any increase, that hath withdrawn his hand from iniquity, hath executed true judgment between man and man, hath walked in my statutes, and hath kept my judgments, to deal truly; he is just, he shall surely live, saith the Lord God.” (Ezek. 18:5-9)

“My son, forget not my law; but let thine heart keep my commandments:

For length of days, and long life, and peace, shall they add to thee. Let not mercy and truth forsake thee: bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart: so shalt thou find favour and good understanding in the sight of God and man.

Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths. Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the Lord, and depart from evil.” (Prov. 3:1-7)

The quoted statement indicates that the Hebrew Bible or Old Testament is JUDAIC. What is meant by the term ‘judaic’? Castell’s New English Dictionary 18th edition defines ‘judaic’ as “pertaining to the Jews. Jewish.” and ‘judeo’ as “of or relating to the Jews or Judaism.” The New Grolier Webster International Dictionary of the English Language, 1974, defines ‘judaic’ as “Pertaining to the Jewish people or Judaism.”

JUDAISM

The Microsoft Incarta Encyclopaedia (MIE) says:

“Judaism, religious culture of the Jews.

The term ‘Judaism’ does not occur in pre-modern Hebrew.”

From the New Grolier Multimedia Encyclopaedia Release 6 (NGME) we learn the following:

Jews “are united by the religion called Judaism, they are not a race; Jewish identity is a mixture of ethnic, national, and religious elements.... The word ‘Jew’ is derived from the Kingdom of Judah which included two of the 12 Israelite tribes.”

Originally the word ‘Israel’ referred to the 12 Israelite tribes and especially to the later Kingdom of the Ten Tribes. It is today narrowly used as a collective name for all Jewry and since 1948 for the Jewish State in Palestine.

Josephus, a Jewish historian, makes it clear that the term ‘Jew’ derives from the name ‘Judah’ and was the name given to the Judeans who returned to Palestine from the Babylonian Captivity in 536 BC. It later came to be applied to all adherents of the worship of Jehovah as conducted at Jerusalem after the Exile. As time went on the term ‘Jew’ came to be applied to people of ALL RACES who worshipped Jehovah in the manner prescribed by the Rabbis.

After the Babylonian Captivity only a small remnant of the exiles returned to Palestine. "Many chose, however, to remain in Mesopotamia, where the Jewish community existed without interruption for more than 2,500 years until the virtual elimination of Jewish presence in Iraq after W.W.2." (NGME)

"The Jewish Diaspora began with the exile of JUDEANS to Babylonia by Nebuchadnezzar in 586 B.C. The majority of Judeans remained in Babylonia even after the refounding of Jerusalem". (MIE)

This is evidenced by the Book of Esther where it is recorded that there were Jews dispersed throughout the 127 provinces of the Medo-Persian Empire which extended from India to Ethiopia.

"And many of the people of the land became Jews; for the fear of the Jews fell upon them." (Esther 8:17)

Thus began the great racial mixture which was to occur in the Diaspora.

"The exile of the Judeans to Babylonia was a major turning point in ISRAELITE RELIGION." (NGME)

From 400 B.C. Biblical laws (Torah) were intensively studied and applied to new situations.

About 300 B.C. the Sacred Canon of Scripture was closed after the collection and revision of the Sacred Books by the Great Synagogue - 120 patriots, including Ezra, Haggai, Zechariah, Nehemiah and Malachi, who had laboured to improve the religious and civil constitution of the new nation. This was the period in which **Greek culture was introduced into the region** after its conquest by Alexander the Great.

Gradually the Biblical Written Law came to be **"supplemented by traditions of popular observance and by precedents established by prominent leaders.** This material long transmitted by word of mouth and known as the ORAL TORAH, defined the meaning of Biblical laws." (NGME)

These were the 'traditions of the elders' which the Lord

Jesus Christ referred to as “making the word of God of none effect through your tradition”, as “teaching for doctrines the commandments of men” (Mark 7:7,13), and as transgressing “the commandment of God by your tradition” (Matt. 15:3;6).

HALACHAH (THE WAY)

“[This was] the body of laws developed since Biblical times to define the holy way of life in Judaism and cover moral, religious and practical matters - they shape the conduct of the individual and the community. Halachah is distinct from the Torah and is based on the ORAL TRADITIONS believed to have been revealed to Moses, which were used to explain and interpret the Scriptures. Study of the written and unwritten (Oral) Law became central to Judaism during the **Hasmonean Period** (2nd-1st Century .B.C.) when Pharisees became dominant.” (NGME) This ‘body of laws’ (Halachah) has continued to evolve through the centuries and provides the means by which the pious Jew serves God.

During the late **Maccabean Period** and early Roman Period of control over Palestine leadership of the people was taken over by pious and learned laymen who formed the party of **PHARISEES (SEPARATISTS)**. They became a major Jewish Party from 2nd C. B.C. to 2nd C. A. D. The seeds of Pharisaism were planted during the Babylonian Captivity (587-536 BC) and a clearly defined party emerged during the revolt of the Maccabees (167-165 B.C.) against the Syrian rulers of Palestine. The name first appeared during the reign of John Hyrcanus because of his assumption of both the royal and high priestly titles and because of the general secularism of the court.

Pharisees were middle class and open to religious innovation. They supplemented the Torah with Oral Traditions. “The Pharisees were followed by the majority: all subsequent Judaism was Pharisaic.” (MEI) The Pharisees were the lineal forerunners of the rabbinic movement which developed after 70 A.D.

It was during this period that once again other races were absorbed into Jewry.

“During the short period of JUDEAN independence under the Maccabees (Hasmoneans) a movement of proselytizing began that was ...energetic. Large numbers of persons, disillusioned with the old pagan cults, adopted Judaism formally or attached themselves unofficially to the synagogue.” (NGME)

John Hyrcanus 134-104 B.C. who freed Judea from all Syrian influence expanded his dominion to include Samaria and Idumea, parts of Galilee and areas east of Jordan. “He subsequently colonized these regions and **converted large parts of the local populations to Judaism.**”

Alexander Jannaeus - High Priest and King from 103 - 76 B.C. also “conquered and **Judaized surrounding territories** and extended the boundaries of the Hasmonean Kingdom to its furthest extent.” (MIE)

After 70 A.D. Jewish scholars and teachers “continued to elaborate and systematize the **Oral Torah**”. “About A.D. 200 a collection was made of the most reliable traditions. This work, the **MISHNAH**, became the **official text out of which further Jewish legal development occurred.**” (NGME)

The Mishnah is the oldest POST BIBLICAL codification of **Jewish Oral Law** which, together with the Gemara (later commentaries on the Mishnah), forms the **TALMUD**. “The **TALMUD** a vast compendium of Jewish law and lore a sequel to the Hebrew Bible ... is the **basis of Jewish religious life.**”

“It consists of the Mishnah and lengthy, rambling commentary called Gemaras, of which there are two - the Palestinian, produced in the 3rd and 4th centuries A.D. in Palestine and the Babylonian completed in 499 A.D. with later additions. Hence there are two Talmuds. The **Babylonian Talmud** remains for traditional Jews the final authority on Law and the standard legal work for Jews everywhere.” (NGME)

After 70 A.D. “The Pharisee leaders whose successors bore the title **Rabbi**, rallied the people round the synagogue and the academies of learning. Through centuries of effort they produced a disciplined and loyal Jewish community.”

The Babylonian Talmud, edited about 6th C. A.D. became the foundation document of Rabbinic Judaism." "Early Rabbinic writings also include exegetical and homiletical commentaries on Scripture (Midrash) and several Aramaic translations of the Pentateuch and other Scriptural books (Targums). Medieval Rabbinic writings include codifications of Talmudic Law,...

In Judaism the study of TORAH refers to the study of all this literature not simply to the Pentateuch (the Torah in the narrow sense)."

TORAH is the "revealed will of God." (MIE)

The New Grolier Webster International Dictionary of the English Language, 1974, defines 'Judaism' as "The religion of the Jewish People as prescribed in the Old Testament and in the rabbinical commentaries of the Talmud."

"Although all forms of Judaism have been rooted in the Hebrew Bible ... It would be an error to think of Judaism as simply the "religion of the Old Testament". Contemporary Judaism is ultimately derived from the Rabbinic movement of the first centuries of the Christian era in Palestine and Babylonia and is therefore called Rabbinic Judaism (Rabbi - my teacher)." (MIE)

The 1935 ed. of the Modern World Encyclopaedia says: "... **JUDAISM**, the religion of the Jewish people ... It is in a sense even more than a religion in the limited meaning of the word. By Jews it is regarded as the whole body of Jewish belief, custom, teaching and practice that have evolved out of the revelation on Mount Sinai and developed under the influence of the intellectual and physical vicissitudes to which the Jews, as a people, have been subjected..... Judaism also accepts the findings of human intellect holding as it does that the power of thought is of divine origin"

Judaism is not merely a system of abstract beliefs and injunctions, but a comprehensive series of regulations governing the conduct of its followers in every possible human activity. Although the Old Testament is regarded as the prime source for the laws governing the conduct of Jews there is also a belief in the ORAL LAW, the

traditions, practices and injunctions which God..... is held to have imparted to Moses by word of mouth....It is these oral traditions, later subjected to study and discussion by the Doctors of the Law, that evolved into the gigantic Talmudic literature which embraces every phase of life, law, administration, ... ethics... etc.”

“The beliefs of Judaism have never been formulated in an official creed; Judaism **stresses conduct rather than doctrinal correctness.** Its adherents have considerable latitude in matters of belief, especially concerning the messianic future and immortality. Judaism is a “this world” religion; its object is a just and peaceful world order on earth.” (NGME)

Thus JUDAISM is the post-Biblical development of the Religious Culture of people of all races who worship Jehovah in the way developed by Jewish Scholars since the return to Palestine from Babylonia in 536 B.C. of representatives of the exiled people of the Kingdom of Judah.

Over the centuries Judaism has followed many different lines of thought ranging from the mystical, esoteric theosophy of the Kabbalah to the secular-political movement of Zionism. Modernist movements have resulted in the Liberal, Reform, Progressive, Conservative, and Reconstructionist non-Orthodox versions of Judaism. Even Orthodoxy embodies a range of traditionalist groups who try to integrate traditional observance with modern life.

Just as Judaism is “rooted in the Hebrew Bible” **so also is Christianity.**

New Testament Christianity derived from the Hebrew Bible and the teachings of Christ and His apostles. But it rejected the “traditions of men”, which had become the underlying tenet of Judaism, and relied solely on the Written Inspired Word of God - both Old and New Testaments.

New Testament Christianity could never be defined as “Judeo-Christianity” as Judaism had taken its own unique course from the Old Testament long before Christ came.

Sadly much of modern so-called Christianity also has departed from the Word of God to follow the words and wisdom of men who know not the purpose and power of God. (Ed.)

THE ADMONITIONS OF JUDE

by C. R. Dickey

The author of the Epistle of Jude identifies himself as "the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James." According to theologian Robert Tuck:

"He was not therefore Jude, the son of James the apostle. It appears most probable that he is to be identified with Jude, the brother of the Lord and of James (Matt. 13:55; Mark 6:3), who was not an apostle, and indeed was converted to faith in Christ after the Lord's resurrection. His brother James was, probably, the first bishop of Jerusalem, and the author of the epistle that bears the name of James."

Jude's introduction, verses 1-2, reads:

"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."

This salutation differs slightly from those of the epistles generally, but in the main both the disposition and the expressions of the writer are of the usual apostolic form. Jude addresses his message to all who are sanctified; that is, all who have separated themselves from sin, and dedicated themselves to the service of Christ. These faithful believers, Jude declares, are "preserved in Jesus Christ, and called." Then he adds the blessing, "Mercy unto you, and peace, and love, be multiplied."

In verses 3-4, Jude's purpose is to call attention to the apostasy of his day which was undermining the true faith.

Note the urgency of his plea":

"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."

Concerning the common salvation which was Jude's major concern, Rev. Tuck wrote some years ago:

"It appears that the mind of the apostle was moved, in the first place, to write concerning salvation generally; but on reflection he was constrained to write on one particular aspect, bearing on the temper of the times. The brevity of the epistle testifies that only one special aspect of religion is set forth.

It was in view of the general defection among Christians, then so prevalent, he was earnestly moved to write. The description given in the epistle of the declension of some, and the false teaching of others, fully sets forth the earnest hope the apostle felt, that a few lines from him might serve the good purpose of conserving the true faith.

Jude's designation of his Gospel as 'the common salvation,' had an interest for all. Nothing could be of more importance than the general concern which all ought to feel in the matter of the purity of the teaching which was intended to set it forth.

Salvation is the great need of all. It supplies a universal want. It reveals clearly the great subjects which have agitated human thought in every age - God, the soul, moral accountability and futurity. It also leads mankind to the fountain of blessing - God in Christ Jesus.

If life is to answer any special end, and if the soul of man is to attain to any particular satisfaction and happiness, the Gospel is as great a necessity to the mind as air is to the body.

The Gospel, like the sun, is God's great blessing to all men of every clime and time. Jesus is 'the Son of man,' to designate the universality of His mission. He is come to seek and to save the race of man."

Jude deals next with historical examples of the widespread denial of the Divinity of Christ. The crisis was urgent because the opposition "came not from men who had openly denied the truths of the gospel, but from those who had privily crept into the Church, and were, in name, members of it. The danger was not from without this time, but from within. To combat this evil trend, Jude issued the solemn warning found in verses five, six and seven:

"I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not.

And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.

Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire."

Following the course of sin in his day, we find that Jude refers to the apostate teachers as filthy dreamers. They "defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities." According to Rev. Tuck:

"When Jude calls the false teachers 'dreamers,' it appears to us that the Gnostics of his day claimed supernatural

illumination. The apostles claimed inspiration, and to meet this they assumed the same Divine authority. Once more the apostle refers to their sodomy - which is a strong expression to denote an unnatural method of gratifying lust. In like manner also these, the dreamers, pollute the flesh, set at nought authority, and blaspheme the excellent.

The course of sin is much the same in all places and at all times. Its marks are the same on the spirit of fallen angels, in the inhabitants of Sodom, and the false teachers in Asia Minor. The chameleon may change its colours, but not its nature. Wherever sin touches there is a black spot."

Jude is the prophet of the apostasy. He sounds the final note of warning. The key word is kept. Those who embrace the faith, and contend for the faith, are preserved unto the day of Christ; those who reject and oppose the faith are reserved unto the day of retribution. Those who kept not their first estate, and are kept for judgment, are contrasted with those who keep themselves in the love of God, and are kept by His power. As one writer puts it:

"There are two sides to this keeping - a Divine side and a human side....if we are to be preserved,...we must persevere."

We come now to Jude's list of the seven duties which must be observed continually if Christians are to keep up the sense of God's love and direction - verses 20-23:

1. "Beloved build up yourselves on your most holy faith"
2. "Pray in the Holy Spirit"
3. "Keep yourselves in the love of God"
4. "Look for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life"
5. "And have mercy on some who are wavering" (NRSV)
6. "Others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire."
7. "Hate even the tunic defiled by their bodies." (NRSV)

Finally we come to Jude's benediction in verses 24-25:

"Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and for ever. Amen. These majestic words, penned by Jude to conclude his brief Gospel, may well be named as the most beautiful benediction in all sacred literature. Two other translations are: (Moffatt) "Now to him who is able to keep you from slipping and to make you stand unblemished and exultant before his glory - to the only God, our saviour through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion and authority, before all time and now and for all time: Amen."

(Goodspeed) "Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to make you stand in his presence irreproachable and triumphant - to the one God our Saviour be glory, majesty, power, and authority through Jesus Christ our Lord before time began and now and forever and ever. Amen." []



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(NOTE: The views expressed in the following articles are not necessarily endorsed by the British-Israel World Federation (Victorian Headquarters) Inc.)

ON CALVARY

**Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ
was punished *that we might be forgiven.*
He was wounded *that we might be healed.***

**He was made sin with our sinfulness
*that we might become righteous with His
righteousness.***

He died our death *that we might share His life.*

**He became poor with our poverty
*that we might become rich with His riches.***

**He bore our shame
*that we might share His glory.***

**He endured our rejection
*that we might have His acceptance
as children of God.***

**He became a curse
*that we might receive a blessing.***

THE DIVINE EXCHANGE

[Quote] The entire message of the Gospel revolves around one unique historical event: the sacrificial death of Jesus on the cross. Concerning this the writer of Hebrews says: **For by one offering [sacrifice] He [Jesus] has perfected forever those who are being sanctified** (Heb. 10:14).

Two powerful expressions are combined: “perfected” and “forever”. Together, they depict a sacrifice that comprehends every need of the entire human race. Furthermore, its effects extend throughout time and on into eternity.

It is on the basis of this sacrifice that Paul writes in Philippians 4:19: **And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.**

“All your need” includes, specifically, the release you are seeking from the curse [of your sin]. But first you need to see this as part of a much larger whole - a single, sovereign act of God that brought together all the guilt and the suffering of humanity in one climactic moment of time.

God has not provided many different solutions for the multitudinous problems of mankind. Instead, He offers us one all-sufficient solution, which is His answer to every problem. We may come from many different backgrounds, each of us burdened with our own special need, but to receive God’s solution we must all make our way to the same place: the **Cross of Jesus**.

The most complete account of what was accomplished at the cross was given through the prophet Isaiah seven hundred years before it actually took place. In Isaiah 53:10 the prophet depicts a “servant of the Lord” whose soul was to be offered to God as a sin offering. The writers of the New Testament are unanimous in identifying this unnamed servant as Jesus Christ. The divine purpose accomplished by His sacrifice is summed up in Isaiah 53:6:

All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way; and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

Here is the basic, universal problem of all humanity: We have turned, each of us, *to our own way*. There are various specific sins that many of us have never committed, such as murder, adultery, theft and so on. But this one thing we all have in common: we have turned to our own way. In so doing, *we have turned our backs on God*. The Hebrew word that sums this up is *avon*, here translated ‘iniquity’.

Perhaps the closest equivalent in contemporary English would be 'rebellion' - not against man, but against God. This was the primary cause for the **curses listed in Deuteronomy chapter 28.**

No one English word, however, whether it is *iniquity* or *rebellion*, conveys the full meaning of *avon*. In its biblical use, *avon* describes not merely iniquity but also the *punishment* of the *evil consequences* that iniquity brings in its train. In Genesis 4:13, for instance, after God had pronounced judgment on Cain for the murder of his brother, Cain said: **My punishment is greater than I can bear!** The word here translated 'punishment' is *avon*. It covered not merely Cain's iniquity, but also the *punishment* it brought upon him.

In Leviticus 16:22, concerning the scapegoat released on the Day of Atonement, the Lord said: **The goat shall bear on itself all their iniquities to an uninhabited land.** In this symbolism, the goat bore not merely the iniquities of the Israelites, but also all the consequences of their iniquities.

In Lamentations ch. 4 *avon* occurs twice with the same meaning. In verse 6 it is translated: 'The *punishment of the iniquity* of the daughter of my people.' Again, in verse 22: 'The *punishment of your iniquity* O daughter of Zion.' In each case, the single word *avon* is translated by a complete phrase '*the punishment of iniquity*.' In other words, in its fullest sense *avon* means not simply 'iniquity', but also includes all the evil consequences God's judgment brings upon iniquity.

This applies to the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross. Jesus, Himself, was not guilty of any sin. In Isaiah 53:9 the prophet says, **He had done no violence, nor was any deceit in His mouth.** But in verse 6 he says, **The Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.** Not merely was Jesus identified with our iniquity, He also endured all the evil consequences of that iniquity. Like the scapegoat that had prefigured Him, He carried them away so that they might never return again upon us.

Here is the true meaning and purpose of the cross. On it a **divinely ordained exchange** took place. First, Jesus Christ endured in our place all the evil consequences that were due by divine justice to *our iniquity*. Now, in **exchange**, God offers us all the good that was due to the *sinless obedience of Jesus*.

Stated more briefly, the evil due to us came upon the Lord Jesus that, in return, the good due to Him might be offered to us. God is able to offer this to us without compromising His own eternal justice, because Jesus has already endured on our behalf all the just punishment due to our iniquities. All of this proceeds solely out of the unfathomable grace of God, and it is received solely by **faith**. There is no logical explanation in terms of cause and effect. None of us has ever done anything to deserve such an offer, and none of us can ever do anything to earn it.

Scripture reveals many different aspects of the exchange, and many different areas in which it applies. In each case, however, the same principle holds good: *The evil came upon Jesus that the corresponding good might be offered to us.*

The first two aspects of the exchange are revealed in Isaiah 53:4-5:

Surely he hath borne our griefs [literally - sicknesses], and carried our sorrows [literally - pains]: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement [punishment] of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes [wounds] we are healed.

Two truths are here interwoven. The application of one is spiritual and the other physical. On the spiritual plane, Jesus received the punishment due to our transgressions and iniquities that we, in turn, might be forgiven and so have peace with God (See Romans 5:1). On the physical plane, Jesus bore our sicknesses and pains that we through His wounds might be healed.

The physical application of the exchange is confirmed in two passages of the New Testament. Matthew 8:16-17 refers to Isaiah 53:4 and records that Jesus **healed all who were sick, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying: "He Himself took our infirmities and bore our sicknesses."**

Again, in 1 Peter 2:24, the apostle refers to Isaiah 53:5-6 and says of Jesus: **[He] Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness - by whose stripes [wounds] you were healed.**

The twofold exchange described in the above verses may be summed up as follows:

Jesus was punished that we might be forgiven.
Jesus was wounded that we might be healed.

A third aspect of the exchange is revealed in Isaiah 53:10, which states that the Lord made the soul of Jesus “an offering for sin”. This must be understood in the light of the Mosaic ordinances for various forms of sin offering. The person who had sinned was required to bring his sacrificial offering - a sheep, a goat, a bull, etc. - to the priest. He would confess his sin over the offering, and the priest would symbolically transfer the sin he had confessed from the person to the animal. Then the animal would be killed, thus paying the penalty for the sin that had been transferred to it.

In the foreknowledge of God, all this was designed to foreshadow what was to be accomplished by the single, all-sufficient sacrifice of Jesus Christ. On the cross, the sin of the whole world was transferred to the soul of Jesus. The outcome is described in Isaiah 53:12: “**He poured out His soul unto death.**” By His sacrificial, substitutionary death, Jesus Christ made atonement for the sin of the whole human race.

In 2 Corinthians 5:21 Paul refers to Isaiah 53:10 and at the same time he also presents the positive aspect of the exchange: **for He [God] made him [Jesus] who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.**

Paul does not speak here about any kind of righteousness that we can achieve by our *own efforts*, but about *God's own righteousness* - a righteousness that has never known sin. None of us can ever earn this. It is as high above our own righteousness as heaven is above earth. It can be received solely by faith.

This third aspect of the exchange may be summed up as follows: *Jesus was made sin with our sinfulness that we might become righteous with His righteousness.*

The next aspect of the exchange is a logical outworking of the previous one. The entire Bible, in both the Old Testament and the New, emphasizes that the final outcome of sin is death. In Ezekiel 18:4 the Lord states, “**The soul who sins shall die.**” In James 1:15 the apostle says, “**Sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death.**” When Jesus became identified with our sin, it was inevitable that He should also experience the death that is the outcome of sin.

In confirmation of this, in Hebrews 2:9, the writer says that **Jesus was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death ... that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone.**

The death that He died was the inevitable outcome of human sin that He had taken upon Himself. He bore the sin of all men, and so died the death due to all men. In return, to all who accept His substitutionary sacrifice, Jesus now offers the gift of eternal life. In Romans 6:23 Paul sets the two alternatives side by side: **“For the wages [just reward] of sin is death, but the [unearned] gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”**

Thus the fourth aspect of the exchange may be summed up as follows:

Jesus died our death that we might share His life.

A further aspect of the exchange is stated by Paul in 2 Corinthians 8:9: **For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich.** The exchange is clear: from poverty to riches. Jesus became poor that we in return might become rich.

When did Jesus become poor? Some people picture Him as poor throughout His earthly ministry, but this is not accurate. He Himself did not carry a lot of cash, but at no time did He lack anything He needed. When He sent His disciples out on their own, they likewise lacked nothing. (See Luke 22:35) So far from being poor, He and His disciples made a regular practice of giving to the poor (See John 12: 4-8; 13:29).

True, Jesus' methods of obtaining money were sometimes unconventional, but money has the same value, whether withdrawn from a bank or the mouth of a fish! (See Matt. 17:27) His methods of providing food were also at times unconventional, but a Man who can provide a substantial meal for five thousand men plus women and children certainly would not be considered poor by normal standards! (See Matthew 14:15-21)

Actually, throughout His earthly ministry, Jesus exactly exemplified ‘abundance’ [i.e. having all you need to do God’s will - and something over to give to others.] He always had all He needed to do God’s will in His own life. Over and above this, He was continually giving out to others, and His supply was never exhausted.

So when did Jesus become poor for our sakes? The answer is: on the cross. In Deuteronomy 28:48 Moses summed up absolute poverty in four expressions: ***hunger, thirst, nakedness, and need of all things.*** Jesus experienced all this in its fulness on the cross.

He was *hungry*. He had not eaten for nearly 24 hours. He was *thirsty*. One of His last utterances was: "*I thirst!*" He was *naked*. The soldiers had taken all His clothes from Him. (John 19: 28 & 23)

He was *in need of all things*. He no longer owned anything whatever. After His death He was buried in a borrowed robe and in a borrowed tomb (Luke 23:50-53). Thus Jesus, exactly and completely, endured *absolute poverty* for our sakes.

In 2 Corinthians 9:8 Paul presents more fully the positive side of the exchange: "**And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, have an abundance for every good work.**"

Paul is careful to emphasize throughout that the **only basis for this exchange is God's grace**. It can never be earned. It can only be received *by faith*.

Very often our "abundance" will be like that of Jesus while He was on earth. We shall not carry large amounts of cash, or have large deposits in a bank. But from day to day we shall have enough for our own needs and something over for the needs of others. One important reason for this level of provision is indicated by the words of Jesus quoted in Acts 20:35: **It is more blessed to give than to receive.**

God's purpose is that all His children should be able to enjoy the greater blessing. He provides us, therefore, with enough to cover our own needs and also to give to others.

This fifth aspect of the exchange may be summed up:

Jesus became poor with our poverty that we might become rich with His riches.

The exchange at the cross covers also the emotional forms of suffering that follow from man's iniquity. Here again, Jesus endured the evil that we, in turn, might enjoy the good. Two of the crudest wounds brought upon us by our iniquity are *shame* and *rejection*. Both of these came upon Jesus on the cross.

Shame can vary in intensity from acute embarrassment to a cringing sense of unworthiness that cuts a person off from meaningful fellowship either with God or with man..... Speaking of Jesus on the cross, the writer of Hebrews (12:2) says that He *endured the cross, despising the shame*.

Execution on a cross was the most shameful of all forms of death, reserved for the lowest class of criminal. The person to be executed was stripped of all his clothing and exposed naked to the gaze of passersby, who jeered and mocked.

This was the degree of shame Jesus endured as He hung on the cross (Matthew 27:35-44).

In place of the shame Jesus bore, God's purpose is to bring those who trust in Him to share His eternal glory. Hebrews 2:10: **For it was fitting for Him [God]..... in bringing many sons to glory, to make the author of their salvation [Jesus] perfect through sufferings.**

The shame Jesus endured on the cross has opened the way for all who trust in Him to be released from their own shame. Not only that, but He then shares with us the glory that belongs to Him by eternal right!

Even more agonizing than shame is *rejection*. Usually this stems from some form of broken relationship. In its earliest form, it is caused by parents who reject their own children. The rejection may be active, expressed in harsh, negative ways, or it may be merely a failure to show love and acceptance..... The breakup of marriage is another frequent cause of rejection. This is pictured vividly in the words of the Lord in Isaiah 54:6: **"The Lord will call you back as if you were a wife deserted and distressed in spirit - a wife who married young, only to be rejected," says your God.** (NIV) God's provision for healing the wound of rejection is recorded in Matthew 27:46, 50, which describes the culmination of the agony of Jesus:

And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up His spirit.

For the first time in the history of the universe, the Son of God called out to His Father and received no response. So fully was Jesus identified with man's iniquity that the uncompromising holiness of God caused Him to reject even His own Son. In this way Jesus endured rejection in its most agonizing form: rejection by a father. Almost immediately after that, He died, not of the wounds of crucifixion, but of a broken heart. Thus He fulfilled the prophetic picture of the Messiah given in Psalm 69:20:

"Reproach has broken my heart."

The record of Matthew continues immediately:

And behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom."

This demonstrates symbolically that the way had been opened for sinful man to enter into direct fellowship with a holy God.

The rejection of Jesus had opened the way for us to be accepted by God as His children. This is summed up by Paul in Ephesians 1:5-6: **Having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself He [God] has made us accepted in the Beloved.**

The rejection of Jesus resulted in our acceptance.

God's remedy for shame and **rejection** has never been needed more desperately than it is today. My estimate is that at least one-quarter of the adults in America today suffer from wounds of shame or rejection. It has given me measureless joy to point such people to the healing that flows from the cross of Jesus.

The two emotional aspects of the exchange at the cross may be summarized as follows:

*Jesus bore our shame that we might share His glory.
Jesus endured our rejection that we might have His acceptance as children of God.*

Actually there is no need resulting from man's rebellion that is not covered by the same principle of exchange:

The evil came upon Jesus that the good might be offered to us.

Once we have learned to apply this principle in our lives, it releases God's provision for every need.

Paul applies to Jesus on the cross an enactment of the Law of Moses, stated in Deuteronomy 21:23, according to which a person executed by hanging on a "tree" (a wooden gibbet) thereby came under the curse of God.

Then he points to the resulting opposite: the blessing - (Gal. 3:13-14):

Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

Jesus became a *curse* that we might receive the *blessing*.

The curse that came upon Jesus is defined as "the curse of the Law." It includes every one of the curses, listed by Moses in Deuteronomy 28. Every one of these curses, in its fulness, came upon Jesus. He thus opened the way for us to obtain *an equally full release* and to enter into the corresponding blessings.

Try for a moment to picture the Lord Jesus as He hung there on the cross, then you will begin to appreciate the full horror of the curse.

He had been rejected by His own countrymen, betrayed by one of His disciples and abandoned by the rest (though some later returned to follow His final agony). He was suspended naked between earth and heaven. His body was wracked by the pain of innumerable wounds, His soul weighed down by the guilt of all humanity. Earth had rejected Him, and heaven would not respond to His cry.

As the sun withdrew its light and darkness covered Him, His lifeblood ebbed out on to the stony soil. Yet out of the darkness, just before He expired, there came one final, triumphant cry: **“It is finished!”**

In the Greek text that phrase, “It is finished,” consists of only one word. It is the perfect tense of a verb that means “to make something complete or perfect.” In English, it could be rendered “It is completely complete” or “It is perfectly perfect.”

Jesus had taken upon Himself every evil consequence that rebellion had brought upon humanity. He had exhausted every curse of God’s broken Law. All this, that we in turn might receive every blessing due to His obedience. Such a sacrifice is stupendous in its scope, yet marvellous in its simplicity.

Have you been able to accept with faith this account of the sacrifice of Jesus and of all that He has obtained for you have you begun to see that Jesus, at infinite cost to Himself, has made full provision for your release [from the curse of your sins]?

If so, there is one immediate response that you need to make - a response that is the simplest and purest expression of true faith. It is to say, “Thank You, Lord Jesus, for all that You have done for me! I do not fully understand, but I do believe, and I am grateful.”

Keep thanking Him in your own words. The more you thank Him, the more you will believe what He has done for you. And the more you believe, the more you will want to thank Him. [End quote]

(From: *Blessing or Curse You Can Choose* by Derek Prince)

Recommended reading and available in the Bookroom)

[]

THERE WAS DARKNESS

The Age, 26.02.04, reported comments made by two theologians, a rabbi and a philosopher, regarding their opinions of the recent film *The Passion of Christ*. These were:

The unremitting portrayal of suffering leaches the theological meaning from the crucifixion.

It was anti-Semitic.

It included extra-biblical material, particularly visions of an 18th-century German mystic nun, Anne Catherine Emmerich.

The circumspection, understatement and subtlety of the Gospels were swept aside ; the film was muddled and massively overstated the violence almost reached farce.

The display of suffering was tedious simulated violence and injury, layered upon layer it shared a contemporary misconception that intensity and graphic detail were crucial in developing understanding".

The Roman theologian considered that the problem was that the film was faithful to the Gospels, which he said "did not purport to be an historical reconstruction". They are more like an opera and need to be carefully *interpreted* [!].

The above report brought to mind points made by F. W. Farrar, D.D., F.R.S. in his book *The Life of Christ as Represented in Art*, pub. in 1894. Discussing the meaning and use of the cross as representative of Christianity he wrote:

"The cross did *not* express the whole of Christianity. The doctrine of the Incarnation was one which *included* that of the Crucifixion. Christ, in His attributes of Saviour of the world, was as truly, as fully, as faithfully set forth in the aspect of the Good Shepherd as that of the Agonizing Sufferer. Either symbol, if taken alone, was incomplete; nor indeed, can any symbol be all-comprehensive.

Man's salvation was not wrought *only* by the *death* of Christ; still less by the sole fact that His death, though brief, was shameful and agonizing.

It was wrought by His nativity, by His life, by all His words, and all His works.

It was not as the humiliated victim that He was present most consciously or most habitually to the minds of His children in the early centuries. They thought of Him more often as that which He was and ever shall be - *the Son of God who sitteth to make intercession for us at the right hand of the Majesty on High*.

They did not morbidly meditate upon the **three hours** during which He hung upon the tree.

That scene in man's redemption was over forever. It was one sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction, offered once for all, full, perfect, sufficient. Christ suffered no more. Their Lord was now enthroned amid endless hallelujahs, as the Lord of time and all the worlds. They wished all men so to think of Him.....

The gradual drift of Christian feeling towards *special or exclusive contemplation of the Lord's sufferings* and death is a matter of ecclesiastical history. The effects which that tendency exercised on Christian emotion, and, therefore, on Christian art, are marked by the transition from the cross to the crucifix."

In this change "*the original intention of the symbol* [the cross] *was entirely lost.* From being a token of joy, an object worthy to be crowned with flowers, a sign in which to conquer, it became a thing of tears and agony, a stock subject with the artist desiring to display his power of representing anguish."

Dean Farrar speaks of "later painters whose sole object it was to lacerate our souls with images of pain", of the Spanish School that "delighted in representing misery, leprosy, torments, and dissolution", of the figure of the Crucified being "degraded by vulgar horror" and of "coarse muscular writhings and brutalizing violences of posture".

Such depictions in the later centuries were to show off the skill of the painter, rather than portray any deep religious understanding. Is this also true of this film?

As far as who is to blame for our Lord's crucifixion we are told in Isaiah 53:4 that He was *smitten of God*; and in verse 10 we read: **Yet it pleased the LORD [Jehovah purposed] to bruise him; He hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure [purpose] of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.** It was vital to God's purposes that His Beloved Son should provide the Perfect Sacrifice for the sin of the world. (Ref. Gen. 3:15; Gen. 28:13-14; Jn. 3:16, etc.)

However, it was not God's purpose that His Son should be jeered at and gloated over by all and sundry while He bore the agony of crucifixion from *9 a.m. until 12 noon on that fateful day. His suffering was thus shrouded in darkness.

And when the sixth hour was come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour.

And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

And some of them that stood by, when they heard it, said, Behold, he calleth Elias.

And one ran and filled a sponge full of vinegar, and put it on a reed, and gave him to drink, saying, Let alone; let us see whether Elias will come to take him down.

And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost.

And the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom. And when the centurion, which stood over against him, saw that he so cried out, and gave up the ghost, he said, Truly this man was the Son of God.

There were also women looking on afar off..... which came up with him unto Jerusalem. (Mk. 15:33-41)

Even His friends and followers watched from afar. They also were not permitted to witness His suffering humanity. His spiritual suffering as He remained cut off from His Father even during His appalling ordeal, cannot be understood or even imagined by man.

After the four soldiers had completed their gruesome task they divided His garments between themselves, except His seamless coat, for which they cast lots. Even at this time our Lord's thought was to spare and care for those He loved: *Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene.*

When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son! Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home. (Ref. Jn.19:23-27)

The words of the great Italian poet, philosopher, and monk Tommaso Campanella (1568-1639) express his concern over the unscriptural one-sidedness of an all-but-exclusive contemplation of our Lord's temporal sufferings.

"If Christ were only three hours crucified,
After few years of toil and misery,
Which for mankind He suffered willingly,
While heaven was won for ever when He died,
Why should He still be shown on every side
Painted and preached in nought but agony,
Whose pains were light, matched with His victory?
Why not rather speak and write of the realm
He holds in heaven, and soon will hold below,
Unto the praise and glory of His name?

Ah, foolish crowd! This world's thick vapour whelms
Your eyes unworthy of that glorious show,
Blind to His splendour, bent upon His shame."

(Ed.)

*Note: In N.T. times *DAYLIGHT* was divided approximately into four parts - the Third Hour (6-9 am), the Sixth Hour (9-12 am), the Ninth Hour (12-3 pm), and the Twelfth Hour (3-6 pm).

ISAIAH SAW HEAVEN ON EARTH

By C. R. Dickey

(From: *Destiny Letter No. 54, March 2004, P O Box 177 Merrimac, Massachusetts 01860-0177 USA*)

Competent Bible scholars agree that the vision recorded in **Isaiah 2:2-4** is a prophecy of Christ's Kingdom as it will function when He returns to reign at the end of the present age. The conditions described by Isaiah have never existed on the earth during the entire period of recorded history; but they do fit the pattern of life in the Kingdom Age as portrayed by the prophets, the apostles, and by Jesus Christ Himself. This vision reads as follows:

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 above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto 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.

And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

With this vision of a blessed future in mind, Isaiah exclaimed: **O house of Jacob, come ye, and let us walk in the light of the LORD.** (Isa. 2:5)

How we need to heed the prophet's words today and learn to walk in that same light! Note the magnificent confidence with which Isaiah speaks of the future. Commenting on the tremendous outreach of his vision, Dr. J. Parker said:

"Casting his eye over all the uproar and tumult of intervening time, he sees a heavenly repose settling on the engagements and destinies of mankind. Herein is the peculiar power of the old prophets, namely, that they did not confine their attention within a brief and inadequate period, but [by inspiration of God] projected their minds over historic spaces within which, so to speak, God had room to disclose somewhat of the proportions and significance of His plans. The whole year can never be judged from any one season. The prophets seemed to see things in their wholeness, and this made them calm in the midst of transitory confusion and distress."

(Homiletic Commentary: Isaiah p. 71)

If Isaiah could see heaven on earth from the faraway view of his day, how much more clearly we should see it now through the rapid fulfilment of events leading to the triumphant return and reign of Christ the King! There is a marked difference, however, between the views of the Bible prophets and the views of many religious leaders today; whereas the former saw Christ's coming Kingdom established in the earth, the latter see it functioning only in some celestial heaven far removed from the earthly scene. This discrepancy should challenge Christians to search the Scriptures and be guided by the hallowed and unchanging truths contained therein.

Isaiah the prophet speaks for the Lord to the House of David and King Ahaz saying (Isa. 7:13-14):

And he said, Hear ye now, O house of David; Is it a small thing for you to weary men, but will ye weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

Brief reference is made to this declaration as a prologue to the great prophecy in the ninth chapter, verses 6-7:

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

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.

“The government shall be upon His shoulder” - that is, upon Christ the Son, the “Child” of whom Isaiah prophesied. And where is this government to be established? Will it be on the earth, or in some undesignated and faraway place in the Heavens? The prophet could not have answered the question more plainly than when he says of Christ’s government and peace that “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.”

Now everyone will surely admit that David’s throne and kingdom were established on the earth, and there is nothing to indicate their removal from the earth when Jesus Christ comes to reign.

Despite these affirmations from one of the greatest of the prophets, many leading theologians during the past century

have exercised more skepticism than faith in regard to Isaiah's words. Concerning the phrase, "*upon the throne of David*," theologian Barnes wrote:

This promise was understood as referring to the Messiah. The primary idea is that He should be descended in the line of David, and accordingly the New Testament writers are often at pains to show that the Lord Jesus was of that family (Luke 2:4). When it is said that He would sit upon the throne of David, it is not to be taken literally."

Why not? It is poor logic, indeed an unjustifiable liberty, to accept one part of a statement literally and then declare that another part of the same statement "is not to be taken literally."

Nevertheless, it is a sad fact that many "Doctors of Divinity" of the past and present have resorted to such juggling of ideas in order to establish their own version of Christian theology. Humility, rather than pride in worldly wisdom, leads men to an understanding of the Bible. It is written in Jeremiah 9:23-24:

Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches:

But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD.

Isaiah's vision of heaven on earth is in perfect harmony with all revelation on the subject contained in the Scriptures. The Patriarch Job declared:

For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: (Job 19:25)

The Second Psalm is a preview of events which lead to Christ's reign; and note that their sequence may be fittingly applied to our own time. First we read the challenge of our angry enemies:

Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing?

The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying,

Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. (Ps. 2:1-3)

Then comes the answer from God's Throne:

He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision.

Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure.

Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion.

I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.

Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.

Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. (Ps. 2:4-9)

The Second Psalm is one of God's answers to all the evil devices of wicked men. There are many others:

The earth is the LORD'S, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein. (Ps. 24:1)

O worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness: fear before him, all the earth.

Say among the heathen that the LORD reigneth: the world also shall be established that it shall not be moved: he shall judge the people righteously. (Ps. 96:9-10)

The LORD reigneth; let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of isles be glad thereof. (Ps. 97:1)

Why would the earth "rejoice" if the glory of Christ's reign is to be removed from it forever, as many have been led to believe?

Jeremiah, too, saw the glory of heaven on earth:

Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth.

In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. (Jer. 23:5-6)

Isaiah saw Jesus Christ first as an infant, born of a virgin; and then on David's throne as the supreme ruler of all the earth. When we turn to the New Testament we find complete verification of Isaiah's vision and prophecy. The connection between the statements in Isaiah 9:6-7 and in Luke 1:26-33 is of such extreme importance, both to Christian faith and to an understanding of world events, that one feels impelled to discuss these prophecies over and over, even at the risk of wearying those who are already familiar with the issues involved.

So, for the benefit of those who do not know how to answer the critic's assumption that Isaiah's statement about

Christ sitting on David's throne "*is not to be taken literally,*" we quote once more the angel Gabriel's statement to Mary as recorded by Luke:

And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God.

And, behold, thou shall conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shall call his name JESUS.

He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David:

And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. (Luke 1:30-33)

Thus Gabriel verifies Isaiah's statement that Christ the Son of God is to receive the literal throne and kingdom of David when He comes to reign "*over the house of Jacob for ever.*" It is this government which is to be established with judgment and justice, and of this kingdom "*there shall be no end.*" Jeremiah confirms these important truths in his chapters 31 and 33, which contain his great expositions on the covenants in their relation to the later-day history of Christianized Israel.

Now what does Christ Himself have to say about the location of His Kingdom? A simple answer to this question is in the prayer He taught the disciples - so easy to see for the alert who have eyes, so hidden from the stupid and blind who see nothing:

After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. (Matt. 6:9-10)

It is well to pause here and give sober thought to this question: If all the believers, either through death or translation, should depart from this earth to some faraway heaven never to return, as the majority of Christians seem to believe, how, then, can the Lord's Kingdom ever come and His will be done *in earth* - as it is in the celestial heaven?

Matthew chapter 25 contains some remarkable Kingdom Parables. The last one, beginning with verse 31, portrays the final judgment of the nations. It begins as follows:

When the Son of man shall [have] come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.
(Matt. 25:31-33)

A chief contributing factor to the mounting danger and confusion today is the widespread ignorance of Christians themselves concerning these great truths which are vital to our very existence as free peoples.

As a matter of fact most Christians do not even know the difference between Christ's Church and His Kingdom. The Church is not the Kingdom, but it has duties to perform for the Kingdom or nation. Christ's Church consists of the entire body of believers who have confessed their faith in Him as Saviour. Jesus said of the believers, "Ye are my witnesses." Their first duty is to bear witness to His saving grace of personal salvation through faith; their second, and equally important duty is to proclaim His coming as King to establish His Kingdom of Righteousness on the earth, according to the Scriptures. Let us be on guard against the danger of neglecting the first of these duties, and of completely misunderstanding the second.

Jerusalem is yet to be the seat of God's government on earth when it is cleansed and made ready for Christ the King. Undoubtedly the present usurpation of the Holy Land and City by Christ-hating impostors, who claim to represent all Israel, will soon come to an end. God's holy places are the heritage of His *redeemed* House of Jacob/Israel - the people of His covenant who have confessed Jesus Christ as the only Lord and Saviour.

All Scripture corroborates the belief that Christ's "**kingdom of heaven**" *begins* on the earth. We do not mean to imply that His Kingdom will always be confined within earthly limits; but we do say that it is clearly taught throughout the Bible that His glorious Kingdom will be established first among the nations and peoples of the earth itself.

The "thousand years" period in Revelation 20, commonly called the millennium, seems to substantiate this fact, for the events of that era are described as taking place on the earth. Even at the end of it, John writes:

And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth,.....
(Rev. 20:7-8)

Then the prophet saw Gog and Magog gathered for the **final conflict of the ages**. Briefly he describes the finish:

And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.

And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever. (Rev. 20:9-10)

What the vast outreach of the Kingdom may be in future ages only the Lord Himself knows. With the annihilation of all evil from the universe, as revealed to the beloved John, there will be nothing to hinder the expansion of Christ's glorious Kingdom to the limitless realms of outer space. Paul seemed to have glimpsed something of that kind when he spoke of being "*caught up to the third heaven*," an experience he was not to reveal.

In the meantime, let us prepare to enjoy heaven on earth, as viewed by Zechariah, when he saw the Lord standing on the Mount of Olives and exclaimed:

The Lord shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one Lord, and his name one."
(Zech.14:9)

Isaiah saw heaven in the desert that rejoices and blossoms as the rose and proclaimed:

And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. (Isa. 35:10)

TRIBUTE TO HAROLD E. STOUGH

Those who have had a long acquaintance with the British Israel Message will have heard of, and may have met, Mr. Harold E. Stough who, from the time of his arrival in England in 1933, worked tirelessly spreading the Kingdom Message. His father was Rev. H. W. Stough, an early 20th century American revivalist and founder of the America-Israel movement.

Harold married Phyllis and remained in England to serve God spreading the identity of the "Ten Tribes" and their place in God's great purpose. Among many other duties, he served the Federation as Secretary for a number of years.

Harold carried out many lecture tours in America and in Commonwealth countries. Those of us from the Commonwealth who visited No. 6 Buckingham Gate, who were fortunate enough to enjoy his and Phyllis' hospitality, or attended a happy and crowded Swanwick Convention, will have experienced Harold's friendly welcome and his help when required. We feel sad that a special era in the history of British-Israel teaching has come to an end.

Harold went to his rest on January 17, this year, at the age of 91, his life's work appreciated by very many people. (Ed.)



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MONTHLY NOTES

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WHY DID CHRIST DIE?

by Dr. N. F. McLeod

Most Christians, and indeed even most people who do not call themselves Christians, know **how** Christ died, and they know **when** and **where** he died. But do many know **why** He died?

Let us attempt to deal with this question as simply as possible. It is a well-known fact that God has given the world certain rules, or commandments, to obey. No community of people can operate efficiently without rules. When any group of people is set up, e.g., a tennis club, the first thing to be done is to call a meeting and write a constitution setting out how the people wish the club to operate. From then on, those who wish to help the club to operate effectively will **obey the constitution**.

It is a fact of life that a certain amount of discipline is necessary to avoid chaos, and the more self-discipline there is, then the less imposed discipline (or law) is required. Unfortunately man, unlike God, is not perfect, so that if in the course of time it is agreed by a significant number of people that the constitution needs altering, a meeting of all members can be called, and if a sufficient number (a quorum) turns up, amendments can be fully discussed and

votes taken on suggested changes to the constitution. Sometimes, in order to avoid too frequent chopping and changing of a constitution by fractious people, a two-thirds majority vote may be required for a suggested change to be made.

This sensible approach, as we know, is a far cry from what goes on in the Parliaments of Western nations today, which very often flout their constitutions in order to get what they want, and very often at variance with the wishes of the people as a whole.

We read in John 14:15:

If ye love me, keep my commandments.

and in 1 John 5:3

For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.

These rules or commandments are for His creatures' own good, and are set by an all wise and loving God. If we love God we will try to obey His commandments and live up to His required standard.

Parliaments are far from wise, and it is self evident that a monarch is more likely to have affection for his people than a parliament that is serving the ends of vested interests. God's commandments are not like some of man's laws which although they are made to appear as if they are for the good of the people, are not always beneficial. For example, one hears at times that some of the traffic laws are being administered for the prime purpose of raising revenue. This may be because most governments are finding difficulty in raising enough money to pay the interest on their borrowings.

For those who have little or no knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, we may say that He was that Person of the Godhead (who the Bible calls the *Son of God*) who was sent by God the Father into this world in the form of a **perfect human being**. Through Him God communicated with men on a very personal level, and He demonstrated by example God's perfect standard for human conduct. Hebrews 4:15 records that He was "**in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.**"

In the years before Christ, God had communicated with the nations of the world by means of His nation Israel who He had formed to be His witnesses in the world (Isaiah 43:12 & 21). They, in turn, were informed of God's Will by their prophets who acted as God's mouthpieces (2 Peter 1:21).

Sadly, there have always been people who disobey the rules necessary to maintain God's standard. In fact, we are all guilty of disobedience at times.

As we need to live by rules, it is necessary to deal effectively, although as kindly as possible, with people who break the rules. We should hope that in a Christian nation most people would not need to be "educated" by the ruler regarding the necessity for rules. A paternalistic ruler is repugnant to most people, and most, even children, do not like being dictated to.

Laws, however, are only necessary for the unrighteous. We read in 1 Timothy 1:9-10:

Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers,.....

To deal with infringements of the rules, a parallel system of punishments is necessary, where the rule breakers are corrected on a scale which matches the nature of the infringement (i.e. the punishment should fit the crime).

At a specific point in history God sent His Son into the world (Galatians 4:4-5). He confirmed all that the prophets had said, as recorded in the Old Testament. This covered all the commandments and promises He had made to His people and included dealing with the question of their inability to keep His commandments (called in the Bible "sin").

There were two possible answers to this question of sin.

1. God could forgive man's unrighteousness by doing away with His own commandments, which would only aggravate the situation and put man into a state of lawlessness, or
2. God could bring man's unrighteous state up to His own level by doing away with man's sinful nature.

We are told that all people have sinned, and come short of the glory of God. (Romans 3:23) We are unacceptable to God in this state and unable to come into His Presence.

However, God in His infinite wisdom was able to lift men up and make them acceptable to Himself. He did this by sending His Son into this world to suffer the punishment due to us because of our disobedience. This is called a vicarious act, and is a principle acceptable to God.

This principle was demonstrated to the people of Israel over many years when they sacrificed **unblemished animals**. God in His mercy will accept a sacrifice made on behalf of another guilty party, provided the **substitute is perfect!** This disqualifies the guilty party from making amends for himself or herself, because of their imperfection.

Animal sacrifice under the Sacrificial Law was really only a temporary, stop-gap way of making amends for disobedience, and was practised only until the perfect, righteous Son of God was crucified. He alone, of all men, could ever become the “perfect substitute” for sinful men. Romans 6:23 tells us that the **wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life** through Jesus Christ our Lord, i.e., through His Sacrifice for our sin. In this way we can be saved from the consequences of our sin, which is death, and so enjoy eternal life.

The Sacrificial Law was useful in teaching the whole nation of Israel the basic principles of forgiveness acceptable to God. We are told in Galatians 3:24-25:

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.

In His goodness God leads us to **repentance** (Rom. 2:4) then gives us the **gift of faith** which enables us to obtain the **salvation** which Christ has made available to us. We cannot earn our salvation by good works.

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. (Eph. 2:8-9)

Since the Crucifixion, in His mercy, through the fact that His Son has paid the price of our sin, **in our place**, God can give His righteousness to whomever He wishes, and this He does as a **GIFT**. We are not required, indeed we are not able to do anything to obtain our own salvation.

But, after we have received God’s justification, through faith in His Son, we are then enabled to do works acceptable to God. As part of this justification God gives us, as a gift, the ability to hate evil and to love goodness. Without this gift we naturally love evil, and may not even admit to the existence of sin. This might seem impossible to some people. In fact it seemed so to the disciples when our Lord was explaining such things to them. (Matt. 19:25-26)

When his disciples heard it, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then can be saved?

But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible.

The reason why it is impossible with men is because nothing that fallen man can do in the way of good works is good enough for God. Isaiah 64:6 states:

But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.

Fortunately, all is possible with God as He gives us His righteousness as a gift. He gives us the Comforter - the indwelling Holy Spirit who changes our nature. Even our own free-will becomes new, so that we will freely want to choose good and reject evil. We are given the desire and the ability to choose the good and hate the evil, which we did not have before. In other words, we will wish to render God unforced obedience, which is what He desires from us.

It is what King David asked to be renewed in himself in that famous 51st Psalm. Verse 12 reads:

Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation;
and uphold me with thy free spirit.

David would then wish to do right and to render unforced obedience as the outcome of a renewed free-will.

We do not become puppets of God, as if He is a tyrant, but in our hearts really want to please Him, where before we pleased ourselves. If we acted righteously before, it was probably out of policy - for an ulterior motive, i.e., from a hope of gain, not from an earnest desire of the heart to please God.

In His infinite wisdom and mercy God has laid down His plan of salvation in the Bible. It is useless in our humble state to try to manipulate God's plan. Probably the most common temptation is for men to think that they can by good works make themselves acceptable to God. But man's goodness can never be good enough to reach God's standard of perfection, and so save himself.

It is only as we humbly trust in that once-for-all perfect Sacrifice of Jesus Christ, that we can enjoy that Salvation provided for us at so great a cost. Our faith in that Sacrifice alone, makes us acceptable to God thus saving us from the consequences of our own sin.

It was, therefore, to pay the price of our Salvation that our Lord Jesus Christ came to die. []

STILL DESPISED AND REJECTED

He is despised and rejected of men;
a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief:
and we hid as it were our faces from him;
he was despised, and we esteemed him not.
(Isaiah 53:3)

The *Faithworks* column in the Sunday Herald Sun for 4th April, under a blasphemous title, discussed some results of the Gibson film of the Crucifixion. It is a telling indication of the spiritual state of today's Western society. The columnist makes several good points but highlights the widespread **ignorance and lack of any respect** which exists today in regard to our Lord's Person.

Unfortunately the columnist, himself, consistently refers to our Lord as "Jesus" which Dr. Bullinger points out is the name associated with the shame He endured in order to save His People from their sins. During His time on earth His followers never addressed Him familiarly as "Jesus" but always as "Master" or "Lord". The demons and His enemies called Him "Jesus". We should be careful, therefore, when referring to Him to do so with due reverence, as the Lord Jesus, Jesus Christ, our Lord, etc.

What does the Bible state about the Lord Jesus Christ?

The first mention of Him is as the special "Seed" who would be born and whose final suffering would bring about the total overthrow of Evil:

"And I will put enmity between thee [Satan] and the woman [Eve], and between thy seed and her Seed;
It shall bruise thy head [the vital part - a permanent effect]
and thou shalt bruise His heel [temporary suffering]"
(Gen. 3:15)

Later Abraham was told that the promised Seed would come through him:

"And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed My voice"
(Gen. 22:18)

This prophecy indicates not only the salvation offered to individuals within all the nations of the earth, but the eventual blessing of nations, under the righteous rule of the King of Kings during the coming Kingdom Age when

"...He shall judge among many people,
and rebuke strong nations afar off ... " (Mic. 4:3)

Isaiah Ch. 9: 6-7 prophesies the birth and final destiny of the Promised Child.

"For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given:.... "
He was born into the House of David who was of the seed of Abraham through Isaac and Jacob.

The angel had appeared to Joseph saying,

"Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee 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 (Greek form of Jehoshua - Jehovah our Saviour): For He shall save His People from their sins." (Matt. 1:20-21)

He is also described as "... the Lamb of God, Which taketh away the sin of the world." (John 1:29)

He was God's Great Gift to the world, to all who received Him.

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved." (John 3:16-17)

Galilee where the light of His teaching first shone is foretold by Isaiah:

".... the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, in Galilee of the nations. The People that walked in darkness have seen a great light; they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined." (Isa. 9:1-2)

This "land of the shadow of death" was the first part of Israel's land to be devastated by the kings of Syria and Assyria (1 Ki. 15:20; 2 Kings 10:32-33; 2 Ki. 15:29) but was the first to hear the Good News of the Kingdom. The Messiah's evangelistic journeys were almost wholly confined to Galilee and the east bank of the Jordan. Samaria and Judea were not evangelized until after His resurrection.

He was the Word of God made flesh (John 1:14); the Godhead revealed in human form (Col. 2:9); Immanuel - God with us. (Isaiah 7:14)

He was to die as the Great Saviour of men but rose again as the Great Conqueror of Death (2 Tim. 1:10; 1 Cor. 15:20-26 & 52-57))

He was the Perfect Sacrifice for sin (Heb. 9:26-28) and is now seated at the right hand of God awaiting the time when

He will return in fulfilment of the rest of the prophecy (Heb. 10:12). "And the government shall be upon His shoulder..." He is heir to the Throne of David (Luke 1:32-33) to whom God promised "Thy throne shall be established forever" (2 Sam. 7:16).

But His kingdom is not to be restricted to the House of Jacob. His rule will be demonstrated in reborn Israel and extend worldwide, for He will judge among the nations (Isa. 2:2-4) and will be known throughout the earth (Isa. 11:9). But He is also the 'righteous judge' who will judge the quick and the dead at His appearing (2 Tim. 4:1, Act 17:31).

Isaiah 9:6-7 prophesies his final triumph:

**"And His name (that is He Himself) shall be called WONDERFUL - a wonder or a marvel
COUNSELLOR - "Where no counsel is the people fall."**
(Prov. 11:14)

THE MIGHTY GOD - God omnipotent

THE EVERLASTING FATHER - Father to Israel His People (Isa. 63:16), and father to His spiritual sons and daughters begotten by His Spirit (Rom. 8:16).

PRINCE OF PEACE - the peace which includes health, happiness, prosperity and accord, in contrast with man's "peace" which is really just an absence of war!

And so He will finally be acknowledged by all the world as the One Who in grace and truth showed forth the nature and attributes of the **Eternal Living God** (1 Tim. 6:16):

*"Who only hath immortality,
dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto;
Whom no man hath seen, nor can see:
To Whom be honour and power everlasting."*

**"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 forever.
The zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this."**

He Who the world has shunned will soon return, not as the Saviour but as **RULER AND JUDGE** of the world:

"Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of His saints, to execute judgment upon all..." (Jude 14-15).

Let those who scorn and deride, beware!

And may we be able to rejoice with Paul who wrote:

"Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing."

(2 Tim. 4:8)

(Ed.)

THE ROYAL MARRIAGE

Once again a "royal occasion" is arousing the interest and enthusiasm of many people, as the wedding of Crown Prince Frederik of Denmark and Mary Donaldson of Australia draws near. While it is not "politically correct" these days to promote monarchy, the idea of kingship and a "royal family" is very ancient in the ethos of the Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian peoples. It reaches right back through the Christian and pagan centuries to the antiquity of their beginnings. It is not surprising, then, that those of us whose roots are embedded in the same rich soil should feel an empathy with these two young people and sense the mystique associated with their royal wedding.

No form of government other than KINGSHIP has ever been recorded for any of the states formed by the tribal invaders in England. H. M. Chadwick, in his *Origin of the English Nation*, has indicated that in Scandinavian history and tradition kingship is universal, that Angles and Jutes were ruled by kings from times immemorial, and that the Saxons and Angles of Britain were probably of common stock. The history of the Anglo-Saxons is enmeshed with KINGSHIP and with the religio-political nature with which that ancient office was endowed among these tribes.

The Anglo-Saxon word CYNING (King) is thought to have meant originally "son of the CYN or family". It was widely used by the tribes before they reached England, and it was a tribal right to elect a KING from the Royal Race. Kingship was bestowed by election upon whoever of the Royal Family was considered ablest. Primogeniture was a later introduction by the Normans.

All the ruling houses claimed descent from a Royal Race. In pagan times the king was considered of "divine descent", and it was believed that it was his relationship with the gods which saved his people as much as the gods

themselves. Because the king was 'Woden-sprung' and so descended from a god, he was believed to possess charismatic power for well-being, a power that was believed to permeate the whole 'Royal Race' from which he was descended and elected. Even later Christian Anglo-Saxons were to understand the authority of Christ in their laws and in their lives because He was the Son of God.

WODEN or ODIN (Norse form) was worshipped in England by Angles, Saxons and Jutes, and was claimed as the ancestor of almost every Anglo-Saxon Royal House. Although his name appears rarely in Old English literature - because it was written down in the Christian era when pagan gods were outlawed - many place names in south and central England indicate a widespread knowledge and worship of him. Examples are:

Wansdyke (Woden's Barrow); Wednesbury (Woden's Fortress); Wensley (Woden's Grove); Wednesfield (Woden's field); and Wednesday.

Though he was deified in later centuries the Norse sagas depict Woden (Odin), originally, as a very real person and a great hero and leader. Historian Paul B. Du Chaillu infers from Norse literature that he arrived in the North after a migration from the south-east, probably from the shores of the Black Sea. His sons were claimed as ancestors of the Royal Houses of Scandinavia and, through marriage to Saxon women, as ancestors of the Saxon Royal Houses also, among which the House of Cerdic, King of the West Saxons, played a dominant role.

Odin's six sons gave rise to six Royal Houses:

Woegdoeg (House of Tudor)	Boeldoeg (House of Cerdic)
Niordr (House of Normandy)	Skield (House of Denmark)
Wecta (House of Saxony)	Seaxnot (House of Guelph)

Of the reign of Odin's son Skield in Denmark it has been said, "So peaceful were those days that a man might leave a bag of gold by the roadside and find it undisturbed on his return." (C.M. Smith *Northmen of Adventure pp.24-26*)

Mr. S.M. Bishop in his *The Royal House of Britain* p.30 writes:

[Quote] "In the "Langfedgatal" which is described by Sharon Turner in his *History of the Anglo-Saxons* (Bk.III, ch. 2) as being 'one of the oldest Icelandic documents that now exist', Odin is traced back to the original Jupiter, son of *Saturnus of Krit*, i.e., the Cretan Chronos. The Icelandic genealogy of Odin in the *Langfedgatal* is as follows:

**Saturnus of Krit -- Jupiter -- Darius -- Erichthonius --
Tros -- Ilus -- Laomedon -- Priam whose daughter
married Memnon, and whose son was Thor, the father of
Hlorlitha, ancestor of Odin.**

A great manuscript genealogy and catalogue were displayed for many years in the royal library at Windsor Castle, giving at the top the pedigree of the **British kings of the line of Brutus**, as follows:

**Saturnus -- Jupiter -- Dardanus -- Erichthonius -- Tros --
Ilus -- Laomedon -- Priam.**

Curious, is it not, that Briton and Saxon should both trace their kings back to the same origin?

Who was this *Saturnus of Krit*, who appears as the ancestor of both Odin and Brutus?

According to the most ancient writer of the heathen world, Sanchoniathon, *Saturn* was but a Greek and Levantine tradition of **Jacob**. *Saturn* is the Latin name for the god whom the Greeks called *Kronos*. Sanchoniathon says: "Kronos, whom the Phoenicians call Israel".

He also tells us that Kronos had a special son, **Jehud**, whom he invested with **sovereignty**.

The Greek *Zeus*, who is identical with the *Roman Jupiter*, is an obvious variation of the same. So *Zeus*, or *Jupiter*, the king of the gods, the royal son of *Kronos* or *Saturn*, is **Judah** to whom Jacob promised **sovereignty** (Gen.49:8-12). ThusJupiter is proven to be Judah. Odin's descent can thus be traced through the Trojan kings to Zarath, the son of **Judah**. [End Quote]

The Royal Families of Europe can now be understood as members of the Royal Seed descending from the Patriarch **Judah** of whom it was prophesied:

The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be. (Gen. 49:10)

The Throne of England, however, deserves special note. As well as being linked through Odin to the Patriarch

Judah, it can be traced back by ancient genealogies, traditions and Scripture to the House of David. The link with the Throne of England comes through the ancient kings of Ireland and Scotland via the House of Stewart.

God promised to build King David a "house" or line of descendants and that there would never lack a descendant of David to occupy his throne (2 Sam. 7:16; 25-29).

In reality, David's seed were to provide occupants for the Throne of the Lord until our Lord Jesus Christ returns to "take the throne of His father David: and reign over the house of Jacob forever." (Luke 1:32-33)

David's son, Solomon, is spoken of as sitting "on the throne of the LORD as king instead of David his father."

One last comment is from an article by Bruce Horner entitled *The Spencers* published in *Covenant Vision Nov/Dec. 1997, p. 18.*

[Quote]

And since our English, Irish and Scottish nobility has married freely amongst our royalty and in great degree amongst themselves, they in turn are a semi-royal race. Princess Diana claimed the blood of every U.K. dynasty; indeed of every monarch of the Kingdom, bar those who left no descendants. Ancient Irish, ancient Scottish, modern Scottish, Welsh, Norman, Saxon, Plantagenet, Bloi, Tudor, Stewart, Palatinate of the Rhine, Hanover - that is, all, except Saxe-Coburg and Windsor, into which she married.

Her two children, William and Harry, are the proud possessors of the most noble inheritance of which this world can boast. Never before have two bloodstreams united to produce such a completeness of noble ancestry. [End Quote]

May the Throne of Denmark be blessed by a happy and fruitful union of Crown Prince Frederik and Mary Donaldson. (Ed.)

PLEASE NOTE:

1. The monthly meetings normally held at BIWF Headquarters, Camberwell, Vic. have been suspended until further notice.
2. Address change for B.I.W.F. U.K. & Covenant Books: 121 Low Etherley, Bishop Auckland, Co. Durham DL14 0HA, ENGLAND U K

“CHRISTIANS”

“And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.”
(Acts 11:26)

For nearly 2000 years people have been labelled, or have labelled themselves, “Christians”. This term, however, covers a wide variety of groups, and a wide variety of teachings and beliefs, some of which are Bible-based and some of which are Church-based, or even based on the biblical interpretations of a single individual. Power, religious and political, has been wielded by “Christian” churches and ruthless acts of cruelty perpetrated by so-called “Christians”.

The disciples were called “Christians” first in Antioch because they were “preaching the Lord Jesus” and many people believed (Acts 11:20:26). They preached that Jesus Christ was the fulfilment of all that had been promised and written down by the prophets about God’s Son, foretelling His suffering, resurrection and glory. They spread His teaching - reverence and love for God, love for one another, honesty, truthfulness, self-sacrifice, morality - the need to obey His Commandments and endeavour to live to God’s standard, as established by the Ten Commandments of the Old Testament and the Two Great Commandments of the New. Those who believed that Jesus Christ was the Promised One and followed His precepts became known as “Christians”.

As time went on, however, and pagan religions became “Christianised”, people came to do what the Jews had done prior to our Lord’s day. Answering the scribes and Pharisees He had said:

“This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.
For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men.....” (Mark 7:7-8)

This was to be repeated in the Christian centuries as men came to obey Church law, doctrines and traditions rather than the inspired Word of God as preserved in the Holy Scriptures. The grounds of infallibility became transferred from the Scriptures to the pope while the true Word was kept from the people.

Bryan Patterson of the Sunday Herald Sun suggests that as the balance and location of religious power is today

changing dramatically, the “Christianity” of 2050 will be very different from that developed in Europe. In 25 years the Christian population will be 2.6 billion - the world’s largest religion - but situated mostly in Africa, Asia, Central and South America. From 1914 the Catholic population of Africa has grown from 7 million to 120+ million and could be 230 million by 2050, and Western Christian involvement will be marginal.

We are living in a time similar to the pre-Reformation period when few have an understanding of God’s Word and His purpose in this earth. One man, called the ‘greatest of English reformers’ and the ‘first reformer of Christendom’, was enabled by God at that time to initiate a movement which, independent of Rome, would restore the Word of God as the ultimate Christian authority. This great Work of God - the Reformation - received its primary impetus in 14th century England. Through it Britain was to become, for a time, a truly “Christian nation” and be greatly blessed by God.

The English Reformation did not begin with Henry VIII (1509-1547) : it began over 100 years before his reign. Born about 1329 in Yorkshire, John Wycliffe studied at Oxford where he acquired a great reputation for learning and became known as “flos Oxonie” - the flower or pride of Oxford. By middle life ‘his biblical and philosophical studies, his knowledge of theology, his penetrating mind, the purity of his manners, and his unbending courage, rendered him the object of general admiration.’ He was a profound teacher and an eloquent preacher. ‘He accused the clergy of having banished the Holy Scriptures, and required that the authority of the Word of God should be re-established in the church.’ Wycliffe insisted that “the canon (church) law has no force when it is opposed to the Word of God.”*

When, c.1370, Pope Urban V summoned King Edward III - the conqueror of Crecy and Poitiers - to recognize him as the legitimate sovereign of England, and to pay him as a feudal tribute, the annual sum of 1000 marks, Wycliffe vigorously defended the rights of the Crown against the Pope’s aggressive command. Being an able politician and a fervent Christian his arguments influenced his fellow-countrymen generally, and also stirred up the zeal of several members of both Houses of Parliament. It was decided that the Kingdom was held ‘directly and solely of Christ alone’ as Lord of lords, and ‘that if the pontiff should attempt to proceed against the King of England

the nation should rise in a body to maintain the independence of the Crown.* From that time the papacy ceased to claim the sovereignty of England.

In the 14th century a parliament was called "good" if it did not yield to the papacy. How desperately Britain needs a "Wycliffe" today, to defend the sovereignty of the Crown, and a "Good Parliament" to back him.

After the accession of Richard II at the age of 10 years, Wycliffe organized the "poor priests" (Lollards) - itinerant evangelists who preached in fields, churchyards, market-places, etc., and afterwards visited and helped the aged, poor, blind and lame. These were to live frugally, replacing Rome's "begging friars" who preached legends of saints and spent their gains in ale-houses and at gaming-tables. The poor people flocked to hear the Lollards as they preached the Word of God faithfully, penetrating every part of England. Finally, the clergy became alarmed and instigated the passing of a law to stop their work.

After a near-death illness Wycliffe having attacked the papacy, and preached the Gospel to the poor, determined to put the people of England in permanent possession of the Word of God. **"Scolasticism had banished the Scriptures into a mysterious obscurity."***

Early in the 8th C. the Venerable Bede had translated the Gospel of St John; learned men at King Alfred's court of the 9th C. had translated the four evangelists; in the 10th C. Aelfric in the reign of Ethelred II had translated some books of the Old Testament; an Anglo-Norman priest had paraphrased the Gospels and the Acts; and Richard Rolle and some pious clerks in the 14th C. had produced a version of the Psalms, the Gospels, and the Epistles. But these rare volumes were hidden, like theological curiosities, in the libraries of a few monasteries. The reading of the Bible at that time was considered injurious to the laity and was forbidden by the priests. **Oral tradition and legends of saints alone were taught to the people in general.**

However, the development in the system of representative government, the rising interest in the English language, and the awakening of the human mind spurred Wycliffe to the third phase of his life's work. Being ignorant of Greek and Hebrew he decided to translate the 'dust covered' Latin Bible into English. It was completed between 1380 and 1384. **"This was a great event in the religious history of**

England; outstripping the nations on the continent, she took her station in the foremost rank in the great work of disseminating the Scriptures. As soon as the translation was finished, the labour of the copyists began, and the Bible was ere long widely circulated either wholly or in portions. The reception of the work surpassed all expectations. The Holy Scriptures exercised a reviving influence over men's hearts; minds were enlightened; souls were converted. Citizens, soldiers, and the lower classes welcomed this new era with acclamations.”* It was, however, strongly opposed by the lower clergy.

Wycliffe preached against transubstantiation, the monasteries, worldly priests and other errors, incurring the wrath of Church leaders also. But he knew that if the king and the nobility were for the priests, the lower house and the citizens were for liberty and truth. Indeed the House of Commons demanded the repeal of the persecuting statute drawn up by the clergy and approved by the king and the lords. Wycliffe died in 1384 at a time when two popes warred for power as head of the Church universal - Pope Urban VI and Pope Clement VII. “Hunted down unceasingly while living, Wycliffe died in quiet, in life and death a faithful witness to the truth of the Word of God. A glorious end to a glorious life. The Reformation of England had begun.”*

A period of persecution followed, with the burnings of Lollards and Wycliffites, and those who criticized Papal authority, during the reigns of Richard II, Henry IV and Henry V who were dominated by Rome. However, Wycliffe's teaching had had a lasting effect upon England of the 14th/15th century. The people of England were beginning to turn to God and consequently began to receive His blessing nationally.

Tanner's Constitutional History records a French writing which contrasts the life of the contemporary English labourer of **Richard III's** day (2nd half of 15th century) with his counterpart on the Continent.

“The King of France will allow no one to use salt, but what is bought of himself at his own arbitrary price. The troops pay for nothing, and treat the people barbarously if they are not satisfied. All growers of vines must give a fourth to the King. All the towns must pay the King great yearly sums for his men-at-arms.

The peasants live in great hardship and misery. They wear no woollen. Their clothing consists of little short jerkins of sackcloth, no trowse but from the knees up, and legs exposed and naked. The women all go barefoot.

The people eat no meat, except the fat of bacon in their

soup. Nor are the gentry much better off. If an accusation is brought against them they are examined in private, and perhaps never more heard of.

In England it is very different. No one can abide in another man's house without his leave. The King cannot put on taxes, nor alter the laws, nor make new ones. The English never drink water except for penance. They eat all sorts of flesh and fish. They are clothed throughout in good woollens, and are provided with all sorts of household goods. An Englishman cannot be sued except before the ordinary judge." (Quoted from *Daughter of Time* by Josephine Tey, 1951, p.57).

The resurrection of the Word of God was to be aided in the 16th century by another force - the **Revival of Learning**.

Towards the end of the 15th C. the study of the Classics and of the Greek language was revived in England. At the same time Caxton imported the art of printing from Germany and the Tudors succeeded the Plantagenets. Henry Tudor has been described as a clever prince, but suspicious, avaricious and narrow-minded. However, a salutary influence was exercised over this ambitious and cunning king and his court by his mother, the Countess of Richmond, who had a passion for study. She would devote five hours each day to reading, meditation and prayer, then visit places where scholars congregated in order to converse with them. Her **grandsons Arthur and Henry** were greatly influenced by the affection and learning of their pious grandmother and grew up to enjoy the society of learned men.

When Erasmus, the great scholar of Rotterdam, visited England the young Henry was nine years old. Erasmus was greatly impressed by Henry's riding ability, courage and excellence in the manly sports of the day, and by his ability to perform on several musical instruments. He was receiving a learned education. When after the death of his brother Arthur, Henry was declared heir to the crown, he continued his studies. "He spoke and wrote in French, German, and Spanish with the facility of a native; and England hoped to behold one day the most learned of Christian kings upon the throne of Alfred the Great."*

The king, Henry VII, not willing to repay the 100,000 crowns which formed half of Princess Catherine's dowry - the widow of the young Prince Arthur - or to forfeit the half as yet unpaid, conceived the plan of marrying Prince Henry to the young widow. He obtained a bull from Pope Julius II authorizing Catherine's marriage to the brother of her first husband, and a betrothal took place. The people

murmured questioning whether the Pope had the power to permit what God had forbidden (ref. Lev. 20:21; Mark 6:18). Although declaring on the eve of his 14th birthday that he would never make Catherine his wife, the 18 years old Henry was persuaded by his advisors to take Catherine as his queen.

The young Henry, handsome, graceful, learned, musical, courageous and of a happy disposition was constantly covered in adulation, feted and praised by his courtiers, friends and visiting dignitaries. Unhappily the great promise which he had shown as a young 'Christian' king was to be marred in later years by unsparing cruelty.

One author writes of him as follows:

"History has not dealt too kindly with Henry VIII (1491-1547), for there has been a pronounced tendency so to exaggerate the unlovely aspects of his character as to discount those great qualities of mind which he possessed in such exceptional measure. God works through individuals, however unworthy some of them may be, and in the reign of Henry VIII it is not difficult to see the first signs of the lifting of that veil of secrecy which so effectively cloaked the destiny of Britain from the eyes of the world.

Henry was a man of great learning. His passion for efficiency was harnessed to ambition and energy, and he had an unshakable faith in the greatness of his country. To Henry we may credit, not merely the break with papal Rome, but also steps towards the development of Parliamentary government and the unification of England, Wales and Ireland. His work in building a navy, again, was an inestimable contribution towards Elizabeth's defeat of the Spanish Armada. Indeed, without it, the freedom of the Netherlands would have been delayed and the development of the English colonies would have been almost impossible. England, under Henry VIII, was prepared most skilfully to emerge from mediaeval obscurity as a modern world-power."

Historian J.H. Merle d'Aubigne *The Reformation in England* vol. 2 sums up Henry VIII in the following words:

"Henry had brought into the world with him remarkable capacities, and these had been improved by education. He has been praised for his application to the business of the State, for his wonderful cleverness, his rare eloquence, his high courage. His abilities certainly give him a place above the average of kings. He regularly attended the council, corresponded with his ambassadors, and took much pains; In politics he had some clear views; he caused the Bible to be printed; but the moral sentiment is shocked when he is held up as a model. The two most conspicuous features of his character were pride and sensuality; and by these vices

he was driven to most blameworthy actions, and even to crimes. Pride led him to make himself head of the church, to claim the right to regulate the faith of his subjects, and to punish cruelly those who had the audacity to hold any other opinions on matters of religion than his own.

The Reformation of which he is assumed to be the author was hardly a pseudo-reform; we might rather see in it another species of *deformation*. Claiming autocracy in matters of faith, he naturally claimed the same in matters of state. All the duties of his subjects were summed up by him in the one word *obedience*; and those who refused to bow the head to his despotic rule were almost sure to lose it. He was covetous, prodigal, capricious, suspicious; not only was he fickle in his friendships, but on many occasions he did not hesitate to take his victims from amongst his best friends. His treatment of his wives, and especially Anne Boleyn, condemns him as a man; his blood persecutions of the evangelicals condemn him as a Christian; the scandalous servility which he endeavoured, and not unsuccessfully, to engraft in the nobles, the bishops, the house of commons and the people, condemn him as a king."

We must remember, however, that Henry was a son of the "Christian" Roman Church, whose popes would have been his models for rulership and power. The emphasis of Rome had long been on secular power rather than on the moral power of the Gospel of Christ. This use of secular power was evident in the struggle between Hildebrand (Pope Gregory VII) and William the Conqueror: the king seeking to enslave the church to the state, while the pope sought to enslave the state to the church. The Norman kings were noted for their magnificent, fortress-like stone cathedrals and soldier-bishops, by which they replaced the wooden churches and shepherds of earlier Christians.

It was the ancient tradition of the pagan Anglo-Saxon and Northern tribes that their Ruler was the primary leader of the tribal religion and the centre of their cult of Kingship. The ideal of the Anglo-Saxon Peace King in both pagan and Christian times was as a royal priest responsible for the victory, plenty, peace and, later, even the sins of his people. National peace and blessing were believed to be the outcome of righteousness.

The Anglo-Saxon contribution to world peace has been their Monarchical System of government, their love of justice and righteousness in government, and their traditional obedience to Law. By the time of the Reformation the Church of Rome had gradually usurped the priestly function of the monarch and diminished the ideal of kingship in England. By making himself head of

the Church in England, Henry VIII was assuming responsibility for the faith of his people as had his ancestors before him, but as a product of the Church of Rome he lacked the spiritual understanding and maturity to adequately fulfil such a function.

The later separation of Church and State has resulted in the idea that the State has no responsibility to serve or obey God. This has allowed the State to adopt humanistic and atheistic principles and stray far from obedience to the Law of God. And so we vainly grasp at that great gift to human society - peace - and will continue to do so, until led back to our God, by our Christian Monarch, in repentance and faith.

It behoves all "Christians" to be Christian in deed as well as in name. Our Lord said: **If ye love me, keep my commandments.** (Jn. 14:15) What are these commandments? Jesus said:

**Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart,
and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.
This is the first and great commandment.
And the second is like unto it,
Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.
On these two commandments hang all the law and
the prophets.** (Matt. 22:37-40)

How do we love God? We seek to please Him by fulfilling His requirements as revealed in His Written Word, which we are told to study:

**Study to show thyself approved unto God, a
workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly
dividing the word of truth.** (2 Tim. 2:15)

(*J. H. Merle d'Aubigne *The Reformation in England* Vol. 1) (Ed.)

**Oh Righteous Lord that lovest righteousness,
look in mercy
upon our bewildered and distracted world.
Show us all where we are wrong;
remove all blindness and bitterness,
all bigotry and prejudice.
Be Thou our peacemaker,
and in Thine own good time
bring out of our discord a better
and abiding harmony,
for the sake of Him Who is the Prince of Peace,
Jesus Christ, Thy Son our Lord.**

Amen.



MONARCHY
UNDER ATTACK
EREA

British-Israel World Federation
(Victorian Headquarters) Inc.

No: 628

May, 2004.

MONTHLY NOTES

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(NOTE: The views expressed in the following articles are not necessarily endorsed by the British-Israel World Federation (Victorian Headquarters) Inc.)

HOW READEST THOU?

It is one thing to read the Bible through
Another thing to read to learn and do.
Some read it with design to learn to read,
But to the subject pay but little heed.
Some read it as their duty once a week,
But no instruction from the Bible seek;
While others read it with but little care,
With no regard to how they read, nor where.

Some read it as a history, to know
How people live three thousand years ago.
Some read to bring themselves into repute
By showing others how they can dispute;
While others read because their neighbours do,
To see how long 't will take to read it through.
Some read it for the wonders that are there -

How David killed a lion and a bear;
While others read it with uncommon care,
Hoping to find some contradictions there!
Some read as though it did not speak to them,
But to the people at Jerusalem.
One reads it as a book of mysteries,
And won't believe the very thing he sees.
One reads with father's specs upon his head,
And sees the thing just as his father said.

Some read to prove a pre-adopted creed -
Hence understand but little that they read;
For every passage in the book they bend,
To make it suit that all-important end!
Some people read, as I have often thought,
To teach the book instead of being taught,
And some there are who read it out of spite -
I fear there are but few who read it right.
So many people in these latter days,
Have read the Bible in so many ways
That few can tell which system is the best,
For every party contradicts the rest!

But read it prayerfully, and you will see,
Although men contradict, God's words agree.
For what the early Bible prophets wrote,
We find that Christ and His apostles quote:

So trust no creed that trembles to recall
What has been penned by one and verified by all.

Anonymous

MONARCHY UNDER ATTACK AGAIN

On Sunday, May 23, I watched with disgust the latest, very obvious, republican ploy to denigrate the Monarchy and attempt to brain-wash the Australian People into changing to a Republic. The claim was made that our present Queen, Elizabeth II, was not our rightful queen and that a Jerilderie rice farmer and his family were the "real" royal family. It was claimed that 500 years ago when the Throne of England was taken by Henry Tudor, it should have gone more correctly to a closer claimant.

God demonstrates in Scripture how often the firstborn or the direct descendant was discarded in favour of a less obvious person or line: Jacob was chosen over Esau (Gen 25:23-26). Ephraim and Manasseh (Jacob's grandsons) replaced Reuben and Simeon (Jacob's two first-born sons) (Gen. 48:5). Ephraim was chosen instead of Manasseh (Gen. 48:18-20); Zarah and Pharez instead of Judah's three older sons (Gen. Ch.38); and David instead of seven older brothers (1 Sam. 16:10-13).

In royal history younger brothers, cousins, uncles, daughters have succeeded to thrones. What matters is that they were members of the Royal line of kings and queens. Marriages were made linking different branches of the

royal family, ensuring its existence from ancient times.

Part of the promise to the Patriarch Judah as given in Genesis ch. 49 vs. 8-12 states:

Judah is a lion's whelp: from the prey, my son, thou art gone up: he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up?

The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh [Messiah] come; and unto him shall the gathering [submission] of the people be.

Then later, for his faithfulness, God promised King David - a Judahite - He would build him "a house" - a line of descent - 2 Sam.7:12-29

And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever (v. 16).

The Throne which King David was given was actually the *Throne of the Lord* over Israel, because until Israel asked for a human king the Lord had been their King (1 Sam. 12:12). In 1 Chron. 29:23 we read:

Then Solomon sat on the throne of the LORD as king instead of David his father, and prospered; and all Israel obeyed him.

Over 1000 years later this same Throne was promised to our Lord Jesus Christ when the Angel spoke to Mary:

And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS.

He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. (Luke 1:31-33)

Throne of David, therefore, must be operational when Christ returns to take it for Himself.

It is God's prerogative to choose or reject whom He will. Being able to see the end from the beginning He chooses the person and the line through which to accomplish His great purpose.

The line questioned by the programme was that of the Tudors. However, the Tudors had the necessary intelligence and strength to unite England and repel the Romanist invasion, at a time when the accelerating spread of knowledge and spiritual understanding was to advance the Reformation. Its task accomplished, the Tudor

Dynasty was then terminated - Queen Elizabeth I having no issue. But the Tudor line had been incorporated already with the Scottish royal line by the marriage of Margaret, sister of Henry VIII, to James IV of Scotland, whose descendant, **James VI of Scotland became James I of England.**

The termination of the Tudor Dynasty allowed a member of the **House of David**, traced in part traditionally, through the Scottish kings back through the ancient Irish Royal line, to Egypt and Jerusalem (to the kings of the David/Judah line), to occupy the Throne of Great Britain. The **Davidic line** came in with the Stewart king, James VI of Scotland and I of England. Our Queen is a member of this Royal Davidic Line.

Prior to this time the Kings and Queens of Europe and England were ruled by descendants of the six sons of **Odin (Woden) and Frea**. Odin, originally a warrior leader, became legendary as time passed. The *Langfedgatal* traces the Odin line back to Jupiter (Judah), the son of Saturnus (or Kronus) whom Sanchoniathon's *Phoenician History* says the Phoenicians call "Israel" (Jacob). As this line covers a period of over three thousand years it is not surprising that it has entered the realms of mythology and tradition. However, fact lies at its base.

ODIN			FREA		
Woegdoeg	Boeldoeg	Niordr	Skield	Wecta	Seaxnot
H	H	H	H	H	H
O	O	O	O	O	O
U	U	U	U	U	U
S	S	S	S	S	S
E	E	E	E	E	E
of	of	of	of	of	of
T	C	N	D	S	G
U	E	O	E	A	U
D	R	R	N	X	E
O	D	M	M	O	L
R	I	A	A	N	P
	C	N	R	Y	H
		D	K		
		Y			

Queen Elizabeth II is our legitimate Sovereign. She has been anointed, crowned, proclaimed, and accepted with acclamation by the great majority of Parliament and the People. How dare anyone claim otherwise.

This programme was a blatant attack, to denigrate the Monarch and our Monarchical system in the eyes of the general public. The “real” royal family of the programme were not only Catholic and so rejected by the Act of Settlement, but Republicans as well. We are living at a time when every opportunity is taken by the media and Antichrist powers to slight or denigrate the British Royal Family, and to influence Australians to cast off the Monarchy in favour of a Republic.

In the *On Target Supplement* dated 21st May, 2004, some information is quoted from the *Australian Aviation* magazine of April, 1992, which contrasts the cost to Australia of security for the US President, with the cost of security for the Queen, both of whom visited Australia in 1992.

Security for the Queen cost \$90,000 - security for President Bush Snr. cost \$596,000, six and one half times as much.

[Quote] “Two giant Galaxy transports preceded the presidential aircraft, carrying everything from secret service firearms to motor vehicles. The motor vehicles included seven stretch limousines with bullet-proof glass and bomb-proof armour, and a special secret service electronics van. One hundred and twenty-five American media representatives were also ferried in to cover the President’s visit on a specially chartered TWA Boeing 747 which cost \$50 million; and then there was Air Force 2, fitted out exactly the same as Air Force 1, just in case of a malfunction, following the presidential aircraft wherever it travelled. Prior to President Bush’s trip from the airport into Canberra, the entire route was cleared of everything which posed the slightest risk to the President’s safety - and there were no spectators.

Queen Elizabeth landed in Australia aboard a Qantas flight. She travelled along a route lined by thousands of cheering Australians.” [End quote]
What a difference!

Let us continue to pray for Her Majesty’s protection, comfort and guidance. We can be assured that God’s Will will be done: His purpose will not fail, regardless of the machinations of the Enemy, whose aim it is to obliterate the Throne of the Lord and His people.

*Behold, he that keepeth Israel
shall neither slumber nor sleep.*
(Psalm 121:4)

NOTE: In response to receiving a copy of my letter of complaint to the Prime Minister, my local M.P. brushed aside my objections with the following explanation:

“Regarding the ABC, it is one of Australia’s **most important** cultural institutions. The Government provides an overall level of funding for the ABC; it **does not however have any power to direct the ABC** in relation to its programming. Parliament has guaranteed this independence to ensure that what is broadcast is free of political interference.”

If the government of this country has no power “to direct the ABC”, who does direct it? Who decides what is, or is not, published? Whose is the final responsibility? As the government represents the People, this means that the Australian People have no power over one of their “most important cultural institutions” and therefore what is being fed to them through the media.

Deception and misinformation can divert the public from a true understanding of situations and events. This may be the result of ignorance, incompetence or prejudice, but it may also be deliberate deception by falsehood, selectivity, or omission. The media can be used as a powerful tool in social engineering by controlling what is promulgated. And yet the government has no power to direct the ABC in relation to its programming. Obviously in this day and age even treason may not be excluded! (Ed.)

GOD OR MAMMON?

In the present climate of Global Markets, Transnational Corporations, Free Trade Deals and Government subsidies, we are not surprised to read (*On Target*) that six Transnational Corporations (TNCs) control 85% of world trade in grain; eight TNCs account for between 55-60% of world coffee sales; seven TNCs account for 83% of world trade cocoa; and three account for 80% of bananas.

Nor are we surprised by the warning that diseases previously contained in remote localities are now spreading worldwide due to interconnection through world trade. In spite of this, Governments are against closing international trade doors. The Australian Quarantine Services’ ability to protect our Primary Industries from imported diseases is now being hampered by the lessening standards of quarantine being generated to accommodate current Free

Trade Agreements. Indeed a steady flow of raw chicken and eggs is already being imported into Australia from Thailand.

We remember Antony Sutton's revelations that US government, and private and public firms and institutions had provided aid to build up the Soviet Military/Industrial Complex. This had resulted in the supply of weapons of mass destruction to communist regimes in Korea and Vietnam. These weapons were in turn used against soldiers from the US and their Allies, the number of casualties increasing in proportion as trade had increased. We are not surprised, therefore, to read John Pilger's report (O.T. 8/4/04) that "the Blair Government has secretly authorized the sale of vast quantities of arms and terror equipment to Israel. These include leg-irons, electric shock belts and chemical and biological agents. No matter that Israel has defied more UN resolutions than any other state since the founding of the world body."

In the editorial (*New Scientist 08.05.04*) we read that "subsidies for ever more powerful fishing boats are driving many of the world's fleets to commit such outrages as the destruction of the cod off eastern Canada or in the North Sea." The same article points out that the US and EU subsidize their farmers to the tune of one billion dollars a day enabling crops from wheat to cotton to be dumped on world markets at such low prices that farmers without subsidies in other countries are unable to compete. And technology continues to force increasing yields regardless of demand.

It comments also that "trade, and the rules that are now starting to govern it on a global scale, has an ever increasing impact on how our species uses the planet. Trade profoundly affects the exploitation of resources and the distribution of technologies, their environmental impacts, and the ebb and flow of prosperity around the world - not to mention the political stability..... a quarter of the GDP of the US is now closely bound to international trade."

The article calls for us "to arrange our global trading rules so that our irrevocably globalizing economy becomes fair for everyone, not rigged for the rich."

As the tentacles of Economic Babylon steadily envelop the globe, and the global divide between rich and poor widens, so war and terrorism will be a growing threat. This is the result of man's efforts over the past 6000 years since the inception of the Adamic race. Clearly man's system involving destructive competition for business has not, and will not, bring a solution to the inequitable distribution of the world's bounty and the accompanying damage to the environment, which is now dangerously threatened.

The time has come to take notice of **God's social agenda** which the world has consistently rejected or ignored for nearly 3500 years. God's Law given at Mt. Sinai in 1446 BC and detailed in the Old Testament and more fully explained in the New, contains the very principles necessary for an equitable and abundant economy derived from bountiful production.

In 1947 Dr. D. S. Milne wrote a pamphlet entitled *Economics a Phase of Divine Law*. Nearly 60 years later as we begin to experience the final results of man's economic strategies, we can understand more clearly the truths he explains. (Ed.)

ECONOMICS A PHASE OF DIVINE LAW

by Dr. D. S. Milne

CITIZENSHIP OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD

In this modern world the Bible occupies a less important place in the thoughts of men than in the days of our fathers. Some ascribe this to the outmoding of superstition by the superior knowledge and wisdom of an enlightened scientific age. Others, while receiving the spiritual message of the Bible, fail to see in it the solution of our economic and social problems.

Yet both Old and New Testaments contain a revelation of God's will, eternal principles which are the only true guide for mankind from age to age. In spite of the drift from the Bible, the need is greater than ever before to learn Divine wisdom and obey the Divine will.

The closer the inquiry into the works of the Creator, the more obvious it becomes that there is a right and a wrong

way of doing things. Throughout all is the reign of law. Obedience to the law tends to life, disobedience tends to death. Obedience to the laws of electricity has supplied many wonderful inventions for the comfort and well-being of mankind. Disobedience to the law of insulation is death.

The law of fertility of the soil has been termed the Wheel of Life. Death and decay are transmuted into life and health by the harmonious action of bacteria, fungi and worms in the soil. The true basis of public health should be the law of return of animal and vegetable wastes to the soil, yet in our time the chemical mind has neglected this wisdom. Analysis of soil chemicals has posed as scientific knowledge, and dosing the land with this or that chemical compound has been the vain remedy for sickness of the soil. The unexpected result of that way is soil erosion, dustbowls, deserts, death.

In modern times the doctrines of finance capitalism have held the stage. The so-called science of economics has been enthroned. The miseries of the workers in the 18th and 19th centuries, the dire poverty of the masses in contrast with the fabulous riches of the few, these were regarded as regrettable evils, but inevitable, as part of the laws of economics. Men have failed to realise that the system of finance capitalism was made by man, and had no part in the wisdom of God. The evils are inevitable only as long as the evil system which causes them endures.

So we turn to the Bible for the solution of the problem. We find that economics has an important place in God's will, but we also find that economics cannot be separated from the larger questions of right relationship between God and man, and between man and man. We find the chief law to be, Mark 12:30,31: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind..... And the second is like it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."

In the beginning God created man and woman, whose happiness and welfare depends upon obedience to His commands. Worldly counsels, however, prevailed; the lust of the flesh, the desire of the eyes, and the pride of life were preferred to the wisdom of God. The result was death. In the same hour that the sentence of death was passed, came the promise. The seed of the woman should bruise the head of the serpent, but the serpent would bruise his heel. The long genealogies that follow in the Bible were recorded in the hope of the coming of the seed of the woman, the expected Redeemer of mankind. The hopes of

the covenant seed were in the future. When Jesus Christ came in fulfilment of the promise, the powers of evil sought to destroy Him, but He rose from the grave triumphant over sin and death.

The Bible teaches believers in Jesus Christ to look forward to His return in power, when they hope to be changed into His likeness, and they expect that the dead in Christ shall also be raised in the new body of eternal life. This is the **Gospel of Salvation**, and is expressed in the words of Jesus, John 3:16, “**For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.**”

The Bible contains another theme which is termed the **Gospel of the Kingdom of God**. Abraham was called to inherit a certain land, to found a great nation, and to be a blessing to all families of the earth. In due time his descendants, the twelve tribes of Israel, entered into Palestine with the promise that, if they obeyed God’s voice, they would be unto Him a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. They were being established as God’s model kingdom on earth, to obey His law, and to be prosperous and happy. Other nations would observe this shining example of how God’s law works in human affairs, and would wish to do likewise.

Israel, as Bible history shows, rarely obeyed God’s laws. They became a melancholy example of the frustrations which follow departure from the right way of doing things. The two Israel nations (for early in their career they divided into two kingdoms, the northern ten-tribed House of Israel, and the southern two-tribed House of Judah, the ancestors of some of the Jews) went successively into captivity and exile.

A small number of Jews returned from exile, and it was to their descendants Jesus Christ came preaching the Gospel of the kingdom of God. He gave them another chance to obey God’s law and to become God’s model kingdom on earth; but they too rejected Him, and therefore He declared that the Kingdom of God was taken from them and would be given to a nation bringing forth the fruits of it (Ref. Matt. 21:43).

The attempt of the Zionists to claim Palestine as the national home of the Jews is unscriptural on several grounds, and its fruit is the insoluble Palestine problem and may well be the Sarajevo to kindle into flame the third world war. It ignores the fact that Jews can be descended

from only two of the twelve tribes of Israel. It ignores the fact that no promise of national restoration is made in the Scriptures apart from the New Covenant in Christ. It forgets that the wider promise to Jacob was that his seed should spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north and to the south, and that the blessings would be to the "utmost bounds of the everlasting hills" (Gen. 49:26).

We of the British Commonwealth of Nations, through no conscious effort of our own, came to occupy a unique position in the world, with a unique opportunity to put God's law into practice, and be a blessing to other nations. This position and opportunity are shared by the United States of America. Instead, we have enthroned the false gods of finance capitalism and unless we set our own house in order, the opportunity will pass us by also. It is therefore an urgent matter for us to become acquainted with God's law, that we may find the solution of the problems which so grievously perplex our age.

When both houses of Israel were going into captivity, the prophets received God's promise that He would write His law in the hearts of His people Israel. Jesus Christ supplied the key to this promise when He said, "**If ye love Me, keep My commandments.**" And again, John 3:3, "**Except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God.**" Obedience to God's law is the result of the new birth. Not the sinful nature of the flesh can do God's will, but the new life of the spirit of God through faith in Jesus Christ. Thus the Gospel of Salvation and the Gospel of the Kingdom become one organic whole.

In the Kingdom of God, Jesus Christ will be King. Every great war has been followed by a League of Nations or a UNO, but every such attempt to bring concord and security to mankind has ended in disaster, because it has been built on faulty foundations. **The citizens of the Kingdom of God must be born again, and they must acknowledge Jesus Christ as Lord and King.** Such national conversion is prophesied in Jeremiah 31:31-36.

ECONOMIC FREEDOM AND SECURITY

In modern times very few are economically free. Most are dependent on others for their employment and for the means of subsistence. The employers are frequently in their turn dependent on the will of those who hold the power of capitalist finance. If any be fortunate enough to possess land it is usually encumbered by mortgage, and freedom is brought into the bondage of debt.

The Bible laws of economics assure freedom and independence to every family. When Israel obtained the promised land, it was divided as fairly as possible so that every family should receive its portion. The land was free from debt and the only tax was a tenth part of the fruit of the soil, the tithe being the inheritance of the Levites, who, engaged in work of national importance, had no land.

The land was inherited, free of death duties, from generation to generation. It had no money value, and must not be sold forever. The possessors of the land were regarded, not as the owners (for the land was God's, Leviticus 25:23), but as God's guests.

Should circumstances compel, it was permitted to sell the land, but the price should be adjusted according to the number of years to the Jubilee. The price was not for the land itself, but for its produce. In the 50th year, the year of Jubilee, every family must return to its inheritance. This great event must take place on the 10th day of the 7th month, the Day of Atonement, on which all the people made confession of their sins: it was a day for national repentance. Thus were closely related the economic and religious life of the nation.

It was not a day of bondage, but a day of freedom, a day of new beginnings. Leviticus. 25:10:

“And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubilee unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family.”

The USA claims to be the land of the free, and a portion of the above quotation was inscribed on their Liberty Bell: “*Proclaim liberty throughout the land unto all the inhabitants thereof.*” But the rest of the law was omitted, and that is why the USA is just as much subject to financial and industrial troubles as any other nation which departs from God's law.

The law of inheritance was at one time deeply written in the conscience of ancient Israel. When the despotic King Ahab coveted Naboth's vineyard, even he was unable to obtain possession against Naboth's will (1 Kings ch. 21). It was only when his consort Jezebel had suborned the elders of the people to accept false witness and pronounce judgment of death for treason, that the king was able to seize the land.

Others also exercised their unscrupulous skill in accumulating land, for we find Isaiah 5:8 declaring:

“Woe unto them that join house to house, that lay field to field, till there be no place, that they may be placed alone in the midst of the earth!”

The Jews who returned from Babylon met with drought, and some were hard put to it to find food for themselves, much less the corn and money for tribute to Babylon. These were compelled to mortgage their lands and houses to their wealthier compatriots. When Nehemiah, the new Governor, saw the state of affairs he set up a Mortgage Corporation, fixed the rate of interest at 5 percent, and caused placards to be posted up in public places promising security to the investors. No, I have that wrong! I am quoting from a proclamation of the New Zealand Government in the early nineteen thirties.

Nehemiah said: **“And I was very angry when I heard their cry and these words. Then I consulted with myself, and I rebuked the nobles, and the rulers, and said unto them, Ye exact usury, every one of his brother. And I set a great assembly against them..... Then held they their peace, and found nothing to answer.....”**

Restore, I pray you, to them, even this day, their lands, their vineyards, their olive yards, and their houses, also the hundredth part of the money, and of the corn, the wine, and the oil, that ye exact of them. Then said they, We will restore them, and will require nothing of them; so will we do as thou sayest.” (Nehemiah 5:6-12)

Much later a rich young man came to Jesus Christ claiming that he had kept the laws of Moses from his youth up; but Jesus put His finger on the vital spot. How did this man's family accumulate such great possessions? Let him sell all, and give to the poor. Thus in Israel, while every family was assured of a sufficient living, no man could lawfully accumulate large holdings at the expense of others.

The clans of Scotland followed the patriarchal system of the Old Testament. Every crofter had his holding. The yeomen of England were likewise free and independent by virtue of their land. The industrial revolution and the enclosure of land changed all this, creating a great landless labouring class at the mercy of others for their precarious and ill-paid jobs.

Since then, conditions of labour and rates of pay have been improved by legislation, but modern economics are now dominated by the machine and mass production. Money and the machines, which should be our beneficent servants, have become our ruthless masters.

Many say that the old laws of Israel, with their rural patriarchal conditions are out of date. Others, with truer vision, see in them our salvation. The prophet of old foresaw that in the new age every man would dwell under his own vine and fig tree. Is it possible to do away with machines, put every man back on the land, and return to peasant life? Perhaps not, but it is possible to decentralise industry, giving each worker sufficient land to occupy his increasing leisure. It is possible to place more and more on small holdings with profit to themselves and to the community. It is possible to foster a renewed love of and respect for the land, to breed a race of husbandmen.

In 1947, in Tahiti, at the age of sixteen, a young man was allotted a plot of land, and was free to marry. The land was his until he died, when it reverted to the Crown. True, the Tahitians were a simple community, but were free, and had no national debt.

If we are to retain the blessing of machine power, the system of finance capitalism with debt and interest must be abolished. In building a new system we must bear in mind the foundation principle of God's law - that every person is entitled to a share in the fruits of the soil. It is not possible for every man to possess land and to work entirely on it, but every secondary industry also depends upon the land for its raw materials. Every worker contributes to the wealth of the nation. Those who do not actually produce add their services to the common pool.

The sum total of national constructive effort is the true basis of the issue of money, whether in the form of currency or of credit. If the total productive power of the nation can be computed and the national income distributed in fair proportion to every person, irrespective of the nature of the employment, the result would be the same as giving everybody a share in the land itself.

Thus would the first principle of Divine economic law be obeyed - economic freedom and security for all. []

NOTE: "The Problem of Distribution" and "A Stable Value of Money" will be discussed next month.

THE VENUS TRANSIT

The perceived transit of the planet Venus across the face of the sun is a significant and inspiring astronomical event which lasts for 6-7 hours as the planet passes in its orbit

between Earth and the Sun. We have just witnessed such an event on 8th June. Venus transits are regular events which occur in pairs, separated by eight earth years minus two days. *New Dawn* magazine, March-April, 2004 p19 gives the following dates for the last five pairs of transits. These appear to indicate a pattern of alternating additions of 113 and 130 years.

<u>First Transit</u>	<u>+ 8 yrs</u>	<u>Second Transit</u>
1518		1526
1631		1639
1761		1769
1874		1882
2004		2012
2117		2125

Some writers have claimed that some of the transit periods have heralded important eras in our history. For example:

AD 60-68 The persecution of Christians began at Rome.

AD 173-181 Marcus Aurelius begins a systematic persecution of Christians in Rome because they oppose emperor-worship and threaten the established order.

AD 303-311 The general persecution of Christians throughout the Roman Empire under Diocletian who seeks to revive the old religion in order to strengthen the Empire.

AD 659-667 The 64th Synod of Whitby adopts the Roman Catholic faith, thus leaving the early Christian faith of the Celtic Church and bringing England under the yoke of Rome.

AD 789-797 The Norse invasions of the British Isles begin.

AD 1032-1040 The twilight of the rule of England by the Danish kings and the House of Cerdic, making the way open for the House of Normandy in the person of William the Conqueror in 1066.

AD 1275-1283 Conquest of Wales by Edward I and his partial conquest of Scotland, foreshadowing their final unification.

AD 1388-1396 The first complete English translation of the Bible based on the work of Wycliffe.

AD 1518-1526 Luther denounces the Papacy, translates the Bible into German and greatly advances the Reformation in Germany. The first circumnavigation of the globe was undertaken under the leadership of Magellan, proving the earth was a sphere and opening the way for voyages of exploration.

AD 1631-39 First national mail services instituted in Denmark, Sweden and England, leading to routine written communications between people even over long distances.

AD 1761-1769 The beginning of viable steam power with Watt's steam engine. The discovery of Australia and New Zealand by Captain James Cook.

AD 1874-1882 The founding of the World Post Union, the completion of the Atlantic telegraph cable, and Bell's telephone were first steps in global communication. Edison's electric lighting presaged a new way of living.

AD 2004-2012 Could the next eight years see more life changing events?

The following information is from *Days of Reckoning No. 85, Part 2, p. 19* - by V. A. Proposch.

Prior to its transit of the Sun, Venus has been an evening 'star' because its orbital position was west of the sun. Having overtaken the earth due to its more rapid orbital movement, Venus is now east of the sun. This makes it a morning 'star', noticeable only at sunrise then as a daylight bright spot in the sky. Its maximum brightness will be reached on July 14, 36 days after transit. This will be 70 days before the Sabbath ending the approaching Feast of Tabernacles.

There are several references to the "morning star" or "day star" in Scripture which are obvious metaphors applying to the Messiah, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

In Revelation 22:16 He testifies of Himself to the Apostle John saying:

I am the root and the offspring of David, and the
bright and morning star.

2 Peter 1:19 speaks of His return:

We have also a more sure word of prophecy;
whereinto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light
that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and
the day star arise in your hearts:

Our Lord is depicted as the Morning Star and the Day Star because He introduced the Light of the Gospel Day, revealing more fully the truths of God than had the ancient prophets.

He is also the Star out of Jacob Who is to have final dominion in the earth (Num. 24:17-19) as the great and glorious King of Peace and Equity.

His name shall be called Wonderful,
Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting
Father, The Prince of Peace.

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. 9:6-7)

(Ed.)

AFTER HANUKKAH

In issue No. 625 we discussed the corrupting influence of Hellenism on the Nation of the Jews that had developed after a small section of Judah returned to Palestine in 535 B.C. from their Captivity in Babylon. We followed their history until the death of Antiochus IV Epiphanes, who had sought to substitute Pagan Greek ritual for the worship of Jehovah.

Supported by the **Hasidim** - the sect/party who believed and practised the Law of God with integrity - the **Hasmoneans** - the faithful priest Matthathias and his five sons - led the **Maccabean Revolt** until Antiochus' death in c. 165 BC. The Regent Lysias made terms with the insurgents and the worship of Jehovah was renewed in 164 BC by the dedication of a new Altar in the Temple, which has been celebrated ever since by **Hanukkah - the Feast of Dedication**.

The Hasmonean brothers had succeeded in gaining religious freedom for the Jews: but they did not stop there. They used their fighting power to attack Gentile towns in Syria, Galilee, Idumea, and east of Jordan in which small communities of Jews had been harassed during the Jewish revolt against the Seleucid Government. The vengeance of Judas was appallingly barbaric with many of the gentiles being put to the sword. Dispersed colonies of Jews were brought back to Judea in order to concentrate Palestinian Judaism, and Hellenists (Jews of Greek culture) in Jerusalem were persecuted, many fleeing to **Idumea**. This provoked a battle with Government forces in which the first Hasmonean brother, **Eleazar**, fell.

By mid 161 BC **Judas Maccabeus** was also killed by the Government forces of King Demetrius, leaving Jonathan, Simon and John to carry on the revolt. The Maccabees and their followers, again were driven into the wilderness where John soon met his death, while Judea came under a strong military occupation.

It is debatable whether Judas was motivated purely by religious fervour, or whether the aggrandisement of his house became his main impetus. Under his successor, his brother **Jonathan**, the policy of the house of Hasmon was thoroughly **worldly**, and suffered open antagonism from the more religious section of the nation.

The result of the Hasmonean revolt was “the

establishment of a dynasty by whose dominion the national life was poisoned, and whose presence at the altar the religious denounced as a pollution."

BC 158 saw Jonathan establish his headquarters at Michmas and become leader of the Judean countryside. Then c. 152 BC due to political conflict within the Seleucid kingdom, King Demetrius in order to gain Jonathan's support, permitted him to re-enter Jerusalem and maintain a military force, except that the citadel remained in possession of the royal garrison. Jonathan repaired the fortifications of the city and erected a fort for his own fighting men.

The Hasmonean family had resolved to possess itself of the High Priesthood, and at the Feast of Tabernacles in October 152 BC **Jonathan the Hasmonean** first appeared before his people in the sacred vestments of the High Priest. The Seleucid Throne had been taken over by Alexander Balas who elevated Jonathan to a high order. Added to the authority he possessed as High Priest, **Jonathan** was now given office under the Seleucid government, viz., the office of **Governor of Judea** in the king's name.

In 145 BC **Simon** was made **Governor of Palestine** which meant that the brothers had under their command both their national levies and the forces of the Palestinian province. They engaged in a series of military operations as officers of King Antiochus, their activities extending from Gaza to Damascus, and garrisoning strategic places with Jews. Jonathan is also said to have negotiated with **Rome**, the rising power of the West. A policy of expansion pushed new settlements of Jews beyond the limits of Judea.

Two years later Jonathan was suddenly captured and killed by the Syrian general, Tryphon, who also usurped the Seleucid Throne. Simon, the last of the five Hasmonean brothers, took up the inheritance. As the Seleucid kingdom fell to pieces, the Jewish State became free, Jerusalem beginning a new era, Simon being "High Priest and General and Ruler of the Jews.". In accordance with the *expansion policy*, at Gezer and Joppa the heathen population was expelled and replaced by Jews.

Twenty years after Judas had fallen in battle at Eleasa, the Hasmonean house had eliminated all competitors in the Jewish state; which it had freed from foreign control. In 141 BC, an assembly of the Jewish people at Jerusalem ratified the High Priesthood which the Hasmoneans had held by the nomination of Gentile kings, making Simon

Chief of the people and High-priest "forever (i.e. his office would be perpetuated in his sons), until there should arise a prophet worthy of credence" (i.e. until a new leader should be revealed by God).

In 135 BC Simon was murdered by his son-in-law who sought the first place. His plan was foiled by **Simon's son John** who was installed in Jerusalem in his father's place. He joined Antiochus Sidetes in war against the Parthians, leading a Jewish contingent himself. After Sidetes' death during this war the Jewish State was to enjoy 65 years of complete independence, as free as it had been in the Old Kingdom of Judah. **High Priest John** was surnamed **Hyrcanus**. He pushed the frontiers of the Jewish State north, south and west.

He conquered the Samaritans taking their city of Shechem and destroyed their rival Temple on Mt. Gerizim. He took Medeba from the Moabites and conquered the **Edomites**. **His policy in regard to the Edomites was to have far-reaching consequences**. He compelled them to conform to the Jewish Law, to become Jews by circumcision. Jews of purer blood claimed a higher social prestige and spoke of the **Edomite citizens as "half Jews"**. John Hyrcanus died in 105 BC after a prosperous reign of 30 years. He is considered to have been all that a pious prince should be and as representing a splendid High Priesthood.

His son, Judah Aristobulus, was the first to assume the Greek title of royalty. He subdued the **Itureans** and **forcibly circumcised them**, thus increasing the numbers of proselyte Jews within the nation. His brother Alexander Janneus by continual wars extended his territory at the expense of internal stability.

From the time when Johathan, the son of Mattathias, took over the struggle for his **own** interests rather than God's, the Scribes and Hasidim had withdrawn themselves from the Party of the Maccabees/Hasmonians. The Hasmoneans had no right to the High Priesthood and their politics aimed at the establishment of a national monarchy, which was contrary to the whole spirit and teaching of the second Theocracy. God and the Law would be forced into the background in a warlike kingdom. "How could the Scribes hope to retain their importance if temple and synagogue were cast into the shade by politics and clash of arms?"

It was considered repellent that the king, usually leading his army in violence, should carry out the High Priest's

ceremonies, and his profane officers be the holders of high spiritual offices. The idea of God and the Law, as opposed to that of an earthly fatherland, caused even the common people to range themselves on the side of the Party of the Scribes (i.e. the Pharisees) as against the Hasmonean Party (the Sadducees).

Alexander Janneus had kept the Pharisees in submission until his death in 79 BC but under his widow, Queen Salome, the High Priesthood passed to her son Hyrcanus II, while she remained Queen. In home policies she allowed the Scribes (Pharisees) paramount influence while maintaining absolute authority in external affairs herself.

The origin of the Sanhedrin had been as the Municipal Council of Jerusalem, but its authority extended over the entire Jewish community. With the elders of the city, the ruling Priests (Sadducees) had the greatest number of seats and votes. The number of Scribes (Pharisees) was much less but under Queen Salome their spiritual influence in the administration was considerable.

Led by Aristobulus, the second son of Alexander Janneus, the Sadducees carried out an insurrection as the Queen lay on her deathbed in 69 BC. Hyrcanus II was then compelled to resign from the High Priesthood and the good understanding between the civil government and the Scribes/Pharisees came to an end.

At this time a more sinister influence was to take effect which would have far-reaching consequences.

(To be continued)

(Ed.)

**Oh Thou whom we adore! To bless our earth again,
Assume thine own almighty power, and o'er the nations
reign.**

**The world's desire and hope, all power to Thee is given;
Now set the last great empire up, Eternal Lord of Heaven.**

**A gracious Saviour, thou wilt all thy children bless;
And every knee to thee shall bow, and every tongue confess.**

**According to thy word now be thy grace revealed,
And with the knowledge of the Lord let all the earth be filled.**

(Charles Wesley)



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MONTHLY NOTES

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(NOTE: The views expressed in the following articles are not necessarily endorsed by the British-Israel World Federation (Victorian Headquarters) Inc.)

CHRIST THROUGHOUT THE SCRIPTURES

The Bible reveals Jesus Christ as speaking the *Words of God* and performing the *Works of God*.

He spoke the Words in creation when God said, "Let there be.....," and there was..... (Gen. Ch. 1)
He is The Word of God made flesh.

As Jehovah-Elohim He fashioned Adam for a special purpose (Gen. Ch. 2). He orchestrated Israel's Exodus from Egypt (Ex. Chs. 12 - 14); leading Israel into the wilderness and speaking to them audibly as their Law Giver (Ex. 19:16-19). He ruled Israel as their invisible King dwelling in the Holy of Holies and demonstrating His presence by the Glory Cloud (Ex. 40:17-38).

As Jehovah-Jesus He became "a Man approved of God.... by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by Him" (Acts 2:22).

He became the perfect Sin Offering, and was identified by the Apostle John who exclaimed, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." (John 1:29)

As Israel's Kinsman Redeemer (ref. Ruth ch. 4) He paid the ransom for them as a national entity, restoring to them their potential inheritance in His land (Gal. 4:4-5). As the Perfect Sacrifice for the sin of the world He opened the way for all men to approach God in repentance and faith (John 14:6):

Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

Only through Him can anyone know God as a close and loving Father and as the Guardian of time and eternity.

As the coming King of kings He will destroy the works of the Devil. **"And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war..... And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The WORD OF GOD..... And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS."** (Ref. Rev. 19:11-16)

Finally, the Inestimable Sacrifice having expunged the sin which separates man from God, the Apostle John sees in a vision **"the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband."** And he hears **"a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.**

And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away." (Rev. 21:1-4)

The Rev. W. Pascoe Goad puts it this way:-

[Quote]

"From the beginning of His world-making activity before the advent of man, on through all the ages of the Adamic period to its ultimate finish, and still on through the world-making activity which produces the New Heaven and the New Earth (Rev. 21), the stately progress of Jehovah-Jesus is revealed until swallowed up in the triumphant glory of Eternity."

For it is He whom God:

**"Hath appointed Heir of all things
By Whom also He made the worlds,
Who being the brightness of His glory,
And the express image of His person,
And upholding all things by the word of His power,**

When He had by Himself purged our sins,
Sat down on the right hand of
The Majesty on high -
Being made so much better than the Angels,
As He hath by inheritance obtained
A more excellent name than they.”
(Hebrews ch. 1)”

What a privilege it is to know and serve such a One as this!
(Ed.)

“LITE” CHRISTIANITY

What a distortion of Truth is the popular version of Christianity today, described in “*Faithworks*” (Sun. Herald Sun 13.06.04) as “Lite” Christianity.

[Quote] “In this new, culturally palatable environment, God is in his heaven and really doesn’t need to be bothered.....no serious references [are made] to guilt, repentance, forgiveness, suffering or evil. You can have your moral truths and I can have mine. Just try not to hurt anyone, never be judgmental and all will be OK. Under post-modern Christianity (the Lite variety that is less filling), you can even acquire lots of stuff without worry. After all you’ve earned it. But remember, don’t bother God. There has really been no need to since man supplanted Him as provider for our prosperity and freedom..... [But] something is wrong with a faith that avoids proclaiming truth. Are they mocking Christianity or merely ignorant of its essential nature?” [End Quote]

The answer is that they are ignorant of its Founder and Teacher, Jesus Christ the Lord!

No wonder blasphemy is the order of the day. No wonder Britain has one of the lowest levels of belief in the world. No wonder we constantly read of increasing violence and fragmentation in society.

The *Sunday Herald Sun* 30.05.04, featured two articles which are illustrative of this. One discussed the fact that the Dispute Settlement Centre of Victoria has reported a rise of over 5,000 disputes in two years. As people are not “talking to each other” the State Government is to examine the setting up of a range of alternative dispute resolution services. Neighbourhood feuds are becoming increasingly widespread across Victoria. Fencing heights, styles and costs; trees, shrubs and creepers, were the main causes, with neighbour behaviour also a bone of contention.

Another article stated that the results of research by a Melbourne clinical psychologist and family therapist, show that it has never been more difficult for students to learn and teachers to instruct. Shorter concentration spans were a big issue, with teachers constantly needing to keep classes interested with "a variety of dynamic and vibrant ideas." This necessitated "ongoing professional development and refined university training" for teachers. It was suggested that "schools were facing the symptoms of society's problems generated by television, movies, computer games and violence." "Primary school and even kindergarten teachers are worried about violence from kids and parents." For some children school was seen as a refuge from home. The OECD has also reported that the above is part of an international trend that is expected to get worse. An illustration of this appeared in another paper under the headline, "Girl, 11, cuts friend's throat as child crime soars in Japan."

In the days of the Adamic civilization prior to the Noachic Flood we are told: "**The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence** (Gen 6:11).

Violence in our world today extends not only to wars between nations but reaches into society as a whole, affecting our very homes and families.

Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself (Lev. 19:18) was a Commandment of Jehovah which was basic to Israel's foundation society. It is basic to the teachings of the New Testament and has been a foundation teaching of Christian societies for 2000 years. In one short generation this has been replaced by the teaching that one should do what seems best for, or pleases, oneself without regard to other people. It is this teaching that has engendered the selfishness, greed, lack of self discipline, the widespread breakdown in marriage and even some of the growing violence against children within the home situation.

How true are the words of Proverbs 14:12:

There is a way which seemeth right [is pleasing] unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death. (Ed.)

PLEASE NOTE:

A **Mr. Andre van der Linden** is pursuing through legal channels, a way to prevent the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ being used in the media as a swear word, expletive, etc. Featured in the *Sunday Herald Sun* 25.04.04, this has attracted wide interest, however, as a pensioner Mr. van der Linden has not the financial resources which will be required to fight such bodies as the ABA. Please support him in prayer. For those who feel led to assist him financially, his address is: **9 Zegelin Road, WARANGA, VIC 3612, AUSTRALIA.** Tel (03) 5854 8289. (Ed.)

ECONOMICS
A PHASE OF DIVINE LAW
by Dr. D. S. Milne
(Part 2)

THE PROBLEM OF DISTRIBUTION

In the last Study we saw that God's law provides economic freedom and security for all. In Israel, the land itself was divided among all the people, each family with its inheritance. Those who can grow their own food, build their own houses, and make their own clothing have economic freedom, which is more real than mere political freedom.

For those who practise self-sufficient husbandry, the problem of distribution of food is of the simplest. It is consumed where it is grown. Any dependents of the family, aged, young, or crippled, would receive their share from the common store. Surplus might be traded in the nearest town for clothing or other manufactures. Trade might extend far and wide, as indeed it did in the days of Solomon.

In such a community could there be poverty? There might be drought, fire, or even sloth and drunkenness. There might be many ways to poverty, none of which was specified in the books of the law. Poverty there was, because laws were framed for its relief. These laws may be briefly summarised as the law of gleaning, the law of lending free of interest, and law of forgiveness of debts.

The corn must not be too closely harvested from the field, the grapes must not be too well garnered, the olive trees must not be shaken. The poor must be permitted to come and glean the generous remainder.

If any person required a loan of either money or goods, the loan must be free of interest. "Usury" is the word, and some in our day regard usury only as excessive interest; but the meaning of the Bible is clear, for it is called "usury or increase." Any rate of increase would be usury. Israelites were sadly apt to disobey this law, but the sinfulness of usury was admitted. It was not respectable as in our time. Ezekiel (22:6-12) classes usury and increase with carrying tales to shed blood, adultery, and incest. The 15th Psalm draws a portrait of a gentleman. "He putteth not out his money to usury."

The seventh year was called the **Year of Release**. Read about it in the 15th chapter of Deuteronomy. Not only were all slaves released from bondage, but in that year all debts must be forgiven. “**If there be among you a poor man thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother: but thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him sufficient for his need, in that which he wanteth. Beware that there be not a thought in thy wicked heart, saying, The seventh year, the year of release is at hand..... Thou shalt surely give him, and thine heart shall not be grieved when thou givest unto him: because that for this thing the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, and in all that thou puttest thine hand unto.**”

Plenty to say about the duty of the lender. Not a word about how the poverty arose - bad fortune, laziness or sin - the cause of the poverty is not mentioned. The great fact is that here is a case of need, and here are the means of satisfying that need, and no question of loss must be considered. Out of the surplus of one is made up the lack of the other. We are not exalting laziness or sin. “**The wicked borroweth, and payeth not again: but the righteous sheweth mercy, and giveth.**” (Psalm 37:21) The point is that the purpose of the law is to satisfy the needs of every creature. Economic independence for all: but should that for some reason be lost, free sharing by those who are able.

This forgiveness of debts was taken by Jesus as an illustration of God’s forgiveness of our sins. “**Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.**” A worldly Church has altered those words. “**Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us.**” (Matt. 6:12) Forgive an insult or an injury? Yes, that is possible. But forgive a debt? Why, that would destroy the sanctity of contract! Yet so important in God’s creative plan is the forgiveness of sins that His Son took the form of sinful flesh to pay the price for us. Sacrificial love is in it. And in the Divine system of economics is the same element of sacrificial love: free sharing and forgiveness of debts.

But many, even among Christians, argue that the laws of lending ~~fee~~ of interest and forgiveness of debts applied only in the case of poverty. They do not apply, they say, to modern industrial transactions. These people forget that modern times differ from the days of Israel in the lack of economic security. The law provided an initial security for all, and only those who had fallen away need borrow. With

us, most are in need. Every man building a house, starting a business, or taking up land is a man in need. He needs a loan.

Conditions of industrialism and mass production have reduced most people to poverty. Very few individuals are in the position to lend large sums. Most lending is done by banks, insurance companies, State Advances, or churches. These institutions have departed from the principles as well as the letter of God's law. A pledge is always taken for debt, interest is always charged, and debts are never forgiven. God's answer to the problem of distribution is giving, free lending, and forgiveness of debts. By these methods the goods would be distributed quickly to all in need. The methods of finance capitalism limit loans to the creditworthy and ignore human need. Distribution of production is frustrated and impeded. The wheels of production are retarded, and in times of depression come to a standstill.

The social credit analysis of modern industrial production reveals a gap between the volume of production and purchasing power distributed as wages and dividends. During war, it is true, purchasing power exceeds the supply of available goods, for the people who stay at home are paid for producing, not consumable goods, but munitions which those who go away, are paid for distributing free to the enemy. But with peace, if the productive powers of the nation are not hampered by finance, by Government or by strikes, it should not be long before there is such a volume of consumer goods as once more to exceed the purchasing power.

Then, to obey the principles of God's law, the surplus should be *given* to those who are in need. Let us begin with the aged, the invalids, the children and the mothers. Let the Government issue credit and give it, sufficient for the need. As the tide of production rises, let the Government issue credit, as a national dividend, to all the people, sufficient to distribute the surplus.

The Divine laws of distribution depend upon individual love. As Jesus said, the chief law is to love God, "and the second is like unto it. Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two laws hang all the law and the prophets." That is why the Kingdom of God can be attained only by its citizens being born again. Selfishness and greed have no place in a Christian order.

But in those days the means of production were in the

hands of individuals with the power to disburse the products. Now, that power is limited to sharing a few vegetables with neighbours. The means of production belong more and more to the community. Manufactures are financed by companies. Even farmers are little more than cogs in the wheel. Their production depends also upon makers of farm machinery and clothing. The interlocking of effort is so complete that in effect we are all units in the scheme of production by the community.

The result of this is to remove the responsibility of distributive justice from the individual to the community. The individual conscience becomes the community conscience. The aged and the sick are less a family responsibility and more a social responsibility. A community of loving individuals would see that pensions are adequate. Indeed, we all have the will to increase pensions, and they would be increased had the Government the power to apply the Divine law and issue credit according to need. The hindrance is the debt and interest system of finance which restricts the power of creating credit to the trading banks. Let Government take the sovereign power of issuing currency and credit, and then it would be able to carry out the wishes of a benevolent people.

A STABLE VALUE OF MONEY

In ancient times money took the form of unminted silver or gold. The talent and the shekel were units of weight. Gold and silver were weighed out. When Abraham bought a field from Ephron, he “**weighed to Ephron the silver, which he had named in the audience of the sons of Heth, four hundred shekels of silver, current money with the merchant.**”

(Gen. 23:16)

In measuring corn or oil, standard measures were used, the *ephah* and the *hin*. A dishonest merchant could have two weights; a *small shekel* if he were paying out silver, and a *heavier shekel* if he were receiving silver. He might have two measures; a *large ephah* if he were buying corn, or a *smaller ephah* if he were selling. In this way the value of money could be manipulated by the possessor of an evil heart. These things apparently were done, for in Deuteronomy 25:13-16, the practice is sternly forbidden. “**Thou shalt not have in thy bag divers weights, a great and a small. Thou shalt not have in thine house divers measures, a great and a small. But thou shalt have a perfect and just weight, a perfect and just measure shalt thou have: that thy days may be lengthened in the land which the LORD thy God**

giveth thee. For all that do such things, and all that do unrighteously, are an abomination unto the LORD thy God.'

Well that is one thing about which we are very particular. We have inspectors of weights and measures and it is a serious offence to give short measure. But stay! The *talent* and the *shekel* were used to weigh money. Do our inspectors concern themselves with the value of money? Have they the power to take action if the \$ of today buys only 50 cents worth of goods as compared with the \$ a few years ago? They have no control over the value of money. That is for financiers, and they are a law unto themselves.

Power and large profits accrue to those who know how to manipulate the value of money, and with liberal donations to party funds, there might be a knighthood or even a peerage in it. A grocer who is discovered with a false balance may go to gaol, but the financier who raises or lowers the value of the \$ wins honour and applause. But, mark you, "they that do such things are an abomination to the Lord thy God."

When the issue of currency and credit is limited by the amount of gold reserve in the bank, there is no true relationship between the volume of money and the volume of goods. There might be an abundant harvest, but unless the amount of money available is increased, the price of wheat or apples, or whatever it may be will fall. The relationship between the *ephah* and the *shekel* has been upset, just as surely as if it had been deliberately and dishonestly done.

The method of orthodox finance in dealing with a too bountiful harvest in order to maintain prices is to destroy the abundance by dumping apples in the sea, or burning wheat in locomotives. The obvious and sensible remedy is to issue more currency or credit to equate with the increased amount of the harvest. Applied as a national dividend, the bounty of the apple crop or the wheat harvest would be immediately distributed to an appreciative people. It should be the business of a board of experts appointed by Government to keep a close watch on the volume of production and the available purchasing power, and to advise upon the issue or curtailment of new credit.

So far in this and previous studies, reference has been made to the issue of credit only for consumption; age pensions, family allowances, national dividends. It is fitting now to describe a simple method of issuing credit for production, an automatic measure of value.

Each stage of production would be financed by a credit from the Reserve Bank, such credit to be cancelled when the loan is repaid. The farmer would require long-term credits, but manufacturer, wholesaler, and retailer could use short-term commercial bills, which may be discounted for a very small rate to cover clerical expenses. As each transaction is completed, the bill is redeemed and the credit cancelled. The advance has been exactly according to the production, the commercial bill having acted as the measure of value.

The retailer is in rather a different position. If the wages of the people are sufficient to buy all the goods for sale, he simply repays his advance and keeps his profit. On the other hand, if the total wages distributed by industry be not sufficient to buy all the products of industry, the retailer cannot repay all his debt unless the Credit Authority, through the Reserve Bank, issues consumer credit to bridge the gap. All the goods would then be sold, the consumer credit being cancelled when the retailer repays his advance. Thus would be preserved the stability of the measure of value, the *just shekel* on the one hand, and the *just ephah* on the other hand.

The whole purpose of any economic system should be to supply the needs of every creature. If the harvest is bountiful, or the ingenuity and labour of men have produced large numbers of desirable and useful manufactured articles, and if there is not enough money to buy it all, the amount of money should be correspondingly increased.

The measure should not be lifeless gold in a vault, but the very goods themselves.

Thus we see the Divine wisdom of the ancient law of the **perfect and just measure of value**. Divine principles are never out of date. Truth and justice are the same in all ages. Conditions may vary from age to age, but if righteous principles are the guide, it is always possible to devise a mechanism to suit the new conditions.

We have seen that in God's law human need must be freely and gladly supplied, without usury, and without perpetual debt. God's law enjoins lending for consumption, protects the consumer, and promises prosperity to the forgiving creditor. God's law obeyed would provide ample for all, freedom from debt and crushing taxation. Therefore "seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." (Matt. 6:33)

It is sometimes objected that the Social Credit idea of issuing credit and distributing it as pensions and national dividends would encourage laziness - "money for nothing." But it is not money for nothing. It is credit issued to represent something that has already been produced in excess of available purchasing power.

Whereas it is evil for a trading bank to issue credit out of what the bank does not possess, it is right and proper for the people through their Government to issue credit to distribute that which they have already produced. Should the people forget that their standard of living depends upon their work, and should they be tempted to sit back and enjoy the national dividend without pulling their weight, a rude awakening would be in store. With decreasing effort, the production would fall, and the national dividend would disappear.

But we have seen that new era, or the Kingdom of God, must be a Christian order and that Christ's standards must prevail. Worldly standards, the lust of the flesh, the desire of the eyes, and the pride of life, lead only to self-seeking, greed, and discord. Jesus set a new standard.

"Whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: even as the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." (Matt. 20:26-28)

Imbued with the spirit of service, every citizen will be eager to give the best to the common weal. There will be no more friction between sectional interests. In obedience to Divine law, there will be economic freedom and security, there will be no longer the spur of fear to grab and hoard. There will be no longer competition to gain selfish advantage, but rather there will be competition to render service, and the added joy and pride of the skilful craftsman, or husbandman.

"And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men." (Col. 3:23)

[1]

THE GREED OF BABYLON

A small article appeared in a Melbourne paper which revealed that a gender discrimination lawsuit against the retailing giant **Wal-Mart**, America's largest employer with more than 3000 stores, can proceed to trial and could result in a bill of up to one billion US\$. The charges are that Wal-Mart discriminated against women in pay and promotion and had retaliated against anyone who complained. It is

claimed that management bullied staff into overtime without pay and breached child labour laws.

An article in the *American Free Press 07.06.04* gave the background to this which highlights the evils of our present "Babylonian economy". Under the title "Wal-Mart Sweatshops Going Global" by Richard Walker, it states: [Quote]"After adding the entire state of Vermont to the endangered species list of ruined local economies and having been rejected for that reason in several other cities, Wal-Mart is looking to export its slave shops.

"Wal-Mart wants stores in every country in Europe and will consider opening its own outlets as well as making big acquisitions, according to the retail giant's chief executive," During his first trip to Brussels, Lee Scott, Wal-Mart's CEO, told *The Financial Times* in an interview, Wal-Mart would consider expanding in Europe via Asda, the British supermarket chain it bought for \$120 billion five years ago. "I can't think of any country in Europe that we wouldn't want to be in over the long course of time. Our growth internationally will be a combination of strategic acquisitions and green field opportunities."

In Vermont, Richard Moe, president of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, put the state on the "endangered" list, saying Vermont has four Wal-Marts, and plans five more. "Vermont is uniquely a state of small towns, and many of these downtowns would be decimated by this," Moe said. "A lot of small businesses just disappear in the face of a huge Wal-Mart."

Localities across the country are resisting Wal-Mart because of its adverse effects. Wal-Mart will undersell local competitors, even at a loss, until the competition dies. Profits are not spent locally, but go to headquarters. It advertises by junk mail, not in local media.

Wal-Mart prices are low for many reasons. Its "sales associates" earn a minimum wage with no health care or other benefits. Many qualify for Medicaid and other public benefits, which amounts to a taxpayer subsidy.

Wal-Mart has used illegal aliens to lower wages, and employees are forced to work unpaid overtime.

Wal-Mart buys its stock, not from American companies, but primarily from China and other third-world countries where labour is cheap and industry is not burdened by safety and environmental regulations. When Wal-Mart buys in poor countries, it demands lower prices at huge quantities, forcing slave wages down further.

But resistance has emerged nationwide..... Wal-Marts are being resisted as the public becomes aware of the ultimate high price of cheap products. [End Quote]

Unfortunately, manipulation of the economic climate forces many people to seek the cheapest goods and so to support this type of evil. But Isaiah 5:8-9 says "Woe unto them that join house to house, that lay field to field", that in the end such "houses" shall be "desolate, without inhabitant."

Fortunately, by the grace of God, we have the more sure word of prophecy which assures us that our present Babylonian System will come to an end:

**Alas, alas that great city Babylon, that mighty city!
for in one hour is thy judgment come.**

**And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no man buyeth their merchandise any more.....
Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all.**

(Rev. 18:10-11, 21)

(Ed.)

OUR CHANGING WORLD

The first decade-by-decade forecast was given recently for the rivers that drain the great glaciers of the Himalayas. It was a sombre report to the effect that the rivers of northern India and Pakistan will flow strongly for up to 40 years then die away, first causing flood, then famine. Glacier meltdown has already increased to up to 30 percent.

A three-year study by British, Indian and Nepalese researchers indicates that in 40 years time few glaciers will remain and severe water problems will arise. The severest impact will be in Pakistan where half the country's crops are irrigated by the Indus River. Flows could double then shrink to half current levels, or less, by the end of this century.

The decline in the Ganges' flow will disrupt a vast Indian government project aimed at avoiding drought by diverting water from the northern rivers to the arid south.

Disturbing forecasts predict drinking water shortages in the Americas as glaciers in the Andes and Rocky Mountains also melt. (Information from *New Scientist*, 8.5.04)

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MORE DANGEROUS DRUGS

The *American Free Press* 07.06.04 reported that six US soldiers have been diagnosed with brain damage as a result of an anti-malaria drug (*Mefloquine*) they took in Iraq and Afghanistan. It has "serious risks" which have not been tracked by military officials or other government agencies.

- Sen. D.Feinstein (D-Calif.)

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THE TAKEOVER BEGINS

In issue No.628 we followed the history of the Jewish Nation from the death of Antiochus Epiphanes c. 165 BC until the death of Queen Salome in 69 BC. The Scribes/Pharisees had placed Hyrcanus on the Throne after his mother's death, but the Sadducees supported his younger brother Aristobulus. After a battle near Jericho in the same year Hyrcanus agreed to withdraw from public life and Aristobulus ascended the Throne of Judea.

By 65 BC the Roman General Pompey had conquered Syria and the neighbouring districts, which had made up the territory of the Seleucid Empire founded in 312 BC by Nicator, one of Alexander the Great's generals. Syria, which included Palestine, was annexed as a province of Rome. In 64 BC Pompey travelled to Damascus where he was met by over 12 kings and many ambassadors. Most had political requests. Aristobulus, King of the Jews, also sent an embassy to Pompey at Damascus, seeking Roman recognition for his kingship, but it was not granted. This request was prompted by the dissensions which prevailed at that time in Judea, dissensions excited by the Edomite Antipater.

Under the heading "*The Herodian Dynasty*" Paul Goodman writes in his "*History of the Jews*" Revised and Enlarged by Israel Cohen, pp. 26-29, 1951, as follows:

[Quote] The fall of the Hasmoneans was brought about by the calamitous intervention of Rome, and accelerated by the rise of a family of foreign descent which was to rule the Jews in the last days of their independence. In a fatal moment, both the contending brothers, Hyrcanus II and Aristobulus II, decided to invoke the assistance of all-powerful Rome. Their representatives appeared before Pompey at Damascus, and pleaded the respective merits of the aspirants for the throne, while the long-suffering people, too, had taken care to send a deputation to Pompey, asking him to relieve them of both unwelcome rulers.

As the result, Pompey marched on Jerusalem, and took the defended and fortified Temple by storm (63 BC) [putting 12,000 Jews to the sword, including the priests who were offering the sacrifices]. On entering the Holy of Holies, where the High Priest only appeared once a year (on the Day of Atonement), Pompey was struck with wonder and awe at the entire absence of any visible representation of the Deity in that mysterious sanctuary.

Strangely enough; he left the vast treasures of the Temple untouched, and reinstated Hyrcanus II in the dignity of High Priest and ruler of Judea.

Hyrcanus, who was to be burdened with the priesthood for a long and stormy period of 40 years (BC 79-40) was a weak and easy-going man, altogether unfitted for the exposed parts he was called upon to play. Throughout he was instigated and supported by a crafty, self-seeking Edomite, Antipater, who held the reins of government while his nominal master was made to serve his deeply-laid schemes. [Many Jews were attracted to his party].

These efforts culminated by Hyrcanus being put out of the way, and in the ultimate election by the Roman Senate of Antipater's son, Herod, as King of Judea.

The reign of Herod, called the Great (37- 4 BC) constitutes a long series of murders and outrages. He killed a number of the Sanhedrin, the chief religious and judicial tribunal of the Jews, as well as several of his ten wives, among them the beautiful Mariamne the Hasmonean, and a number of his own children. As Augustus once put it, it was better to be such a man's swine than his son.

Swayed by unscrupulous ambition and fierce jealousy, he shrank from no crime which would further his aim or satisfy his suspicion. In order to ingratiate himself with his Roman masters, he built a number of Grecian cities in honour of the emperors, and introduced un-Jewish customs, such as Greek games and combats with wild beasts, into Judea. To flatter his vanity, he rebuilt the Temple in Jerusalem on a magnificent scale, and otherwise comported himself with regal pomp. As he lived, so he died. During his last days he planned to throw the whole nation into mourning on his death, by slaying their most prominent representatives.

Herod was succeeded by his son, Archelaus, but, as the result of an appeal to Rome, Augustus divided Herod's kingdom and apportioned Judea proper, Idumea, and Samaria to Archelaus, who only received the title of ethnarch.

While the Herodian family was contending for the sovereignty, the Jewish people experienced a time of great tribulation. The country was in a state of anarchy, subjected to massacre and pillage by Jewish friend and Roman foe. While the so-called Zealots were patriots who

considered fair all means that went to rid the country of the hateful foreigner, they became mixed up with doubtful and dangerous elements, like the Sicarii (dagger men), who used patriotism as a cloak for all manner of crime and outrage. Archelaus' reign of nine years was full of misery. He was ultimately summoned to Rome and banished to Gaul, and, with his departure, Judea sank into a Roman province, administered by a procurator resident in Caesarea, and subject to the authority of the Prefect of Syria. [End quote]

Divisions Within Jewry

Since the times of the Maccabean revolt against the tyranny of Antiochus Epiphanes, and the stand against the subversive influences of Hellenism made by the bulk of the people, a division of the Jews into religious parties had developed. These were coloured and guided by political sympathies and tendencies. At the time of Herod these had culminated in two opposing parties - the **Pharisees** and the **Sadducees** - who represented differing interpretations of Judaism.

The **Pharisees** succeeded the **Hasidim** "in the conscientious observance of the Torah of Moses and of its traditional development" among the Jews. They curbed the priestly and aristocratic pretensions of the **Sadducees** as well as their Hellenistic tendencies. They made the Sacred Writings the obligatory possession of every Jew, and their study a duty. They transferred the centre of religious life from the Temple (the Sacrifices and Priesthood), to the synagogue and the home. Perhaps this is why the prophetic meanings of the sacrifices were not understood in the context of the Sacrifice of Christ.

The **Essenes** grew out of a strict section of the **Pharisees**, who were of a more contemplative mind. Tired of political turmoil, they withdrew to secluded places such as the wilderness bordering the Dead Sea. Some became imbued with Oriental Theosophy which considered spirit and matter to be irreconcilable principles, and became involved in Gnostic teachings.

The **Scribes** attended to the extremely careful transcription of the **Scriptures**. They "translated the Hebrew original into the Aramaic vernacular and explained it to the people. Out of this grew the **Midrash** and **Haggas dah**, the homiletical and general exposition of Scripture, and the **Hallachah**, the legal decisions deduced from Mosaic and other enactments." The accumulated **Oral Traditions** were further developed by the **Elders**, then by the **Tannaim** (Teachers) who flourished from AD 10 - 220. (Ed.)

COMMENT ON IRAQ

(From: *AFP 07.06.04*)

One of the chief architects of the war in Iraq is now saying the United States made a mistake turning the liberation of the country into an occupation. "I would be the first to acknowledge we allowed the liberation [of Iraq] to subside into an occupation. And I think that was a grave error, and in some ways a continuing error," said **Richard Perle**, the former chair of the influential Defence Policy Board.

FRUSTRATION, DESPERATION & BLAME IN IRAQ

[Quote]

While the major political parties in Washington point accusing fingers at each other over the Abu Ghraib prison scandal they ignore the real lessons Americans need to learn from this episode.

For too long, the digital age has encouraged us to think of war as a video game. Images of cruise missiles with pin point accuracy have sanitized what is brutal, bloody and costly in terms of human lives. War is not a celluloid spectacle, as Hollywood movies might tend to make us believe. It is about broken bodies, shattered limbs and suffering. It is also about man's inhumanity to man.

War often makes people dysfunctional, irrespective of their motives. It erodes sensibilities and sometimes leads us into a surreal world in which reality can quickly be suspended. It can even be difficult for the rest of us as observers to separate the good guys from the bad guys, especially when bombs begin exploding the comrades are murdered in cold blood and we all feel a genuine need to retaliate.

What we must learn is that US policy makers should not confuse the role of our military and assume that its job is nation building and bringing democracy to far-flung parts of the globe. Our military is trained to defend us and to deliver overwhelming force against our enemies. It is not the world's policeman. Combat soldiers are not trained for traffic stops and bringing security to the towns and cities of Iraq. The term "policing" should be applied to those professionally trained for that role - policemen.

The Abu Ghraib scandal also raises the important principle of responsibility, and so far that has only been applied in legal terms to the lower ranks. There was the suspension from duty of Brig. Gen. Janis Karpinski, but she claims she was not really in control of the prison - that her authority was eroded by the decisions of others higher up the command chain.

So what about those at the top of the civilian and military hierarchies?

Are they going to be held accountable? Are they not like the CEOs of corporations who are ultimately responsible for what happens on their watch? The abuse at Abu Ghraib was not an isolated event - the actions of a few. Evidence shows that it was part of a special programme that had its roots in Afghanistan and Guantanamo. Those who sanctioned such a programme, be they military or civilian, must not be allowed to sacrifice others in the lower ranks of the military as scape goats.

But should we lay the blame fairly and squarely on the US military for this mess? The answer to that question may be simpler than we think. The US military did not advocate or sanction this war, and that is a fact that has been articulated by retired generals like Anthony Zinni, who worked within the Bush administration and was its front man in the Middle East. But when the commander-in-chief and the neo-conservatives demanded that the military invade Iraq, it did its duty as it has always done.

However, the military did not want to go to war with Iraq because there was not adequate planning for it, and the numbers of troops needed to occupy Iraq once it was liberated were grossly understated. When it became clear the military assessment was correct, it was too late to change course and the military was quickly faced with the burden of finding a military solution to a political problem.

The developing insurgency and the inability of the military to define its enemy exacerbated the dilemmas facing our soldiers. How can an army defeat its enemy, play politics and deal with all the unseen variables in a place like Iraq? It can only do so if the civilian leadership is clear about strategy and objectives at the outset.

In many respects, Abu Ghraib is about frustration, about the arrests and detention of too many people in a desperate attempt to discover who the enemy is and what kind of threat it poses. [End quote]

CONGRESS BEHIND YET ANOTHER FOREIGN AID SWINDLE

by Congressman Ron Paul.

Yet another ill-conceived foreign aid swindle has become law in the form of the "Millennium Challenge Act," a disgraceful bill that sends billions of American tax dollars overseas even as our national debt explodes.

The Act combines the worst aspects of bad domestic policy and bad foreign policy, by wasting \$2.5 billion in 2005 alone while meddling in the affairs of foreign nations. Arrogant is the only word to describe a Congress that cares so little about its own taxpaying citizens while pretending to know what is best for the world.

The very name - Millennium Challenge Act - is highly insulting. It sounds like a PBS fundraising slogan or car company sales pitch. It's like calling an old used car a classic or an antique. Foreign aid welfare is still foreign aid welfare, no matter what jingoistic name is applied. There is nothing new or noble about. The Millennium Challenge Act is just another shabby federal programme that takes your money and gives it to somebody else.

Foreign aid doesn't help poor people: it helps foreign elites and US corporations that obtain the contracts doled out by those foreign elites. Everyone in Washington knows this, but the same lofty rhetoric is used over and over to sell foreign aid programmes to a gullible public. During a hearing about the new act last week, I asked one of the witnesses how much of the \$2.5 billion would actually go to US corporations. He enthusiastically answered that much of it would, making no attempt to downplay the corporate interests promoting expansion of our foreign aid programmes. Naked corporate welfare is bad enough, but corporate welfare in the guise of helping poor foreigners is indecent.

In many cases, foreign aid money simply distorts foreign economies and props up bad governments. In countries that pursue harmful economic policies, an infusion of US cash only exacerbates and prolongs problems. No amount of money can help nations that reject property rights, free markets and the rule of law.

In developing countries that pursue sound economic policies, foreign aid money is not needed - the international financial markets will provide the investment capital

necessary for economic growth. This capital will be invested according to sound investment strategies - designed to make a profit - rather than allocated according to the whims of government bureaucrats.

Foreign aid encourages socialism and statism. Because it is entirely geared toward foreign governments, it mandates economically devastating "public-private partnerships" in developing nations. If the private sector wants to see any of the money, it must be in partnership with government. Who knows how much of this money is wasted on those companies with the best political connections to the foreign governments in power? Foreign aid invites political corruption by creating a slush fund under the control of foreign governments.

The wisest approach to international economic development is for the United States to lead by example, by revitalizing the economic policies that led us to become wealthy in the first place. This means less government, less taxation, and no foreign meddling. The greatest gift we can send overseas is a demonstration of the freedom and prosperity possible only with limited government and the rule of law.

Americans are the most charitable people on Earth. Those who wish to help fight AIDS, famine and poverty overseas can choose from hundreds of private charities. Americans don't need a politician or rock star to tell them what causes are important. Most of all, they don't need to be forced to pay for foreign welfare at the barrel of a government gun.

[End quote]

MEN AND WOMEN ARE DIFFERENT!!

After all the nonsense we have been subjected to in past years, all the sex change operations, etc., scientists now believe that men and women are different - physically, mentally, emotionally, and that from the first weeks of conception being male or female affects every process of the body. Previously most male-female differences were attributed to the sex hormones but researchers now realize that there is much more to being male or female than simply hormones. Previously considered genetically barren apart from its male-determining gene, the Y chromosome has been discovered to contain a wealth of information. So far 78 gene differences between men and women have been found. Biological gender differences go very much deeper than ever thought possible. [Doesn't the Bible record indicate this?]

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OBEDIENCE

And Samuel said, "Has the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Surely, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed than the fat of rams.
(1 Sam. 15:22)

But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only,
deceiving your own selves.
(James 1:22)

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

Hear the words our God hath spoken,
Words of life, unfailing, true;
Careless one, prayerless one, hear and remember,
Jesus says, "Blessed are they that do."

All in vain we hear His commandments,
All in vain His promises too;
Hearing them, fearing them, will not bring blessing,
Blessed, O blessed are they that do!

They with joy may enter the City,
Free from sin, from sorrow and strife,
Sanctified, glorified, now and forever,
They may have right to the tree of life.

THE LAW OF THE SABBATH

by
Robert Graham, E.Sc.(Soc), M.A.

The Law of God, as given in the Decalogue (Ten Commandments), is the fundamental law of the Kingdom of God. The Ten Commandments, therefore can rightly be termed the Law of the Covenant - both Old and New. As writers such as Matthew Henry (the 17th century Biblical commentator) and Dr. Francis Nigel Lee (20th century reformed theologian and scholar) have clearly demonstrated, it is a law which had been in existence since the very beginning and will continue to the end, and beyond. For example:

“This law God had given to man before (it was written in his heart by nature); but sin had so defaced that writing, that it was necessary, in this manner, to revive the knowledge of it.” (Matthew Henry - *Commentary on Exodus 20*).

“..... that the Decalogue was merely re promulgated on Mount Sinai; that Christ revealed God’s laws in His Person and enjoined them upon His disciples; that the New Testament Church kept all Ten Commandments; and that God’s children will always keep the decalogue, even on the future earth to come.....” (F. N. Lee, *The Ten Commandments Today*.)

It has always been held that the Sabbath Day has a central place in the life of the nation, both as a sign of God’s grace and as a blessing to the community. And, indeed, the Law of God quite clearly and unquestionably lays down a perpetual obligation that, as a matter of obedience, the nation shall set aside one day in seven as holy to the Lord. Thus, this commandment establishes a legal holy day (i.e., a holiday) for the people of God in every generation.

The following points in connection with this commandment should also be noted.

The Sabbath Day is quite independent of moons and seasons, and is a day set apart and specified by law (God’s Law). It is thus dependent for its continuation and observance on the obedience of man to God’s Law.

It is also comprehensive in its application because Scripture commands that it be kept by all, including servants, strangers, and even domestic animals.

Finally, and this is a vital point, the Sabbath Day does not belong to man, nor to the state, nor to the church, but it belongs to God - for it is the Lord's Day. Mark 2:28: **Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath.** Thus its foundation does not lie in us, but in God's sovereignty and property rights over us and all creation (Gen. 1:1, Ps. 24:1)

The Scriptures indicate that when we commemorate the Sabbath Day we remember four basic events which are crucial to us, both as individuals and as a nation.

1. First, we remember the original creation (Gen. 2:2-3; Ex. 20:10-11).
2. Secondly, we recall our deliverance from the prison house of Egypt - i.e. our national redemption (Deut. 5:12-15).
3. Thirdly, we remember the resurrection of our Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. For it is the **Lord's Day**, and sanctified by His Resurrection; and thus it is now a Christian Sabbath and points us to the New Covenant of Jeremiah 31:31-34.

[NOTE: This is relevant to the period spoken of in the Revelation Ch. 20:4 when those sincere believers who take part in the First Resurrection **live and reign with Christ a thousand years** over a spiritually renewed Israel People (Jer. 31:31-34). The peace and equity under the rule of Jesus Christ as King will be experienced by His People Israel and will extend throughout the world as a demonstration to all nations of God's perfect government (Isa. Ch.2:1-5 & Ch.11).]

4. And, finally, it points us towards eternity, the eternal Sabbath for the people of God.

As Hebrews 4:9 puts it:

There remaineth therefore a rest for the people of God.
Or, as an alternative rendering has it,
So there is still a Sabbath-keeping for the people of God.
(*Sabbatismos - Greek*)

[The Companion Bible interprets this as "a Rest Day", i.e., the great day of "rest" under the rule of the great Priest-King upon His Throne (ref. Luke 1:31-33).]

It is interesting to note from the above, the continuity of the theme of creation and rest; and to observe that the Lord's Day (the Christian Sabbath) exists to commemorate the new act of creation (the re-creation) in Jesus Christ; and thus we declare that we recognize and believe in the first creation - for the second is founded on the first.

Indeed, the Lord's Day is both the first and the eighth day of the week and as such it is continually the beginning of the new, prefiguring eternity for us. As one writer has put it, "*it is an intrusion of eternity into time*" - since it speaks of God's redemptive work in history, centred in the incarnation, and thus points beyond history to eternity.

Another fundamental point about this fourth Commandment, often missed by Christians, is that not only does the Commandment stipulate rest, it also legislates work!

Six days shalt thou labour and do all thy work.

Man was also ordained and commanded to work to the glory of God, as a priest in God's world, in his vocation or calling, thus developing God's property (creation) in obedience to His Word. Indeed, this is the core meaning of the biblical task given to the nation of Israel, and hence her title and function as a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation (Ex. 19:6, 1 Pet. 2:9)

Therefore, *work and rest* are both enjoined by God. And there is a healthy balance between these two aspects of man's task if in obedience to God's Word.

Man's way especially in contemporary, modern societies, has been to attempt to have more "rest" (so-called) and less "work". But man's way leads to the impoverishment of true work and rest, and inevitably to frustration and discontent and death. Well does the Scripture say:

But the wicked are like the troubled sea,

when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt.

There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.

(Isa. 57:20-21)

because, of course, only those who truly know the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ have true rest - both in time and in eternity.

It was John a Lasco (the Polish reformer, friend of Archbishop Cranmer, who supervised the Foreign Protestant Congregation in London under King Edward VI) who said that it was by thus labouring and resting that he honoured his heavenly Father.

Now, one can summarise some of the benefits and blessings for the people of God from remembering the Sabbath Day:

1. It is a day of rest for God's people.
2. It is a time of grace and mercy, of blessing and benefit, to us and ours.

3. It is a memorial of the redemption of God's people through Christ's death and resurrection.
4. It is a holy day, separate for the preaching of, and instruction in, the Word of God.
5. It is prophetic of the coming eternal Sabbath of rest for the people of God.

But failure to keep this memorial of God's creation, providence and redemption, is also a sign of judgment. For it is indicative of a church and nation who have abandoned God's salvation in Christ, and who are in wilful rebellion against His Word.

In other words, when Sabbath observance becomes a burden and begins to lapse, it is a sign of the apostasy of God's people and prophetic of His judgment - viz., a society not under God and His grace, mercy and peace, but without God and consequently both restless and ultimately destructive of life itself.

Remember Moses' words about God's law and obedience to it:-

See, I have set before thee this day life and good,
and death and evil;

In that I command thee this day to love the LORD thy God,
to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments
and his statutes and his judgments,
that thou mayst live and multiply,
and the LORD thy God shall bless thee
in the land whither thou goest to possess it.

(Deut. 30:15-16)

Finally, with reference to this Fourth Commandment, recall the perceptive words of the 18th century Frenchman, Voltaire: *"If we wish to destroy the Christian religion, we must destroy the Christian Sabbath."*

And the French revolutionary regime attempted just that by setting up the 10 day cycle to destroy the 7 day week, and thus the Christian Sabbath, because, as we have seen above, it testified to the Creator-God of the Bible as the Sovereign Lord over all earthly authorities. [The 10 day cycle was a disaster resulting in a breakdown in the health of both men and animals.]

It was Matthew Henry who noted that:

By the sanctification of the Sabbath Israel declared that they worshipped the God that made the world, and so distinguished themselves from all other nations, who worshipped gods which they themselves had made."

(Originally from *The National Message*) []

Note:

The violation of the Sabbath Law is so widespread today that we, particularly the Christian-Israel peoples, can expect nothing but judgment until we repent and turn back in obedience to our God. How can we expect our Governments' endeavours to prosper when our nations are in such rebellion against God's Law. Our leaders might pray and attend Christian meetings, but until they turn back to their Bibles and legislate according to the principles laid down in God's Word, we can expect neither God's blessing nor His protection. (Ed.)

IN HONOUR OF THE GODS

The Olympia was the famous Greek religious, political and athletic centre, where the Olympic Games were held below the sacred Cronion Hill in Elis, Peloponnesus. It was a place of pagan worship from c.1000 BC where the Games grew as a festival in honour of Zeus.

The Centre was 250 yards in length and 200 yards in width. In it stood the great altar where divination and other practices took place; a small building where sacrifices were offered to the Achaean ancestor and hero, Pelops; the temple of the Great Mother of the gods; the Temple of Zeus; and the Temple of Hera where a 'sacred flame' (resurrected as the Olympic Torch) burned continually on the altar. There was also a council chamber for the presidents of the Games, a colonnade, 12 treasuries in which the various Greek states deposited their offerings, and numberless statues. Outside was a wrestling-ground, a covered race-track, and buildings for the use of the competitors in the games, who had to spend the last period of their training at Olympia.

The Olympic Games are said to have existed from immemorial antiquity but, in the 9th century BC Iphitus of Elis is said to have reorganized the Games, establishing peace between all Greek states during the festival. The organization of the worship and the games, both of which assumed national importance, made its administration a political matter in which the Eleans, Spartans, and the Pisans all took part between 776 BC and 393 BC. The rising popularity of the festival constantly tended to make Olympia the religious and social centre of Peloponnesian life - even of the whole Hellenic world.

After 570 BC it entered a phase of brilliant and secure existence as a recognized Panhellenic institution. It was to

remain a central expression of the Greek ideas that the body of man has a glory as well as his intellect and spirit, that body and mind should both be disciplined, and that it is by the harmonious discipline of both that men best honour Zeus. As the significance of Olympia was larger and higher than the political fortunes of the Greeks who met there, it survived the overthrow of Greek independence.

In the Macedonian and Roman periods the temples and contests of Olympia still interpreted the ideal at which free Greece had aimed. Philip of Macedon and Nero are among those whose names are recorded in the Altis, and are typical of a long series of visitors who paid homage to Olympia. Corboebus of Elis is the first recorded victor of Olympia in 776 BC, the last recorded name is that of an Armenian, Varastad, who was said to have been of the race of the Arsacidae.

No Olympian festival was held after 393 AD and by the 5th century AD the desolation of Olympia had set in. The Olympian Temple of Zeus is said to have been destroyed, either by the Goths or by Christian zeal, in the reign of Theodosius II (402-450 AD).

From 776 BC the games were held every four years, at the first full moon after the summer solstice, and lasted five days. The earliest and most important contest was the *stadion*, or short foot race of about 200 yards. It was the only event held from 776-728 BC. Other contests were added at different intervals - a race twice the length of the *stadion*, and another 24 times its length; wrestling; the pentathlum (running, leaping, throwing the quoit, the javelin, boxing); various chariot races; a foot race in heavy armour, and horse races, etc. At a later period competitions in music and poetry were also introduced.

Only free-born Greeks were allowed to compete. The prizes - wreaths from the sacred olive supposed to have been planted by Hercules - were presented to all the victors at the conclusion of the contests. Though the value of the prize was nothing in itself, the glory of an Olympic victory throughout Greece was so great that a victor obtained from his city a substantial reward in money and other privileges.

Other Greek Games were also held. The Isthmian Games were held at Corinth in honour of Poseidon from 523 BC on the 1st and 3rd year of each Olympiad until the sack of

Corinth in 146 BC. The Nemean Games held in the city of Nemea in honour of Zeus from 516 BC were held every two years. The Pythian Games instituted in 527 BC were held in honour of Apollo at Delphi every four years, and were usually limited to musical competitions.

The infamous Idumean Herod, King of the Jewish Nation from 31 BC until his death in 4 BC, a lavish erector of beautiful buildings, made Judea a first-rate kingdom, extending and protecting its frontiers with a cordon of castles and fortified towns, which even the Romans found hard to subdue. By his building projects he gave impetus to all forms of public life and amusement, and to heathen idolatry by erecting heathen temples, as well as a glorious palace and Temple at Jerusalem.

His gifts flooded the heathen world: gymnasia in Tripolis, Damascus, Ptolemais, and Nicopolis; theatres in Damascus and Sidon; an aqueduct in Laodicea, baths in Ascalon, temples in Tyre and Rhodes; colonnades in Tyre and Antioch, city walls for Byblos and Berytus; and to the horror of many Jews a theatre and amphitheatre at Jerusalem in the year 25 BC. Greek adventurers thronged to Jerusalem in hundreds to compete for the unusually valuable prizes by which Herod bribed their attendance. This called to mind the wicked High Priest Jason and his Hellenising party who, in the bad days of Antiochus Epiphanes, had “built a place of exercise at Jerusalem according to the customs of the heathen.”

Dean Farrar writes that Herod became, year after year, a profuse patron of heathen games. At almost every great gymnastic contest his riches supplied a “Herod’s prize.” One year he helped to revive the languishing Olympic festival, and presided at it in person; and he thought it right to spend huge sums on the quinquennial games in honour of Apollo, which had been established to commemorate the victory of Actium in 31 BC when Octavian won the decisive naval victory over Antony and Cleopatra.

Athens, Sparta, Nicopolis, Pergamum and Cos received ostentatious donations or prizes for their games; and had it not been for his permanent regal endowment, the ancient and famous Olympic contests would probably have come to an end.

As mentioned above the Olympic Games had died out during the 4th century BC, and by the 5th century AD earthquake, pillage, and neglect had desolated the ancient

site. However, after the site was excavated by German scholars between 1874 and 1881 AD the games were revived, being held in Athens in 1896, Paris in 1900, St. Louis 1904, London 1908, Stockholm 1912, etc.

It is only since 1986 that the *Marathon* has been run at the Olympics. This race commemorates the feat of Pheidippides, a soldier who in 490 BC ran 26 miles at top speed, to bring the news of the Greek victory over the Persians on the Plain of Marathon, to the people of Athens. Pheidippides fell dead after delivering his message.

Unhappily, the Games of modern times have been used as forums for political propaganda. The Berlin games of 1936 were used to promote Hitler's vision of the Master Race, and the 1952 and 1956 games in Helsinki and Melbourne took place under the Cold War menace, with countries withdrawing in order to gain political advantage. Mexico City, 1968, saw student riots and hundreds dead in the streets.

Threatened last minute boycotts by 20 countries forced Rhodesia out of the Munich games in 1972. This was followed by the Munich Massacre when the Israeli team was attacked by Black September terrorists, leaving 11 athletes and five terrorists dead. Taiwan was forced out of the Montreal Games of 1976 by China's demands, and 22 countries withdrew their 441 athletes at the last minute because of New Zealand's Rugby tour of South Africa.

The \$3 billion USSR Games in 1980 were marked by widespread disharmony and Russian cheating, as well as by a boycott by 40 nations led by the USA. In retaliation the 1984 Los Angeles Games were boycotted by 14 eastern-bloc nations led by the USSR. However, sponsorship deals struck with national and international companies, as well as the negotiation of world television rights, demonstrated that the Olympics could become a major money-making concern.

The Seoul Olympics of 1988 revealed the widespread use of performance-enhancing drugs, while the Barcelona Games of 1992 revealed indications of bribery and corruption within the I.O.C. and its international connections, in regard to the choice of cities to host the Games. The Atlanta Games of 1996, a triumph for American capitalism, were marred by the explosion of a pipe bomb in Olympic Park, killing one person and injuring 111 others.

It has been said that rather than the "Olympic spirit" changing the world, the Olympic Games remain a reflection of human nature, dominated by corruption, racial hatred, drugs and the extremes of competitiveness and greed, while the dedication, self discipline and great effort of young athletes is exploited by mammon on a worldwide scale.

Claimed as the best Olympic Games so far, the 2000 AD Sydney Games were clearly recognizable as a pagan festival, where the pagan "spirit of the Dreamtime" was a major feature and the 'sacred flame' travelled hundreds of miles to be viewed and applauded by thousands. No mention was made of the One True Living God. He was not asked for His blessing nor was He thanked for the peace, harmony and good weather conditions which prevailed, or the fact that no lives were lost, and no violence disturbed the peace of our land.

We are now on the brink of the Athens Olympics which will be held in perhaps the most dangerous world climate of all time. Once again, will it be the pagan no-gods who are honoured, while the Creator and Saviour of the world is ignored, even scorned? Israel of old was told to 'Beware' lest they forgot the Lord and worshipped other gods, in case the anger of the Lord was kindled against them (Deut. 6:12-15). Human nature has changed little in the more than 2,500 years since Jeremiah wrote the following inspired words of warning:

Do men make their own gods?

Yes, but they are not gods!"

**"Therefore I will teach them— this time I will teach them
my power and might.**

Then they will know that my name is the LORD.

(Jer. 16:20-21 NIV)

(Ed.)

U.S. COLUMNIST'S VIEW OF PRESIDENT BUSH

Charley Reese, described as a nationally syndicated columnist with an unabashed devotion to the truth, comments as follows in the *American Free Press* 07.06.2004.

"Americans should realize that if they vote for President Bush's re-election, they are really voting for the architects of war - Dick Cheney, Donald Rumsfeld, Paul Wolfowitz and the rest of that cabal of neo-conservative ideologues and their corporate backers.

I have sadly come to the conclusion that President Bush is merely a front man, an empty suit, who is manipulated

by the people of his administration. Bush has the most dangerously simplistic view of the world of any president in my memory.

It's no wonder the president avoids press conferences like the plague. Take away his cue cards, and he can barely talk. Americans should be embarrassed that an Arab king (Abdullah of Jordan) spoke more fluently and articulately in English than our own president at their joint press conference recently.

John Kerry is at least an educated man, well read, who knows how to think and who knows that the world is a great deal more complex than Bush's comic-book world of American heroes and foreign evildoers. It is unfortunate that in our poorly educated country, Kerry's very intelligence and refusal to adopt simplistic slogans might doom his presidential election efforts. Thomas Jefferson said.... that people who expect to be ignorant and free, expect what never was and never will be.....

Bush is as far from being a conservative as you can get..... It is not at all conservative to balloon government spending, to vastly increase the power of government, to show contempt for the Constitution and the rule of law, or to tell people that foreign outsourcing of American jobs is good for them, that giant fiscal and trade deficits don't matter and that people should not know what their government is doing. Bush is the most prone-to-classify, the most secretive president in the 20th century. His administration leans dangerously toward the authoritarian.

..... Bush's foreign policy has been a dangerous disaster. America is not only hated in the MiddleEast, but it has few friends anywhere in the world thanks to the arrogance and ineptness of the Bush administration..... A scientific poll of Europeans found the US, Israel, North Korea and Iran as the greatest threats to world peace." []

THE CONSTITUTION OF ISRAEL

(From *The National Message February, 1938*)

The Constitution of Israel is given in the Pentateuch (the Five Books of the Law). Under that constitution, which is unchanging, the law is administered by the King, with the help of an administrative council, but without power to alter in any way its provisions (ref. Deut. 17:14-20). Upon the keeping of this constitution and its statutes, commandments, and judgments, depends the nation's prosperity, health and peace.

Of the many most startling challenges regarding national welfare given to Israel, if she will only keep this constitution, we intend to refer to three.

FIRST, there is the promise (Deut. 7:6-16) that if she will but keep the commandments and the statutes, and the judgments, God will remove all illness from her.

Thou shalt therefore keep the commandments and the statutes and the judgments, which I command thee this day, to do them (vs. 11,15).

And the Lord will take away from thee all sickness..."

But we seem to have suffered instead under verses 21 and 22 of chapter 28, for the afflictions laid upon disobedient Israel are:

The Lord shall smite thee with a consumption and with a fever, and with an inflammation, and with an extreme burning, and with the sword, and with blasting, and with mildew; and they shall pursue thee until thou perish."

Mark, these physical conditions are not due to the system of worship, but to the system of government and that the punishments are physical not spiritual.

All have wondered at the world's continuing diseases and premature deaths. Scientists have tried to prevent and to cure sickness. Governments have tried to stamp it out but with too little success. But here is a direct challenge, as vital today as ever, to re-establish the Divine system of Law and to obey the law so re-established, and then - **the Lord will take away from thee all sickness.**

This is for *National Israel* to accomplish *not the Church*.. The result embraces in its healing, not only the whole of the people, but also the animal kingdom, and even the vegetable: neither blighting, mildew nor crop failure is to be known. Imagine what this would mean! Is it not worth trying?

Such is the Divine challenge regarding health. We have already suffered under *the warning*, and we know that warning was true; so it is within the power of the nation to take up God's challenge and to obtain this wonderful Divine gift of perfect health for man, animal and plant. This would be true "*Christian Science*"!

SECONDLY, there is the question of wealth, and of the poor. This is very clearly dealt with in the first verses of chapter 15 of Deuteronomy (which may be considered as the Creditor Statute):

At the end of every seven years thou shalt make a release.

And this is the manner of the release:

Every creditor that lendeth ought unto his neighbour shall release it; he shall not exact it of his neighbour, or of his brother; because it is called the LORD'S release.

Of a foreigner thou mayest exact it again: but that which is thine with thy brother thine hand shall release;
Save when there shall be no poor among you; for the LORD shall greatly bless thee in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance to possess it:
Only if thou carefully hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe to do all these commandments which I command thee this day.

For the LORD thy God blesseth thee, as he promised thee: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, but thou shalt not borrow....

Again, national wealth and national rule are bound up with these national statutes in the same way as is national health. Mark that this is Jehovah's release, not the creditor's. The creditor acts but Jehovah bears the charge and becomes the debtor.

The question at stake is: "Which is the better debtor, Jehovah or man? What a Divine challenge is this!"

So intimately does God wish to be associated with His people in their dealings with one another, that He offers His note of hand to every creditor, as security for the release of every borrower, and He does it at the end of every seven years. It is for the declared purpose -

"To the end that there be no poor among you."

(However, among the Jews the credit of the Lord seemed to be poor in our Lord's day. Perhaps the most cutting thing that the Lord Jesus ever said, having the law in mind as He always had, was "**the poor YE have always with you.**")

Let us pass on to the Statute of Surplus Wealth:

If there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren within any of thy gates (Duet. 15:7):

Here is a strange thing, that in God's mind there should be any question of the presence of the poor. But it must be remembered that the Creditor Statute, and this statute, which is made for the express purpose "**to the end that there be no poor among you**" has never really operated.

But, if there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren within any of thy gates in thy land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother:
But thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need, in that which he wanteth.

Consider this statute well. It is clear that every man may use the increase of his wealth for the prudent maintenance of his family, this is enjoined elsewhere, as is its use for the efficient support of his business. But with his surplus wealth he must be prepared to act as a banker, holding moneys in trust and bound by the conditions of that trust to employ that money for the elimination of poverty.

This does not debar the possession of surplus wealth, but it does debar the possession of surplus wealth by one, while another has need. If one be wealthy it should mean that all are well off. Of course, the loan so made comes under the Creditor statute, and at the end of the Sabbath year on the day of release the duty of repayment passes and Jehovah becomes the debtor and liable for paying back the loan. This He does by abundantly blessing the creditor's circumstances.

The first result is that at every Sabbath year every person, every property, every business, every estate, passes out from obligation or debt. Every man is free from debt.

The second result is that the surplus wealth of the nation is redistributed. This takes place every seven years. The guaranteed result is that every person following this process, and the whole nation in thus obeying and honouring God, becomes abundantly wealthy.

Other results must be an absence of millionaires and of all personal, corporate, civic and national debt, war debts, etc., a result devoutly to be desired. Such debts are throttling all enterprise today. God would have wealth to be a constantly flowing stream of living water perennially renewed by Divine power, and not a stagnant lake whose waters are harmful to society.

This is God's financial gospel. These are the financial clauses of the Divine constitution. However they can operate only within a nation whose people practise a living faith in their God.

THIRDLY, let us turn to the question of *National Safety and continuance*.

We know that the Throne of David is established by the oath of God until the end of time and beyond (2 Sam. Ch. 7; Luke 1:30-33). The continuance of the People of Israel is also guaranteed to the end of time and beyond (Gen. 17:19; Is. 44:7, Luke 1:33, Rev. 21:9-14).

But the undisturbed safety and continuance of the nation was at the first made subject to the keeping of the *constitutional law*. Deuteronomy 28:7:

The LORD shall cause thine enemies that rise up against thee to be smitten before thy face: they shall come out against thee one way, and flee before thee seven ways.

Verse 13:

And the LORD shall make thee the head, and not the tail; if that thou hearken unto the commandments of the LORD thy God, which I command thee this day, to observe and to do them.

But the House of Israel did not keep the commandments and statutes of Jehovah, but instead 'the statutes of Omri are kept' - i.e., the statutes of Omri King of Israel who substituted his own statutes for the statutes of God's Law. As a result the predicted forfeiture of the promised possession (the Promised Land Gen.3:15; 30:15-20) has eventuated. The House of Israel, driven into exile has been sifted throughout the nations till gathered in Western Europe (Amos 9:8-9). The House of Judah, becoming even more apostate than Israel, was also cast out of the Land of inheritance (Jer. 3:6-11).

From this time Israel went forth deaf and blind, and unknown to her, led by God to the fulfilment of her mission.

Who is blind, but my servant? or deaf, as my messenger that I sent? who is blind as he that is perfect [committed to me], and blind as the Lord's servant?

Seeing many things, but thou observest not; opening the ears, but he heareth not. (Isa. 42:19-20)

Declare this in the house of Jacob, and publish it in Judah, saying, Hear now this, O foolish people, and without understanding; which have eyes, and see not; which have ears, and hear not: (Jer. 5:20-21)

Son of man, thou dwellest in the midst of a rebellious house, which have eyes to see, and see not; they have ears to hear, and hear not: for they are a rebellious house. (Ezek. 12:1)

And Jesus said [to the man born blind], For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind.

And some of the Pharisees which were with him heard these words, and said unto him, Are we blind also?

Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth. (John 9:39-41)

Although Israel was guaranteed that she should remain a nation, her *position* among the nations was woefully different from what it would have been had she continued faithfully under the *Divine Constitution*.

Centred in the Isles of the West in the Latter Days, Israel carried out the Divine mission assigned her, spreading the Word of God, the Gospel of Salvation, and a righteous system of Law, worldwide. But she carried it out as one blind and deaf. Throughout all these ages the nations of Israel have been in danger from the aggression of their foes who were inspired to their destruction by the influence of the devil.

[Even now, duped into supporting a bogus "Israel" their governments have been instrumental in the shameful destruction of innocent people and children by weapons and the restriction of food and medicines; the disgraceful abuse of prisoners by "contract" prison interrogators; and the wilful, illegal use of depleted uranium weapons leaving an estimated over 2000 tons of residual D.U. dust to poison water and the local environment for thousands of years. All this because, in their blindness and apostasy, they are unwilling to follow God's Law and unable to trust in His protection.]

Finally, the culminating terror shall arrive in the Great Day of God Almighty, when all the non-Israel nations shall mass their forces for the destruction of the Israel Peoples. Because Israel is ignorant of her own birthright and of the fact that she is hedged about by the Divine promise and the Divine power, as she has in the past, she will face these things with the courage which prepares for, and discounts the worst, instead of marching forward in the consciousness of the invincible might of God.

She, who might have been free from sickness, has been scourged and suffering through the ages. She, who might have been free from poverty, has had a great proportion of her people suffering want from the cradle to an early grave. She, who should have waged victorious and bloodless wars as far as she was concerned, has stained every sea and every land with the blood of her slain. She, who should with a light heart have led the nations in the path of light, gropes as one blind, carrying the burden of the World upon her shoulders as a weary Atlas.

These things will pass at the final revelation and restoration of Israel as God's Nation. But, for the great mass of people, that Day shall not arrive until she has drunk to the dregs, even to "The Day of the Lord," the cup she has filled for herself by her own rebellion against the Law of the Lord.

The following conclusions seem clear:

1. God has provided all the constitutional (as distinct from administrative) legislation which He has allowed for, in the national constitution given in the Bible.
2. In the application of the principles of that constitution to new cases and circumstances as they arrive, He has made provisions in the department of the judgments, which are the commandments and statutes applied from time to time and from age to age. The principles of right action are few: they are all included in the constitution. They are changeless and eternal, therefore the constitution is perfect for our age and is capable of full application in our complex life.
3. Constitutional legislation belongs to God only, and He has not trusted men or nations to make laws for the government of their fellows.
4. The Divine plan of government does not favour one more than another and class is not known.
5. The way out of the present world-struggle for power and wealth is to go back to the Divine constitution.
6. The restoration of the Divine constitution as Israel's system of Law, would enable the Nation to test the Divine challenge as to health, prosperity and peace.

Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you. (Matt. 6:33)

The final climax of All-Israel's restoration described in Jeremiah 31:31-34 is also prophesied by the Prophet Ezekiel:

And I will set my glory among the heathen, and all the heathen shall see my judgment that I have executed, and my hand that I have laid upon them.

So the house of Israel shall know that I am the LORD their God from that day and forward.

And the heathen shall know that the house of Israel went into captivity for their iniquity: because they trespassed against me, therefore hid I my face from them, and gave them into the hand of their enemies: so fell they all by the sword.

According to their uncleanness and according to their transgressions have I done unto them, and hid my face from them.

Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; now will I bring again the captivity of Jacob, and have mercy upon the whole house of Israel, and will be jealous for my holy name; after that they have borne their shame, and all their trespasses whereby they have trespassed against me, when they dwelt safely in their land, and none made them afraid.

When I have brought them again from the people, and gathered them out of their enemies' lands, and am sanctified in them in the sight of many nations; then shall they know that I am the LORD their God, which caused them to be led into

captivity among the heathen: but I have gathered them unto their own land, and have left none of them any more there.

Neither will I hide my face any more from them: for I have poured out my spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord GOD. (Ezek. 39:21-29) []

THE WALL

Chapter 12 of the Book of Ezekiel describes the Prophet acting out the prophecy of the coming siege and desolation of Jerusalem by the Babylonians (ch. 12:19-20). He was to pack his baggage and carry it about signifying the removal of the inhabitants into captivity (vs. 3-6). He was to dig through the city wall signifying the attempted escape of King Zedekiah, his capture, blinding and final captivity in Babylon (vs. 7-13). The rapid fulfilment of this prophecy is recorded in 2 Kings ch. 25 and Jeremiah 39:1-10.

Ezekiel's portrayal of the coming disaster was at a time when the false prophets and leaders of Judah considered the fulfilment of prophecies either *unlikely* or a *long way off*. Their attitude was: **The days are prolonged and every vision faileth..... The vision that he seeth is for many days to come and he prophesieth of the times that are far off** (vs.22,27).

The reason for God's judgment upon them was **because of the violence of those that dwelt in the land** (v. 19).

How similar are the attitudes and circumstances today!

Chapter 13 deals with the nature and behaviour of **False Prophets and Leaders** and is applicable even today. It is to be remembered that a prophet "speaks for God or in place of God", so it is a serious thing to misrepresent Him. False prophets prophesy or advise out of their own hearts and spirits, when in reality they have not received any word from the Lord at all. Thus their visions and their advice are **lies** (vs. 1- 8).

The result is that they are not protecting the people from judgment. Their fate, is to be excluded from the coming Kingdom of our Lord (v. 9).

Verses 17-23 speak in a rather obscure way about the **women** who prophesy falsely. This is applicable today with many women seeking high positions in the Churches, and in Government, etc., many of whom discount the Old Testament in accord with "modern Christian" teaching, ignoring its teachings, warnings and prophecies.

The Companion Bible explains these verses as saying that they sew coverings together in order to hide from the

People the hands of God which are lifted up and stretched forth in judgment (ch.14:9-13). They make mantles to cover the heads and eyes of those upon whom God's judgments are about to fall so they will not see them coming. Even the tall figures - the men of high station - are blinded by the opinions of these false prophetesses. They ensnare people promising life to those who should not live, and claim that those who should live, should be slain!

They make life difficult for the righteous and have promised the wicked continuance in life - i.e., escape from the judgments pronounced by God.

Verses 10 - 16 appear to be very relevant today.

Verse 10:

Because, even because they have seduced my people, saying, Peace; and there was no peace; and one built up a wall, and, lo, others daubed it with untempered mortar:

The Hebrew word translated "wall" is **chayits** and is numbered 2434 in Strong's Concordance. It is the only time that it is thus used.

Chayits is another form of 2351 - **chuwts** or **chuts** (which comes from an unused root - "to sever") and has the meaning "**to separate by a wall - outdoors, abroad, etc.**"

Chapter 12 is addressed to 'the people of the land' and 'the inhabitants of Jerusalem' (v. 19), chapter 13 to the 'prophets of Israel.' It is at a time when peace is being falsely proclaimed. One of the false prophets instigates the construction of a "wall" to separate the land, while other false prophets cover it with whitewash.

A U.K. report on the Middle East peace process written by the Department for International Development in consultation with the Foreign Office, was reported in *The Age* July 22, 2004. It [Quote] reveals the alarm within British Government circles at the disengagement of the Bush Administration from events in Israel and the occupied territories. It warns: "The role of the USA, the country with the most leverage over Israel, is key. Frustration with aspects of the Palestinian leadership, preoccupations in Iraq, presidential elections and security concerns for US citizens, may risk USA disengagement at the highest levels from the peace process when it is most likely to start collapsing..... There is now a medium to high probability that there will be a lack of effective international engagement on the Middle East peace process, due to other international priorities in 2004."

Prime Minister Tony Blair has insisted that the **peace process**, along with Iraq, is a priority of his foreign policy

and a key to winning support in the Arab world.....
Since the Iraq war, US action has been limited. Mr. Blair tried to put the best gloss on the planned withdrawal from Gaza negotiated by Mr. Bush and Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon earlier this year. He has endorsed the plan, despite Palestinian condemnation, and has said the "road map" peace plan is not dead.

The analysis says unilateral Israeli withdrawal from Gaza and parts of the West Bank **not in line** with the peace plan, may lead to a dramatic rise in violence and severe poverty. "Without action soon, there is a real danger that facts on the ground - Israeli settlement expansion and **construction of a separation barrier** - may make a viable two-state solution almost impossible.".....

It warns that huge rises in aid have not prevented an increase in poverty and will not reduce it much without progress on peace. [End quote]

Of the 191 nations in the **UN General Assembly**, only six voted **against** the UN resolution ordering Israeli to tear down the wall it is constructing through the West Bank, viz., **Israeli, Australia, the United States**, and the small nations of Palau, Micronesia and the Marshall Islands.

The Age 22.7.2004, reported that on July 9, the International Court of Justice in The Hague decided that the wall's construction was illegal, and that parts that wind through occupied territories should be taken down, and damages caused during construction compensated. The Palestinians claim that it hurts them economically and protects settlements built by Israeli on territory it seized in the 1967 Middle East War.

Israeli, however, vowed that construction of the 719 kilometre , nine-metres-high wall with television monitors, electronic sensors, etc., at a reported cost of 1.6 million dollars per kilometre, would continue in order to enable Israeli to exercise its "inalienable right to self-defence."

It is obvious that those who daub the wall with whitewash are the false prophets of the Israel Nations, who claim that Israeli must be allowed to erect a security barrier to defend itself against terrorists, and that the road to peace is being pursued.

The wall and its builders, however, are to be destroyed (vs. 13 & 14) and at the same time, those who daubed it.

Thus will I accomplish my wrath upon the wall, and upon them that have daubed it with untempered mortar, and will say unto you, The wall is no more, neither they that daubed it;
To wit, the prophets of Israel which prophesy concerning Jerusalem, and which see visions of peace for her, and there is no peace, saith the Lord GOD. (Vs. 15-16)

(Ed.)



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MONTHLY NOTES

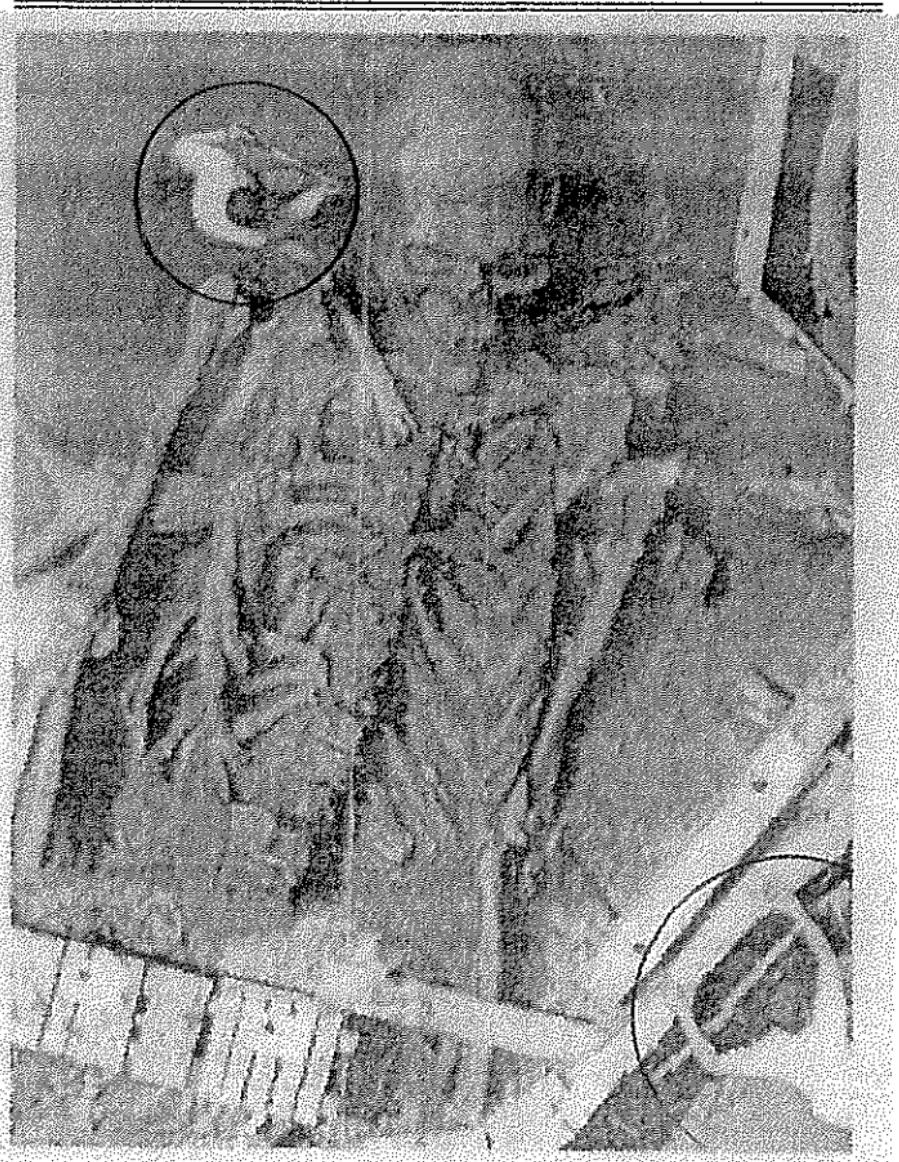
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endorsed by the British-Israel World Federation (Victorian Headquarters) Inc.)



SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT

For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known. (Luke 12:2)

The above interesting photograph was sent by one of our readers who lives in Rochester Hills, MI U S A, with the comment, "Something to think about".

The notation with it states that recent gas exploration by ARAMCO in the southeast region of Saudi Arabia has uncovered the skeleton shown. This desert region, which borders Yemen and Oman, is called "Rab-ul-Khalee" (the empty quarter).

Saudi theologians believe this body to belong to the AAAD nation, and the Saudi military has taken over the entire area allowing only ARAMCO personnel access. The discovery is meant to be kept secret.

The picture was taken from a helicopter overhead. (Notice the small people working near the skeleton.)

There are references to "giants" in Scripture. (Ref: Gen. 6:4; Num. 13:33; Deut. Chs. 2 & 3; Josh. Chs. 12, 13, 17, 18; 1 Chron. 20:4-5)

These are mentioned in the 19th century book *Giant Cities of Bashan and Syria's Holy Places* by Rev. J.L. Porter who begins by quoting Deuteronomy 3:10-13:

[Quote] " All the cities of the plain, and all Gilead, and all Bashan, unto Salchah and Edrei, cities of the kingdom of Og in Bashan.

For only Og king of Bashan remained of the remnant of giants; behold, his bedstead was a bedstead of iron; is it not in Rabbath of the children of Ammon? nine cubits was the length thereof, and four cubits the breadth of it (about 14 ft. x 6 ft).....

And the rest of Gilead, and all Bashan, being the kingdom of Og, gave I unto the half tribe of Manasseh; all the region of Argob, with all Bashan, which was called the land of giants."

"Bashan is the land of sacred romance. From the remotest historic period down to our own day there has ever been something of mystery and of strange wild interest connected with that old kingdom [which bordered the Arabian Desert east of the Sea of Galilee, and covered all the land north of Gilead unto Mt. Herman]. In the memorable raid of the Arab chiefs of Mesopotamia into Eastern and Central Palestine (Gen. 14:5), we read that the

“Rephaim in Ashteroth-Karnaim” bore the first brunt of the onset.

The *Rephaim* - that is, “the giants,” for such is the meaning of the name - men of stature, beside whom the Israelite spies said long afterwards that they were as grasshoppers (Num. 13:33). These were the aboriginal inhabitants of Bashan, and probably of the greater part of Canaan. Most of them died out, or were exterminated at a very early period; but a few remarkable specimens of the race - such as Goliath, and Sippai, and Lahmi (1 Chronicles 20:4-5) were the terror of the Israelites, and the champions of their foes, as late as the time of David; - and, strange to say, traditional memorials of these primeval giants exist even now in almost every section of Palestine, in the form of graves of enormous dimensions, - as the grave of Abel, near Damascus, *thirty* feet long; that of Seth, in Anti-Lebanon, about the same size; and that of Noah, in Lebanon, which measures no less than *seventy* yards!

The capital and stronghold of the *Rephaim in Bashan* was Ashteroth-Karnaim; so called from the goddess there worshipped, - the mysterious “two-horned Astarte.”..... The cities built and occupied some 40 centuries ago by these old giants exist even yet. I have traversed their streets; I have opened the doors of their houses; I have slept peacefully in their long-deserted halls..... Among the massive ruins of these wonderful cities lie sculptured images of Astarte, with the crescent moon, which gave her the name *Carngham*, upon her brow.

Four hundred years after the incursion of Chedorlaomer and his allies (Gen. Ch. 14) another and a far more formidable enemy [the Israelites under Moses] emerging from the southern deserts, suddenly appeared on the borders of Bashan. Sihon, the warlike king of the Amorites, who reigned in Heshbon, had tried in vain to bar their progress. The rich plains, and wooded hills, and noble pasture-lands of Bashan offered a tempting prospect to the shepherd tribes of Israel.

They came not on a sudden raid, like the Nomadic Arabs of the desert: they aimed at a complete conquest, and a permanent settlement. The aboriginal Rephaim were now all but extinct: “Only Og, king of Bashan, remained of the remnant of the giants.” The last of his race in this region, he was still the ruler of his country; and the whole Amorite inhabitants, from Hermon to the Jabbok, and from the Jordan to the desert, acknowledged the supremacy of this giant warrior.

Og resolved to defend his country. It was a splendid inheritance, and he would not resign it without a struggle. Collecting his forces, he marshalled them on the broad

plain before Edrei. We have no details of the battle; but, doubtless, the Amorites and their leader fought bravely for country and for life. It was in vain; a stronger than human arm warred for Israel. Og's army was defeated, and he himself slain.....

The conquest of Bashan, began under the leadership of Moses in person, was completed by Jair, one of the most distinguished chiefs of the tribe of Manasseh. In narrating his achievements, the sacred historian brings out another remarkable fact connected with this kingdom of Bashan. In Argob, one of its little provinces, Jair took no less than *sixty great cities*, "fenced with high walls, gates, and bars; besides unwalled towns a great many" (Deut. 3:4, 5, 14)

Such a statement seems all but incredible..... How could a province measuring not more than 30 miles by 20 miles support such a number of fortified cities, especially when the greater part of it was a wilderness of rocks? But mysterious, incredible as this seemed, on the spot, with my own eyes, *I have seen* that it is literally true. The cities are there to this day. Some of them retain the ancient names recorded in the Bible.....

Though Bashan was conquered by the Israelites, and allotted to the half tribe of Manasseh, some of its native tribes were not exterminated. Leaving the fertile plains and rich pasturelands to the conquerors, these took refuge in the rocky recesses of Argob, and amid the mountain fastnesses of Mt. Hermon. The **Geshurites**..... made their home among the rocks of Argob.

David in some of his strange wanderings met with, and married the daughter of Talmai, their chief; and she became the mother of Absalom (2 Sam 3:3). The wild acts of his life were doubtless, to some extent, the result of maternal training; they were at least characteristic of the stock from which she sprang. After murdering his brother Amnon, he fled to his uncle in *Geshur*, and found a safe asylum there amid its natural fastnesses, until his father's wrath was appeased.....

Bashan was regarded by the poet-prophets of Israel as almost an earthly paradise. The strength and grandeur of its oaks (Ezek. 27:6), the beauty of its mountain scenery (Ps. 68:15), the unrivalled luxuriance of its pastures (Jer. 50:19), the fertility of its wide-spreading plains, and the excellence of its cattle (Ps. 22:12; Ezek. 39:18; Mic. 7:14), all supplied the sacred penmen with lofty imagery." [End quote]

Bashan later became divided into four provinces - *Gaulanitis* (the territory of Golan the ancient Hebrew city of refuge); *Auranitis* (the Greek form of *Hauran* - Ezek. 47:16 & 18); *Batanea* (the eastern mountain range);

Trachonitis (the singularly wild and rocky district on the north - a Greek translation of the old *Argob* meaning "the stony".) It is mentioned in Luke 3:1 as part of the tetrarchy of Philip the son of Herod the Great.

[Quote] But though Bashan is not mentioned by name, it was the scene of a few of the most interesting events of New Testament history. It was down the western slopes of Bashan's high table-land that the demons, expelled by Jesus from the poor man, chased the herd of swine into the Sea of Galilee. It was on the grassy slopes of Bashan's hills that the multitudes were twice miraculously fed by the merciful Saviour.

And that "high mountain," to which He led Peter, and James, and John, and on whose summit they beheld the glories of the transfiguration, was that very Hermon which forms the boundary of Bashan..... Paul travelled through it on his way to Damascus; and, after his conversion Bashan, which then formed the principal part of the kingdom of Arabia, was the first field of his labours as an apostle of Jesus. He went into Arabia (Gal. 1:15-17)

His mission to Arabia, seems to have been eminently successful; and that Church, which may be called the first-fruits of his labours, made steady progress. In the fourth century nearly the whole inhabitants were Christian; heathen temples were converted into churches, and new churches were built in every town and village. At that period there were no fewer than *thirty-three* bishoprics in the single ecclesiastical province of Arabia. [End quote]

(Ed.)

THE CURSE OF THE LORD

The curse of the LORD is in the house of the wicked:
but he blesseth the habitation of the just.
(Prov. 3:33)

We do not like to think of a "curse" in connection with the Lord our God. However, the following warning was given in the Book of Malachi:

"And now, O ye priests, this commandment is for you. If ye will not hear, and if ye will not lay it to heart, to give glory unto my name, saith the LORD of hosts, I will even send a curse upon you, and I will curse your blessings:...." [denounce as evil; abhor; abominate] (Malachi 2:1-2).

And again, speaking of the return of Elijah the Prophet, God says:

"Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD:

And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse [appoint to utter destruction]." (Mal. 4:5-6)

The New Unger's Bible Dictionary, in reference to the curses of the Lord, states: "These divine maledictions are not merely imprecations or the expressions of impotent wishes, but they carry their effects with them and are attended with all the miseries they denounce or foretell."

A most significant operation of the "curse of the Lord" was in relation to His Servant Nation, Israel.

"Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse; A blessing, if ye obey the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you this day: And a curse, if ye will not obey.....but turn aside out of the way which I command you this day, to go after other gods, which ye have not known." (Deut. 11:26-28)

In calling Abraham God was selecting one man from whom He would build up His Servant Nation which would witness to His Person and Purpose throughout the millennia intervening until the Kingdom Age, when the world will be ruled in peace and equity by the Anointed One of God. (Ref. Isa. 43:10-12; Isa. 9:6 & 7)

To Abraham's son, Isaac, were born twin sons, Esau the firstborn, whom the Bible describes as a "profane person" [secular, irreverent, blasphemous] (Heb. 12:16), and says

"Was not Esau Jacob's brother? saith the LORD: yet I loved Jacob, and I hated Esau, and laid his mountains and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness." (Mal. 1:2-3)

It was his brother, Jacob, that God chose to be the progenitor of His Servant Nation Israel, the descendants of his 12 sons becoming known as the *Twelve Tribes of Israel*.

Jacob and his sons and their families settled in Egypt at the time of the seven years of famine at the beginning of the 17th Century BC, where they multiplied greatly in the Land of Goshen. Here they flourished until the reign of the Pharaoh "who knew not Joseph", viz., Ramessu II, during whose reign and that of his successor, Menephtah, the Israelites were oppressed.

Finally God took notice of their pleas to Him for deliverance and provided the great leader Moses to bring

them out of Egypt and into the Promised Land. For God appeared to Moses as a bush that burned but was not consumed, and said:

"I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God.

And the LORD said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows; and I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey; unto the place of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites.

Now therefore, behold, the cry of the children of Israel is come unto me: and I have also seen the oppression wherewith the Egyptians oppress them.

Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt." (Ex. 3:6-10)

When Moses and his brother Aaron told the Israelites what God had said "the people believed: and when they heard that the LORD had visited the children of Israel, and that he had looked upon their affliction, then they bowed their heads and worshipped." (Exod. 4:31)

Pharaoh Menephtah, however, refused to allow the people to depart, saying:

Who is the LORD, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I know not the LORD, neither will I let Israel go. (Ex. 5:2)

Finally, after ten plagues had been visited on Egypt the Pharaoh did agree to Israel's departure. Then followed that dramatic, miraculous deliverance of 2-3 million people and children, flocks, herds and goods, from the pursuing Egyptian army through the waters of the Red Sea. The great miracle of the Exodus of the Children of Israel from Egypt was to begin God's dealings with them on a national footing, which would continue into eternity.

Isaiah 44:7 states that God "appointed the ancient People". The Companion Bible's note on this verse is interesting:

"appointed = set, or established
the ancient People = the everlasting Nation.

The nation of Israel is everlasting, like the [Abrahamic] Covenant (Gen. 17:1-8 & 19; 28:1-4). The nations which oppressed Israel (Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Rome) passed away; but Israel remained and, when restored, will remain forever."

God's purpose in appointing His "everlasting nation" is stated in Isaiah 43:10-15:

YE ARE MY WITNESSES, saith the LORD, and MY SERVANT whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me.

I, even I, am the LORD; and beside me there is no saviour. I have declared, and have saved, and I have showed, when there was no strange god among you:

therefore YE ARE MY WITNESSES, saith the LORD, THAT I AM GOD..... Thus saith the LORD, your redeemer, the Holy One of Israel;.....

I am the LORD, your Holy One, the creator of Israel, your King.

God's Israel People were to be an everlasting witness to the fact that He is the only, true, Living God. In carrying out this role Israel were to be given the Word of God through the Prophets and Apostles. They were to be its custodians and proclaim its teaching throughout the world, and their history would fulfil the many prophecies given in Scripture concerning them. Their **faithfulness** to the Living God and His Divine Law would bring **blessings** to them as well as to other peoples.

But what about their many periods of unfaithfulness and apostasy: how could they be regarded as God's witnesses then?

BLESSINGS AND CURSINGS

Israel's national existence was to be governed by the principles laid down in Leviticus ch. 26 and Deuteronomy ch. 28, viz.,

Blessings for faithfulness to God's worship and Law, and *Cursings* for the worship of false gods, and departure from God's Law .

The *Blessings* would result in the Israel People attaining a position of preeminence and leadership in the world; great increase in offspring, health, abundance in agricultural pursuits, peace and safety in their lands; national expansion, and sufficient wealth to be able to lend to many nations without needing assistance themselves.

Therefore if we were to see in the world a People nationally claiming as their God the Living God of the Bible, and making their laws in accordance with Bible Law, who were being nationally blessed as above, that People would be

Israel People bearing living witness to the principle of "blessings for obedience".

Three outstanding examples of this have been the rapid growth of the Israel Kingdom of David and Solomon; the explosion in population, expansion, wealth and power of Britain after the Reformation, resulting in the British Empire and Commonwealth of Nations; and the settlement and rapid development of the United States of America.

But the principles laid down in Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28 applied equally for times of national disobedience to Divine Law and apostasy from their God. The result would be fear, disease, invasion, foreign oppression, failure in agriculture and husbandry, plagues, drought, famine, and decrease in population, prestige and power. When such is the lot of a once blessed People who are nationally denying their great God and disobeying His Commandments, they can be recognized as Israel People who are witnessing to God's principle of "cursings for disobedience".

Moreover all these curses shall come upon thee, and shall pursue thee, and overtake thee, till thou be destroyed; because thou hearkenedst not unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to keep his commandments and his statutes which he commanded thee: and they shall be upon thee for a sign and for a wonder, and upon thy seed for ever.

(Deut. 28:45-46)

Who gave Jacob for a spoil, and Israel to the robbers? did not the LORD, he against whom we have sinned? for they would not walk in his ways, neither were they obedient unto his law. (Isa. 42:24)

The breakup of both Solomon's kingdom and the British Empire and Commonwealth of Nations, are obvious examples of national apostasy resulting in the *curse of God* becoming operative. Today even the sovereignty of this once rich nation and world leader for more than 300 years is in jeopardy. And, as we watch, the rapid rise to power and prosperity of the United States of America is declining as America's national apostasy increases.

In this apparently prosperous and powerful country "more than 130 million prescriptions were written in 1999 for depression and mental health-related symptoms at a cost of US\$ 8.58 billion." (Update No. 47) This year the US has found it necessary to authorize US\$422 billion for defence-spending, which includes an additional \$25 billion for Iraq.

With energy independence the key to America's future, the fluctuating price of oil is being reflected in the Stock Market.

An article from the *Daily Mail* appeared in the *Herald Sun*, August 11, 2004, entitled *Nature's Own Brand of Terrorism*.

It warned that Tsunamis, super volcanoes and earthquakes could pose a greater threat than terrorism, and that Global Geophysical Events are not being taken seriously enough. A current potential threat is an insecure rock - the size of the Isle of Man - in the Canary Island of La Palma. When it erupts, a huge slab of rock 19 km long would shear off and plunge into the sea, unleashing massive forces which would sweep across the seas towards Europe, Africa and North and South America. Experts are convinced this event is a matter of when, rather than if.

Boston, New York, Washington DC and Miami could be virtually wiped off the map, killing or making homeless tens of millions of people. The mountainous wave would be 90m tall and travel at 800 km - as fast as a jetliner. At least 20 years separates each eruption, with the last one occurring in 1971.

We in this country would do well to heed the warning given in Deut. 28:23-24 as our apostasy increases alarmingly, and our shortage of water and rainfall becomes acute:

And thy heaven that is over thy head shall be brass, and the earth that is under thee shall be iron.

The LORD shall make the rain of thy land powder and dust: from heaven shall it come down upon thee, until thou be destroyed.

The results of apostasy witness to the truth of God and His Word, just as do the results of faithfulness.

But in faithfulness or apostasy, Israel has been a witness throughout the centuries to the power of the Living God to protect and save His People when appealed to in their distress; and to preserve Israel continuously as a nation, in order to fulfil His purposes in the coming Kingdom Age and beyond. (Ref. Revelation 20:1-10; Rev. 21:1-14)

Hebrews 10:31 warns that -

It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. Let us rather consider His abundant blessings -

.....prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.

And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the LORD of hosts. And all nations shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the LORD of hosts. (Mal.3:10-12)

Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert..... This people have I formed for myself; they shall show forth my praise. (Isa. 43:21)

God has given Israel the way of repentance back to Himself through the great sacrifice of their Messiah and Saviour on the Cross of Calvary.

Remember these, O Jacob and Israel; for thou art my servant: I have formed thee; thou art my servant: O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me. I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee. (Isa. 44:21-22)

If they shall confess their iniquity, and the iniquity of their fathers, with their trespass which they trespassed against me, and that also they have walked contrary unto me;

And that I also have walked contrary unto them, and have brought them into the land of their enemies; if then their uncircumcised hearts be humbled, and they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity: (because even because they despised my judgments, and because their soul abhorred my statutes.).....

Then will I remember my covenant with Jacob, and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham will I remember; and I will remember the land. I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly, and to break my covenant with them: for I am the LORD their God. (Lev. 26:40-44)

And the LORD thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live. (Deut. 30:6)

This is in accord with the prophecy of Jeremiah 31:31-34:

Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah:.....

After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.

And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more. (Ed.)

WHAT IS THE NATIONAL DEBT?

The stranger that is within thee shall get up above thee very high; and thou shalt come down very low.
He shall lend to thee, and thou shalt not lend to him: he shall be the head, and thou shalt be the tail.
(Deut. 28:43-44)

The National Debt is NOT the sum of all the debt of individuals within a nation. That does not come into it.

Encyclopaedia Brit. 1962 v.16; p.136:

The National Debt refers to the indebtedness of a Central Government, as distinct from that of a State, Provincial or subordinate political unit [within a country].

Because of the fact that the resources of citizens are taken by taxation, to pay interest or to retire the principal of National Debts, these obligations are sometimes called "mortgages on the wealth and income of the people of a country", or a lien [legal claim] on the income of taxpayers."

The difference between the amount of revenue the Government is able to collect and its annual spending if more, is known as the Deficit.

The National Debt is the progressive total of the Annual Deficits accruing over the years.

TO WHOM IS IT OWED?

Alexander Delmar, formerly Director of the Bureau of Statistics of the USA, in his book entitled *A History of Monetary Crimes* wrote:

From remotest time till the 17th century of our era the right to coin money and regulate its value by controlling the amount in circulation, was the exclusive prerogative of the State.

But in AD1666 King Charles II gave up his royal prerogative to issue money in England, to the East India Company, who Delmar describes as "a collection of Money Changers, Privateers, Filibusters, and Bullies."

From that time, the British Government has borrowed from the Private Banking System which engages in Fractional Reserve Banking. That is, it lends out 'money' which represents far in excess of the actual reserves held, and so charges 'interest' for wealth that does not really exist.

Although Article I, Sect. 8, Para. 5 of the United States' Constitution mandates that Congress controls the issuance of America's money, a small clique of international bankers, through their ownership and control of the so-called "*Federal*" Reserve System (created by Congress in 1913) has usurped that authority.

Since its creation 91 years ago, together with the federal income tax, the *Federal Reserve* has run the United States without being accountable to anyone. Each year it spends over one billion of taxpayers' dollars with no guidance or direction from any elected body, in spite of a ruling by a federal court that the Fed is a **privately-owned, privately-controlled money system**.

And although the Fed controls America's money system, sets interests rates, and generally dominates the economy - affecting every man, woman and child in the country, *it has never been audited*. Only 'in-house' audits are conducted focusing on day-to-day expenses. The fact that there is no audit of any kind by an independent, outside agency, is one proof that the Fed is not a government agency. A complete audit would reveal exactly who owns the Fed and how its monetary policies are conducted - which as now remain a secret.

By Law the Federal Reserve Bank is required to return its profit back to the U.S. Treasury, but neither Congress nor the IRS has the power to audit the Fed. The Bank profits by hundreds of billions of dollars by buying U.S. government bonds, but only a small part of the profit is returned to the Treasury, as the rest of the profit has been spent as 'operational expenses' or given to shareholders as dividends.

Summing up - Bruce Bangerter of the Independent American Party has stated:

"We affirm that the Federal Reserve is a private business, owned primarily by international bankers, operating under the deception of a government entity, which annually extorts, for their personal use, hundreds of billions of dollars in interest on the National Debt from the American public with government cooperation.

We believe that the power to issue money should be taken from the Federal Reserve (and its banks) and restored to Congress and the people to whom that power rightfully belongs. We favour a total reform of the banking and credit card industry which currently exploits from us an average of 26

percent of our lifetime earnings in usury or interest.

We favour the repeal of the National Bank Act (Federal Reserve Act), and favour the seizure and audit of the Federal Reserve System, the outlawing of fractional reserve banking, and disavowal of Federal Reserve claims upon us and our properties for the National Debt.

The Private Banking System now controls the money distribution throughout the world. (Ed.)

FROM LABOURERS TO OLIGARCHES

There is a school of thought which claims that throughout the history of all civilizations a rhythm exists in the development of society which complies with *natural laws*. The efforts of *natural man* to build a society are regulated by these natural laws which are closely related to human nature.

Indian Scholar P.J. Sarkar reasons that every society has four predominant groups of people:

1. The WARRIORS who maintain law and order;
2. The INTELLECTUALS who supply philosophy and religion;
3. The ACQUISITORS who manage the economy; and
4. The LABOURERS who do the unskilled work.

As society develops over long periods no single group dominates the social and political scene all the time. In fact, societies in their development seem to pass through four distinct eras. For example, a corrupt and acquisitive ruling class can cause a large majority of the people to be reduced to poverty. This produces an era when most people have little time to indulge in the finer aspects of life - art, music, poetry, spirituality, etc. They can afford to have their children taught only the basics of education. Such an era has been termed an *Era of Labourers*.

This is an era marked by a lack of guidance, sound leadership and authority; by greedy, egocentric leaders and by greed and total self concern on the part of the populace. It ends in near anarchy and social disorder. High values and the finer things of life are scorned, morals are loose, crime and materialism permeate society. People become very lazy with a "get something for nothing" outlook. Family ties are weak bringing frequent divorce, marital violence, indiscipline and disrespect for parental authority,

the removal of the elderly from family care, and the exploitation of women by men in the form of prostitution and pornography.

An *Era of Labourers* is always followed by an *Era of Warriors* as strong leaders arise bringing stability and discipline to society, albeit often by harsh dictatorship. But with stability comes a flourishing of intellectual activity and an *Era of Intellectuals* follows in which learning and the arts flourish.

This inevitably turns into an *Era of Acquisitors* as wealth, pleasure and power become paramount. The *Era of Acquisitors* ends in widespread poverty with wealth in the hands of the few. This ushers in another *Era of Labourers* and the cycle begins again. Though the slide from one era to the next is gradual, it is inevitable.

Extinct civilizations of the past have been totally overwhelmed by the ills of a *Labourers Era*, whereas existing civilizations have been able to survive the difficulties of such periods and move forward into another *Era of Warriors*, and so on.

Such is the destiny of the societies of natural man because the laws and morals of men reflect human nature. This is why God's ancient Law as known to Abraham (Gen. 26:5) was recodified at Sinai.

.....**Abraham obeyed my voice, (to be heard and believed -**
Rom 10:17)

and kept my charge, (to be observed)
my commandments, (to be obeyed)
my statutes, (i.e. decrees to be acknowledged)
and my laws. (i.e. instructions to be followed)

It was given to counteract the cyclic results of human nature within society and to provide the means whereby men could build a lasting social structure.

The **Ten Commandments** controlled the vagaries of human nature on an individual basis and so formed a stable and unchanging basis on which to rest community life. The **Statutes and Judgments** demonstrated the basic principles by which a sound social structure could be fabricated. God's Law was never wholly in operation in ancient Israel but even when it was imperfectly observed during the Golden Age achieved in the reigns of David and Solomon, society was free and prosperous.

At the time of King Alfred the Great in England large sections of the Mosaic Legislation were combined with

ancient British laws and the Ten Commandments were taught and respected as the basis of life. Alfred's legislation formed the backbone of English Common Law which for hundreds of years provided a vehicle for justice and individual development for all sections of society, unequalled by the laws of any contemporary nation. Sad it is that over the centuries God's Law has been gradually replaced by men's laws and the Ten Commandments are today widely ignored and disobeyed. Natural man never wants to go God's way and after 3,500 years of rejecting God's Law man is still reaping the consequences of his own nature.

Last century saw in the Western World the peak of an *Acquisitors Era* which today has all but engulfed the whole of world society. At the turn of the 20th century the USA had assumed leadership of the Western World because it had surpassed every European nation in industrial might. From its roots in Britain Capitalism came to full bloom in America, which has been in an *Acquisitors Era* from its inception.

The influence of Christianity which was so strong at first was soon swept aside by the rising tide of economic growth and prosperity. After the Civil War economic power had moved from the landholders to businessmen and merchants, and bankers attempted to turn the Constitution to their own advantage. Corporations thrived and State Governments were unable to control giant enterprises. Almost every major industry became a monopoly and economic power became concentrated on a vast scale. The result was that competition was smothered and products became shoddy. There was cheating, sweated labour and exploitation of the country's natural resources.

Adam Smith's theory of economics involving free trade, which had been followed during the 19th century, was increasingly abused - mainly by the industrial giants of America and Germany. Monopolies and Trusts grew bigger undermining the free enterprise market mechanism and bringing economic collapse.

After the crash of 1929 the Keynesian theory of economics was adopted. Being a Fabian Socialist Keynes advocated State Control of the economy and massive Government spending to combat unemployment. Since then Governments have borrowed heavily in following his advice and are unable to pay back the loans and the huge loads of interest they have amassed. His ideas gained worldwide popularity, but his theory was found to be

unworkable in the long term.

Reaganomics was a trend in the opposite direction but resulted in massive tax cuts for affluent individuals and large corporations. It has been reported that the debt accumulated during Reagan's first term alone dwarfed the total indebtedness incurred from the very beginning of the Republic! Today the wealthy and greatly blessed USA is the world's greatest debtor nation with an unimaginable National Debt.

Then came the trend for nations to deregulate their financial systems and surrender their currencies to international control, thus relinquishing their economic stability. Before Deregulation, Australia's control over the value of our currency governed the value of our exports, and devaluation of our dollar could be used to reduce prices of commodities. But our economy is now under the control of international forces.

Today most national leaders and politicians are internationalists with loyalty to the ideology of Globalism and the programmes of Industrialists and the International Bankers, rather than to their own nations. Power is in the hands of the very wealthy few who are becoming more wealthy as the standard of living continues to drop for the majority of people.

The final phase in the *Acquisitors Era* appears to be the OLIGARCHY - a form of government in which the power is exercised by, or vested in a few. This is demonstrated well in an article by Uri Avnery published in *ON TARGET BULLETIN* August 13, 2004.

First it recounts how "a tiny group of entrepreneurs exploited the disintegration of the Soviet system to loot the treasures of the State and to amass plunder amounting to hundreds of billions of dollars. In order to safeguard the perpetuation of their business, they took control of the State. Six out of seven are Jews."

"In the first years of post-Soviet Russian capitalism they were the bold and nimble ones who knew how to exploit the economic anarchy in order to acquire enormous possessions for a hundredth or a thousandth of their value: oil, natural gas, nickel and other minerals. They used every possible trick, including cheating, bribery and murder. Every one of them had a small private army.

After a period of fighting each other, they decided that it

would be more profitable for them to co-operate in order to take over the state. At the time, President Boris Yeltsin was in a steep decline. On the eve of the new elections for the presidency, his rating in public opinion polls stood at 4 percent. He was an alcoholic with a severe heart disease, working about two hours a day. His bodyguard and his daughter in practice ruled the state: corruption was the order of the day.

The oligarchs decided to take power through him. They had almost unlimited funds, control of all TV channels and most of the other media. They put all these at the disposal of Yeltsin's re-election campaign, denying his opponents even one minute of TV time and pouring huge sums of money into the effort..... they secretly brought over the most outstanding American election experts and copywriters, who applied methods previously unknown in Russia.

The campaign bore fruit: Yeltsin was indeed re-elected. On the very same day he had another heart attack and spent the rest of his term in hospital. In practice, the oligarchs ruled Russia. One of them, Boris Berezovsky, appointed himself Prime Minister..... Berezovsky boasts that he caused the war in Chechnya, , in which tens of thousands have been killed and a whole country devastated. He was interested in the mineral resources and a prospective pipeline there. In order to achieve this he put an end to the peace agreement that gave the country some kind of independence. The oligarchs dismissed and destroyed Alexander Lebed, the popular general who engineered the agreement, and the war has been going on since then.....

In the end, Vladimir Putin, the taciturn and tough ex-KGB operative, assumed power, took control of the media, put one of the oligarchs (Mikhail Khodorkovsky) in prison and caused the others to flee.”

The article then looks back to earlier America and comments that the same sort of thing had happened at the time of the “great robber barons, Morgan, Rockefeller et al, all of them good ‘Christians’. However he omits to say that the wealth which financed them was Rothschild gold, J.P. Morgan having been appointed head representative for the Rothschild’s interests in the U.S.A., and the Rockefeller Oil interests being involved with Kuhn-Loeb & Co. who were also partly financed by Rothschild gold.

Regarding the current American Presidential campaign the article states: “..... the candidates collect hundreds of

millions of dollars. George W. Bush and John Kerry both brag about their talent for raising enormous sums of money.....from the cabals of billionaires, the giant corporations and powerful lobbies (arms dealers, Jewish organizations, doctors, lawyers and such). Many of them give money to both candidates - just to be on the safe side. All of these expect, of course, to receive a generous bonus when their candidate is elected..... As in Russia, every dollar (or rouble) invested wisely in an election will yield a ten or hundred-fold return.

The problem is rooted in the fact that presidential candidates (and all other candidates for political office) need ever increasing amounts of money. Elections are mainly fought out on TV and cost huge sums. It is not a coincidence that all the present candidates in the US are multi-millionaires. The Bush family has amassed a fortune from the oil business (helped by its political connections). Kerry is married to one of the richest women in America.... Dick Cheney was the chief of a huge corporation that has garnered contracts worth billions in Iraq. John Edwards, candidate for Vice President, has made a fortune as a trial lawyer.

From time to time there is talk in America about reforming election finances, but nothing worthwhile ever comes of it. None of the oligarchs has an interest in changing a system that enables them to buy the government of the United States."

"In Israel an investigation into Ariel Sharon and his sons is pending. It concerns millions of dollars that reached his election coffers by roundabout routes, crossing three continents. Shimon Peres' connections with multi-millionaires are well-known, as are the huge sums poured out by American Jewish multi-millionaires for extreme right-wing causes in Israel. A political scandal concerning the Israeli Minister for Infrastructure has mushroomed into an affair involving giant multinational corporations competing for contracts for supplying natural gas to the Israeli Electricity Company, an affair of billions in which underworld figures, politicians and private investigators play their parts. This disclosure has made it clear to Israelis that here, too, politicians of the highest rank have long ago been acting as mercenaries for powerful financial interests." [End quotes]

Consumer advocate and independent presidential candidate Ralph Nader has raised the ire of the American Anti-Defamation League by claiming that the President and

Congress are controlled by the Israeli State, and that there is more freedom in society to discuss the Israeli/Palestinian conflict in Israel than in America. He challenged the League to cite a recent example of when American leaders have pursued a policy opposed by the Israeli government.

Would it make any difference if John Kerry were elected President? *The Australian Jewish News 12/03/04* confirmed Kerry's Jewish roots - "John Kerry will take on George W. Bush in November's US election for the White House, and if he is successful he will be the first US president with Jewish roots." An article by Simon Tisdall in *The Age 29/07/04*, comments that Samuel (Sandy) Berger, Clinton's national security adviser from 1997 - 2001, is now a key Kerry adviser. Berger says that as a result of the Bush Administration's high-handed style and gratuitous unilateralism, "although the US has never enjoyed greater power than it does today, it has rarely possessed so little influence."

It would seem that Kerry, would not change U.S. objectives (including, primarily, maintaining its position as unchallenged global super-power) in any fundamental sense, he would change only the style and method employed to achieve those aims. He would recommit the U.S. to the United Nations. Kerry also has the financial support of billionaires, e.g., George Sorros, who has recently part funded a multi-million dollar TV advertising campaign accusing the President of eroding the American dream.

We are seeing the final stage of an Acquisitors Era and in human terms the whole world now faces the disintegration, turmoil and tragedies of a *Labourers Era*. However, Holy Scripture, the Sure Word of God, sets out God's intent for human society in the next age, which neither man nor Satan will be able to change. Both Old and New Testaments testify to the personal return to earth of the Lord Jesus Christ, God's Only Begotten Son, who will come, not as our Saviour and Sin Bearer, as He did the last time, but as the Great Judge of the Nations and the awesome King of Kings. Hebrews 9:28:

So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without [apart from] sin unto salvation.

His righteous rule in His Kingdom on earth will replace the oppression of man, and the faithful observance of His Law within national Israel will demonstrate to the world the workings of a perfect society. The knowledge of Israel's Great King and His Perfect Law will spread throughout the earth and result in the blessing of all peoples. (Micah 4:1-2) The mounting turmoil in the Middle East seen in the light of prophecy would indicate that His return is at hand. (Ed.)



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A GIANT DECEPTION

The following letter was received from a reader in Queensland commenting on the picture of the giant skeleton on the front of last month's Monthly Notes, and we thank him for his research..

"Regarding the photo of the giant skeleton on the front of your Monthly Notes [August 2004], I checked on the Internet to see if I could turn up anything more about this. Sad to say the photo was not real and neither was the story of its find....

The image displayed was taken from Worth1000.com, a site devoted to hosting contests in which entrants show off their skills at manipulating photographs using digital editing programs. This particular picture was an entry from one of the site's "Archaeological Anomalies" competitions, in which entrants vied to create the most realistic archaeological hoaxes: "Your job is to show a picture of an archaeological discovery that looks so real, had it not appeared at Worth1000, people might have done a double take."

The basis for this image was a real photograph of an excavation site near Hyde Park, New York, where scientists were working to uncover the skeleton of a mastodon that had been found during an excavation. Someone combined the Worth1000.com contest entry photo with a fanciful story linking the image to the Islamic account of the Prophet Hud, creating the hoax - which spread especially far and wide after being published as a seemingly real news article on the web

site of The New Nation, described as "Bangladesh's Independent News Source.

I have printed the original photos taken at the Mastodon dig sight. They were taken by someone standing in the excavator's bucket raised above the site. The man in the bottom of the top picture is in the fake picture, and the man at the top of the fake picture has been added to it. The shadows gave it away.

The printing at the left hand bottom corner of the 2nd picture states that the Mastodon dig was conducted by the Cornell University in the year 2000.



What happened to "Seeing is believing", or the days when a photo posted to a company which had sent goods by mail would be accepted as proof of a damaged item? We know that fake photos have been used for years to obtain political advantage, gain public sympathy, or to make spurious claims in advertising, but these have been reasonably easy to detect even by non experts. The advanced technology freely available today makes such deception practically undetectable and, coupled with the speed with which fake information can be disseminated, can be a dangerous weapon in the Enemy's hands by which to deceive the populations of the world. One wonders how many of today's images displayed on screen or in printed matter, have been manipulated to deceive in some way.

This episode is a perfect example of the days in which we are living when lies and deception are the order of the day. The Master Deceiver is running rampant seeking to destroy not only God's People but probably the planet itself, to the end that the prophecies in Scripture regarding both might not come to pass, and so make God a liar!

Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time. (Rev. 12:12)

Once the *Child* had been born - the *Seed of the Woman* (Gen. 3:15) who was to destroy the Serpent and his works:

..... that old [ancient] serpent, called the Devil [the Slanderer], and Satan [the Adversary], which deceiveth the whole world:.... (Rev. 12:9) - Satan knew that his judgment was inevitable.

His mission since has been to slander, deceive and destroy.

The political deception of leading figures in the Bush administration (perhaps not of the President himself) purports that the Iraq war was, and continues to be, against terrorism - a war of good against evil. Last May however, US Senator Ernest Hollings voiced the opinion of other political leaders, even the longest-serving Member of Parliament in England, that Iraq was invaded essentially to "secure Israel."

Modern day deception in business was illustrated by the report that the US Army will abandon a contract with Halliburton, the company formerly run by Vice-President Cheney, which has been investigated for overcharging on army contracts to provide housing, food and other services to troops in Iraq and Afghanistan. Pentagon auditors suggested the army should withhold 15 percent of Halliburton's invoices in Iraq, saying the firm had been unable to account properly for \$US1.8 billion of the \$US4.3 billion it had so far billed the Army.

In 1999 the whole E.U. Commission was found to have been involved in large scale fraud, but not one individual could be prosecuted because a blanket, life-time immunity from legal proceedings has been extended to all officials under the *Protocol on the Privileges and Immunities of the E.U.* A further clause exempts from search any of the Community's buildings, offices, filing cabinets, archives, etc., thus putting the people on E.U. premises completely above the Law. (*Ten minutes to Midnight* by Philip Day p.50, 2003). What grave deception is apparent in the framing of this *Protocol!* What scope for future deception it affords!

Even the Church is not immune from deception. *Update Newsletter* Feb./Apr. 2004, reports as follows:

"A ground breaking survey of some 2000 Anglican clergy revealed that many do not believe in Christian doctrines as basic as Christ's Resurrection or His Virgin birth. The survey by a Traditionalist Anglican Group, Cost of Conscience, exposed the fact that only 3 in 10 female priests, and 6 in 10 male priests believe in the Virgin Birth. Only half of female priests and 7 in 10 male priests believe in the literal Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

The conclusion suggested by the report is that most of the clergy do not believe 75 percent of what they preach each week. Yet they are still pleased to claim a full salary."

Returning to our original subject of giants, true or false, the *Update Newsletter* Nov.2003/Jan.2004, reported that surviving giants live in vast cave systems in the rainforest jungle mountain ranges of Guadalcanal, Santa Isabel Island, and Choiseul Island, in the Solomons. A sighting of two 15 feet tall men has been reported. There are reportedly hundreds of caves containing giant artefacts throughout both Guadalcanal and Malaita. A complete skeleton 15 feet long has also been seen, and a human femur bone eight feet long, as well as a large burial place scattered with giant skeletons.

Has anyone any information as to the validity of this?

We would like to thank both the sender of the original skeleton photograph, and the researcher who has commented on it above. Your contributions are appreciated. (Ed.)

BOOKS:

Please note that the Bookroom has new stocks of the two excellent books by Mr. W. H. Bennett of Canada, viz: *Symbols of Our Celto-Saxon Heritage* 210pp 1995 \$38.00 and *Story of Celto-Saxon Israel* 236 pp 2002 \$28.00.

WHAT IS TRUTH?

Pilate therefore said unto Him, Art thou a king then?

Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king.

To this end was I born,

and for this cause came I into the world,

that I should bear witness unto the truth.

Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.

(John 18:37)

Like so many today Pilate, confused and tired of the multitude of philosophies, religions and ideologies which at that time contended for acceptance, asked as follows:

Pilate saith unto Him, "What is truth?" (Jn. 18:38)

Speaking to Thomas (John 14:6) the Lord Jesus had said:

"I am the way, the truth [Grk. *Aletheia*] and the life...."

Truth, that is, in contrast with what is *false*. It is used of God in that He cannot lie. In Titus 1:2 we read:

"....in hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie,
promised before the world began...."

It was in Christ that God manifested Himself, i.e., revealed His own Character, to man. Christ, therefore, could rightly claim to be truth.

In portraying Him as the 'Word of God', the Apostle John writes (Jn. 1:14):

And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

Grace and Truth was a Hebraism used to denote the Sum of Divine Revelation.

John 1:15-16 records the witness given by John the Baptist regarding "the Word":

John bare witness of Him, and cried, saying, This was He of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for He was before me [i.e. He pre-existed as "the Word of God" in Creation].

And of His fulness [all His virtues and excellencies] have all we received, and grace for grace [new, continuous, ever-fresh grace as needed].

Then in verse 17 we read:

For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth [i.e. the Sum of Divine Revelation] came by Jesus Christ.

The Companion Bible's note on this verse is as follows:

"In the days of Moses there was *Grace* (Ex. 34:6) and the Law itself was an exhibition of *Truth*: but when Jesus Christ came, He was Himself the Truth, i.e. the very personification of truth, and His life and death were the supreme manifestation of grace."

Because the Lord is the **God of truth** (Psa. 31:5), "He is faithful in all His dealings. His promises are sure, for He cannot lie. He judges according to truth, that is, *according to the way things really are*, and not on the basis of outward appearance. Everything that emanates from Him is pure and without defect. His judicial decisions, law, commandments and word are truth. They are always right and proper, and stand in opposition to all unrighteousness and error." (*Aid to Bible Understanding*)

On the other hand, Satan is the personification of all that stands in opposition to *truth* and, as such, is the implacable enemy of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. He is constantly enticing men's hearts away from worshipping the God of Truth, by deceiving them into worshipping idols, false gods, false doctrines supposedly supported by Scripture, or false philosophies. How careful we should be that our beliefs are based on Scripture and not on the ideas put forward by men.

We are all responsible to God for our beliefs and are admonished to:

"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

The Jews of Berea, we are told, were more noble than the Jews of Thessalonica because "they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so." (Acts 17:11) They were earnestly seeking the TRUTH.

Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.

Abstain from all appearance of evil.

**And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly;
and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body
be preserved blameless**

unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.

(1 Th. 5:21-14)

(Ed.)

ASTEROID - VERY CLOSE ENCOUNTER

NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory Near-Earth Orbiting Programme Office predicts that a three-miles-long asteroid will come within 963,000 miles (four lunar distances) of Earth on **September 29**. Travelling at 20 miles per second it has the capacity to cause great destruction should it collide with Earth. Even its close proximity could affect communications systems. [1]

THE ORIGIN OF ALLAH

by

Samuel L. Blumenfeld

How many times have you heard it said that Christians, Jews, and Muslims all worship the same God, and that spiritually and morally the three religions are all based on the same concept of God?

It is true that Ishmael, the father of the Arab nation, was the son of Abram and Hagar, Sarai's maid. But that was before God made His covenant with Abram and changed his name to Abraham. Concerning Hagar and Ishmael, we read in Genesis 16:11-12:

And the angel of the LORD said unto her, Behold, thou art with child, and shalt bear a son, and shalt call his name Ishmael; because the LORD hath heard thy affliction. And he will be a wild man; his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him; and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren.

And true to God's word, the descendants of Ishmael have plagued the civilized world for centuries with piracy, extortion, murder, terrorism, assassinations, suicide bombers, kidnappers, hijackers, and slavers.

Abram and Ishmael

Abram was 86 years old when Hagar bore Ishmael. But it was thirteen years later, when Abram was 99, that the Lord appeared to him and said (Gen. 17:2-8):

And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly.

And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with him, saying, As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations.

Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee.

And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee.

And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.

But God did not include Ishmael in the covenant.

We read in Genesis 17:19-21:

And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him.

And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee: Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation.

But my covenant will I establish with Isaac, which Sarah shall bear unto thee at this set time in the next year.

In other words God made His covenant with Isaac and not with Ishmael. And that may be why Muhammad despised the Jews. He had read the Bible, and it is quite clear that Ishmael was not a descendant of covenantal Abraham but of pre-covenantal Abram. Despite this, however, Muslims claim that Ishmael was a descendant of Abraham. They also reject the idea that God gave Canaan to Abraham's descendants as a gift.....

Also, and most important of all, the God who established a covenant with Abraham was also capable of begetting a Son, Jesus Christ, whose mission it was on earth not only to save mankind from its sinful nature but to extend the covenant beyond the seed of Abraham to all of mankind.

But according to the Koran, God did not have a son, and there is no salvation through the blood of Christ, for Jesus was merely a prophet.

In addition, Islam forbids Muslims from accepting salvation through Jesus Christ. Recently, in Palestine, a Muslim accepted Jesus Christ and went to a mountainous region to study the Bible and listen to cassette tapes. He was murdered, and his body, cut up into four pieces, was returned to his wife and two children. The family believes that this was meant to warn other Muslims against accepting the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Allah, the Moon-god

Allah is not the Jehovah of the Old Testament. In fact, Allah is a version of the Moon-god, a pagan god in Arabia who was worshipped during pre-Islamic times. And that is why the **Crescent moon** [also associated with the goddess Astarte worshipped by the Rephaim - giants] is the symbol of Islam, and the month-long Ramadan fasting begins and

ends with the crescent moon. The evidence of this can be found in the extensive archaeological digs in the Middle East over the last 100 years. A temple of the Moon-god was excavated in Ur by Sir Leonard Woolley. The examples of moon worship which he found can now be seen in the British Museum. In the 1950s, a temple to the Moon-god was excavated at Hazor in Palestine. Two idols of the Moon-god were found. Each was a statue of a man seated on a throne with a crescent moon carved on his chest.

Also in the 1950s, archaeologists excavated sites at Qataban, Timna, and Marib. Thousands of inscriptions from walls and rocks in Northern Arabia have also been collected. Reliefs and votive bowls used in worship of the "daughters of Allah" have also been discovered. The three daughters - al-Lat, al-Uzza, and Manat, are sometimes depicted together with Allah the Moon-god represented by a crescent moon above them. The archaeological evidence demonstrates that the dominant religion of Arabia was the cult of the Moon-god.

The oldest name of the Moon-god was Sin, of Sumerian origin. Hence, Sinai, or the wilderness of Sin. While the Arabs worshipped 360 gods at the Kabah in Mecca, the Moon-god was the chief deity. The Moon-god was also called Il or Ilah, which eventually became Allah.

Muhammad's Monotheism

Muhammad was raised in the religion of the Moon-god Allah, but he went one step further than his fellow pagan Arabs. While they believed that Allah, the Moon-god was the greatest of all gods and the supreme deity of them all, Muhammad decided that Allah was not only the greatest god but the only god. Thus he added the trappings of monotheism to his concept of the Moon-god.

In other words, Allah is not Jehovah.

This becomes obvious when one hears of the murderous rantings of Imams in the mosques preaching genocide against the Jews, encouraging children to become suicide bombers, promoting jihad against the infidels.

The followers of Jesus Christ largely conquered the western world by offering salvation, forgiveness of sin, and eternal life after death. They conquered by the Word of God, by the Gospel, by the love of Jesus Christ.

Islam conquers by the sword, by enslavement, brutality, and tyranny. A non-Muslim can only live in a Muslim country by accepting an inferior status.

Antithesis

While love and life are dominant themes in Christianity and Judaism, hatred and death are the dominant themes in modern Islam. The religion of the Bible and Islam are clearly opposite to each other. Islam's pagan origin has made it a religion of Satan. It is not derived from the God on high who spoke to Moses. It is pagan in concept, pagan in practice, and pagan in results. That is why no Muslim nation has ever experienced or achieved the freedom and general prosperity that are found in nations based on Christianity.

Communism produced poverty and murder. Islam does the same. Millions of Muslims have been led to believe that theirs in the true religion, which only proves that millions of human beings can be led down the path of misery and submission, enslaved by a religion of superstition, violence, and ignorance.....

Muslims are driven by appeals to their emotions and not their minds. It is only because they sit on an ocean of oil and have more money than they know what to do with that they have become a mortal danger to us. This is what happens when a religion of death and hatred has the financial means to spread its murderous philosophy across the globe. Their wealth has not provided philanthropy, but terror.

But there is an even more cogent reason why the Koran cannot be considered a furtherance of Biblical monotheism. For we are told in the last book of the Bible, viz., Revelation 22:18-19:

For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book:

And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

(From *Chalcedon Report November, 2003.*

Mr. Blumenfeld is the author of eight books on Education)

EVOLUTION?

The following information came from *UPDATE International Feb/April 2003*:

Slowdown of Light Threatens Evolution Theory

Light has slowed down, report many media sources, as a team, of Australian scientists, led by theoretical physicist (and evolutionist) Paul Davies from Sydney's Macquarie University, say it is possible that the speed of light has slowed down "over billions of years".

They have proposed that the speed of light may not be a constant - a revolutionary idea that could unseat one of the most cherished "laws" of modern physics - Einstein's Theory of Relativity. (*Reuters, Aug. 7, 2002; Canberra Times, Aug. 8, 2002.*)

Implications:

Radiometric dating methods are based on the belief that radioactivity, the speed of light, etc., have always been constant. If so this earth and the objects on it have a measurable age of million, even billions of years.

But if such processes were faster in the past then it did not take millions or billions of years to reach the present condition but perhaps only thousands of years. This idea is very **dangerous** to the Theory of Evolution!

[]

WHY SLEEP?

This year it was discovered that a large region of the **brain** called the cerebellum participates in sleep. Other organs such as muscles and liver, do not sleep. Animals sleep but plants do not.

In natural sleep a deep state of unconsciousness (the *non-REM* state) when no rapid eye movements take place, is always followed by a period of *REM* sleep when the eyes flick from side to side and most of our dreaming occurs.

Non REM sleep is now being explained as the time when the brain repairs the damage caused by free radicals - the toxic chemical by-products of metabolism. The brain is unable to replace injured cells as do other organs as they function, so it switches off while repairs are carried out. It has been suggested that the *REM* phase that follows is the brain booting up and testing the repairs it made during the *non-REM* phase.

Sleep is essential, therefore, for the brain to function as it should. "Going without it kills you quicker than starvation." Surely, we are indeed "fearfully and wonderfully made." (Psa. 139:14)

(Information from *New Scientist* 04.09.04)

THE KINGDOM OF GOD - Part 1

The LORD is good to all:
and his tender mercies are over all his works.
All thy works shall praise thee, O LORD;
and thy saints shall bless thee.
They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom,
and talk of thy power;
To make known to the sons of men his mighty acts,
and the glorious majesty of his kingdom.
Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom,
and thy dominion endureth throughout all generations.
(Psa. 145:9-13)

A kingdom is where a King reigns and where his will is sovereign.

God's kingdom, the sphere of God's sovereignty, is "everlasting".

i.e., His kingdom operates for all ages -

It looks backwards as well as forwards, in keeping with His nature as the EVERLASTING GOD -

' He Who WAS and IS and IS TO COME.

PSALM 22:28 states :

*"For the kingdom is the LORD'S:
and he is the governor among the nations."*

DANIEL 4:25: "*.... the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will.*"

ROMANS 13:1 "*Let every person be subject to the governing authorities; for there is no authority except from God, and those authorities that exist have been instituted by God.*" (NRSV)

From these Scriptures we see that God is the over-ruling power in the affairs of Natural Man in spite of the continuing disruption and chaos initiated by Satan when he instigated the Fall of the First Adam.

The Companion Bible points out that the fall of Adam "was to do solely with the WORD OF GOD and is centred on the sin of believing Satan's lie -

'Ye shall not surely die' [for disobeying God's command], instead of Jehovah's truth - '

Ye shall surely die'." (Gen. 3:3-4)

The temptation of the first Adam began with Satan's **doubting question: 'Hath God said?'**

The temptation of the Second Adam, the Lord from heaven, began with a similarly **implied doubt:**

'If thou be the Son of God', when the voice of the Father had not long before announced of Him:

'This is my beloved Son'. (Luke 3:22)

Our Lord silenced Satan three times with *'It is written'*, quoting from the Word of God.

The Companion Bible comments:

"The history of Genesis 3 is intended to teach us the fact that Satan's sphere of activities is in the *religious* sphere, and not in the spheres of crime or immorality; that his battlefield is not the sins arising from human depravity, but the *unbelief* of the human heart.

We are not to look for Satan's activities today in the press, or the police courts; but in the **pulpit**, and in **professors' chairs**. Wherever the **Word of God is called in question**, there we see the trail of "that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan". [End Quote]

Adam's fall was basically spiritual. He was given the opportunity to believe and obey God, to do God's Will on earth as it is done in heaven. Here was the alternative - **obedience** and an abundant earth without toil and sorrow, or **disobedience**, resulting in a fight for existence, and grief in the bearing of children, many of whom would die prematurely, through famine, illness or war.

The first Adam had the potential to be a partaker in building the Kingdom of God on earth. Vestiges of ancient advanced knowledge are evidenced even today as the knowledge of the ancients is further investigated. However, because of Adam's sin - his disobedience to God's Word - the knowledge which had been given to him was used for Evil rather than for Good.

The resultant **human depravity** originated in the heart of natural man, which we are told is "*deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked:*"

However despite the presence and activity of Satan, and the fall of Adam, we know that:

“The LORD has established his throne in the heavens, and his kingdom rules over all.” (Ps. 103:19)

In His **foreknowledge** God was to provide the means to rectify the sin of Adam through the symbolic *“Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.”*

It is upon this great underlying theme of Scripture that the purpose of God in this earth depends.

- i.e to bring the whole world again into **obedience to the perfect Will of God.**

*“Look unto me, and be ye saved,
all the ends of the earth:*

for I am God, and there is none else.

I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return,

That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear.” (Isa. 45:22-23)

The Prophet Daniel also glimpsed the culmination of God's Purpose in the Person of the Son of God - the Risen Lamb slain for the sin of the world:

“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)

1 Cor. 15:24-28 pictures the final handing over of the perfected Kingdom to God the Father.

“Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power.

For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet.....

And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.”

THE KINGDOM OF GOD ON EARTH

Vine's Expository Dictionary defines THE KINGDOM OF GOD as -

"The sphere in which at any given time His rule is acknowledged."

Amid the increasing apostasy and evil in the Adamic Earth, there were those who remained faithful to God as members of His Kingdom. Enoch is described as walking with God.

"And all the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty and five years:

And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him." (Gen. 5:23 & 24)

Finally, Noah, "*a just man, perfect in his generations*" who "*walked with God*", was the last "*preacher/herald of righteousness*" in the Adamic civilization (2 Pet 2:5).

To him was entrusted the knowledge of the **Kingdom of God**, and from him was to come a selected line through whom the Kingdom of God would gradually become manifested.

In was in this line that God's great promise of Genesis 3:15 was to be realised.

"And the LORD God said unto the serpent,

Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: and I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."

(Gen.3: 14-15)

Here in this brief statement is summed up the great battle between Satan and the Son of God, Who, though suffering temporary affliction Himself, will complete the bruising of Satan's head by finally bringing about the destruction of him and his works, and so eradicate his influence over men.

Instead of enabling mankind to enter into the full abundance of God's Providence, Adam's disobedience to **RIGHTEOUS LAW** brought into being, as D. Davidson

expresses it, [Quote] "the 'knowledge of good and evil', and the operation of conscience. Then began the struggle for survival by the 'free-enterprise' of individuals, groups of individuals, and successively dominant and predatory dynasties.

The first Adam, in the initial trial of civilization failed, just as successive trials, and even our modern day trials have failed.

The hope of humanity lies in the promise that of Eve, who was named "the mother of all living" before she had any offspring - was to come the Seed of New Life, to germinate, in the travail of expectant humanity, as 'the Last Adam' - the Christ under whom all things shall be restored.

Having gained the ripe experience of how not to do things, emancipated humanity is to be given tuition in how to participate righteously in new creative work on earth." [End quote]

Was Adam's fall an impediment to the purpose of God? Did his disobedience cause God to alter His plans in any way? Would God be God if man could alter His course of action?

Isaiah 46:9-10:

*"Remember the former things of old:
for I am God, and there is none else;
I am God, and there is none like me,
Declaring the end from the beginning,
and from ancient times the things that are not yet done,
saying, My counsel shall stand,
and I will do all my pleasure:"*

Thus God's great purpose will continue to unfold regardless of the errancy of man or the machinations of Satan. The Kingdom of God will triumph and eventually fill the earth. (To be continued)

. (Ed.)

IRAN/ISRAEL CONFLICT

In reference to the strained relations between Israel and Iran, and Sharon's decision to put aside the US Roadmap to Peace, the following report was quoted in the 3rd of September issue of *On Target Bulletin*..

[Quote]

Agence France Presse, from Tehran - 18.08.04

"Iran will strike the Israeli reactor at Dimona if Israel launches an attack on Iran's own burgeoning nuclear facilities", a commander of the elite Revolutionary Guards was quoted as saying on Wednesday.

"If Israel fires one missile at Bushehr Atomic Power Plant, it should permanently forget about Dimona Nuclear Centre, where it produces and keeps its nuclear weapons, and Israel would be responsible for the terrifying consequence of this move," General Mohammad Baqer Zolqadr was quoted as saying in the press.

Iran's controversial bid to generate nuclear power at its Bushehr plant is seen by arch-enemies Israel and the US as a cover for nuclear weapons development, allegations that Iran denies. As a result Israel and Iran have been exchanging threats in recent weeks, raising the possibility of an attack on Iran's facilities similar to that carried out by Israeli bombers on the Iraqi nuclear plant at Osirak in 1981.

Israel refuses to confirm it has a nuclear arsenal but is estimated to possess some 200 warheads.

Iran recently tested an upgraded version of its conventional medium-range shahab-3 missile, and Revolutionary Guards Chief, Yadollah Javani said that all Israeli *military and nuclear sites* are now within range." [End quote]

It was also reported (*On Target Bulletin* 10.09.04) that support for the Zionist state in both the White House and the Congress is so fervent that regardless of whether the new president is a Democrat or a Republican, American policy is tightly in the grip of politicians and government officials who are ardently dedicated to Israel and its interests. []

OUR CHANGING WORLD

Many reports are appearing in the media these days indicating that this world is indeed heading for substantial change, caused by man's misuse of the environment and the warming of the climate. The Bible also warns that the world will be in turmoil and distress just prior to the return of Jesus Christ in power and glory.

There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars, and on the earth distress among nations confused by the roaring of the sea and the waves.

People will faint from fear and foreboding of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken.....

So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that the kingdom of God is near. (Luke 21:25-26, 31)

Ten thousand years ago, at the end of the last great ice age, Scandinavia experienced large earthquakes as glaciers began to melt. During the last 100 years because of rising temperatures and changes in precipitation, many southern Alaskan glaciers have shrunk or disappeared altogether like the Muir glacier which disintegrated between 1899 and 2003. "Shrinking glaciers in Alaska could trigger earthquakes in the region as tectonic plates in the Earth's crust move more freely, relieved of the massive weight of the ice." (Anna Gosline *New Scientist* 14 Aug. 2004)

Earthquakes can cause tidal waves of huge proportions.

Japan's Earthquake Research Committee predicted on 23rd August that a 90 percent chance exists that Tokyo will be devastated by a magnitude 7 earthquake within the next 50 years. This is based on an analysis of data from the five earthquakes of magnitude 6.7 - 7.2 which have struck the Tokyo region since 1885. (*New Scientist* 4 Sept. 2004)

An article in *New Scientist* 24 July 2004, by Kate Ravilious, entitled "Mountains Face Meltdown" states the following [Quote]

Rock faces on high mountains could start crumbling at alarming rates if summers get hotter as global climate models predict. Higher temperatures could destabilise rocks by thawing the permafrost beneath them.

In Europe, concern about disintegrating rock faces was heightened last year when at least 50 people died in the Alps as a result of falling rock. Many mountain paths, including classic routes on Mont Blanc, were closed because of the danger of rockfalls, and nearly 100 climbers had to be rescued from the normal route on the Matterhorn when part of the ridge collapsed.

Because there was no unusual snowfall or rainfall to trigger these incidents, geologists suspected that thawing of the permanently frozen interior of the rocks could be the reason..... In the past month [June] at least four massive rock formations have come crashing down in the Italian Dolomites.

A quarter of Earth's land surface is permanently frozen, with some of this permafrost in mountain ranges. If global mean temperatures rise by as much as 1.3 degrees C. over the next 20 years, as predicted, "mountain ranges from the Himalayas to the Andes will all be affected if permafrost starts to thaw," says Lorenz King, a geographer at the University of Giessen, Germany. And Michael Davies, from the University of Dundee, UK, says, "European mountain ranges like the Alps and Pyrenees are particularly

vulnerable because they are relatively warm and their permafrost is only marginal." "Global warming could have an effect sooner than we thought." [End quote] []

THE WALL AND ARCHAEOLOGY

A Biblical Pool is Discovered

Not many pools are specifically mentioned in the Bible, but one of them was in Gibeon.

And Joab the son of Zeruiah, and the servants of David, went out, and met together by the pool of Gibeon: and they sat down, the one on the one side of the pool, and the other on the other side of the pool. (2 Sam. 2:13)

Professor J. B. Pritchard who excavated Gibeon from 1956 onwards, wrote:

"The most spectacular monument discovered in four seasons at el-Jib is the large pool with a spiral staircase, hewn from the bedrock of the hill just inside the wall on the north east side of the city.

The cutting of this landmark of ancient Gibeon involved the quarrying and removal of approximately 3,000 tons of limestone..... How long it must have taken to carve out this hole, 80 feet deep, cannot even be guessed with any degree of accuracy."

Under the terms of his agreement with the locals Pritchard had to fill in all his excavations when he was finished so the land could be returned to the Arabs for cultivation, but now this peaceful village is to be split in two by the wall the Israelis propose to build at Gibeon.

The wall will separate the village from the archaeological site. The site will become inaccessible to tourists to Israel, and the villagers will be deprived of tourist income.

It is deplorable that politics have to interfere with archaeology. (From: *Diggings April, 2004*)



Located on a hill that rises some two hundred feet above the surrounding plain, the ancient site of Gibeon covers about 16 acres. The site was the scene of archaeological diggings around the mid 20th century when excavators cleared a 167 foot tunnel cut through solid rock. This tunnel was anciently lighted by means of lamps placed in niches at regular intervals along its walls.

With its 93 rock-cut steps, the tunnel led from just within Gibeon to a man-made cave reservoir fed by a spring about 82 feet below the city wall. This ensured the Gibeonites a safe water supply even in time of siege.

Excavators also uncovered a round, rock-cut pit or pool having a diameter of more than 37 feet. A circular stairway, with steps measuring about 4.9 feet wide, leads downward in a clockwise direction around the edge of the pit. From the bottom of the pit, at a depth of about 35 feet, the steps continue for some 45 feet through a tunnelled stairwell leading to a water chamber. The pit has been identified as the Biblical "pool of Gibeon" (2 Sam. 2:13).

At the time of Joshua Gibeon was inhabited by Hivites who should have been expelled as the Israelites conquered Canaan. Realising that they had no hope of resisting Israel, because they acknowledged Jehovah's power in Israel's dealings with the Egyptians, and their conquest of the Amorite kings Sihon and Og on the east side of Jordan, they tricked Joshua into making an alliance with them by pretending they had come from a far country. (Josh. ch. 9; 11:19)

When five Amorite kings sought to destroy the Gibeonites for their alliance with the invaders, Jehovah blessed Israel's rescue operation, even showering down great hailstones upon the foe and miraculously extending the daylight for battle (Josh. 10:1-14)

Both in seeking a covenant of peace with Israel and in appealing to Joshua for help when threatened, the Gibeonites manifested faith in Jehovah's ability to fulfil His word and to effect deliverance, something for which Rahab of Jericho (Josh. Ch. 2) was commended, and that resulted in the preservation of her life and that of her household.

The Gibeonites had a wholesome fear of Israel's God and for this they were blessed. Gibeon afterwards came to be one of the cities in the territory of Benjamin assigned to the Aaronic Priesthood. (Ed.)



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(NOTE: The views expressed in the following articles are not necessarily endorsed by the British-Israel World Federation (Victorian Headquarters) Inc.)

THE HOLY SPIRIT OF TRUTH
(John 16:5-15 NRSV)

- 5 But now I am going to Him who sent me; yet none of you asks me, 'Where are you going?'
- 6 But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your hearts.
- 7 Nevertheless I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage [expedient] that I go away, for if I do not go away, the ADVOCATE [COMFORTER] will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you.
- 8 And when He comes, He will prove the world wrong about SIN and RIGHTEOUSNESS and JUDGMENT;
- 9 about sin, because they do not believe in me;
- 10 about righteousness, because I am going to the Father and you will see me no longer;
- 11 about judgment, because the ruler of this world has been condemned.
- 12 I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now.
- 13 When the SPIRIT OF TRUTH comes, He will guide you into ALL THE TRUTH; for He will not speak on His own, but will speak whatever He hears, and He will declare to you the things that are to come.
- 14 He will glorify me, because He will take what is mine and declare it to you. All that the Father has is mine.

THE COMING OF THE SPIRIT

In the Old Testament, it is the Spirit of God Who is most present. It is He Who speaks through the prophets and holy men, and it is He Who is the comfort and strength of Covenant men. The repentant David prayed:

Cast me not away from thy presence;
and take not **THY HOLY SPIRIT** from me.
Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me
with **THY FREE SPIRIT**. (Psa. 51:11-12)

In spite of this we can speak of the post-resurrection era as the time of the "coming of the Holy Spirit". In verse 13 of John 16 (above) our Lord speaks plainly of the coming of the Spirit in some unusual sense. He is not here referring to Pentecost, but to something far greater and broader.

Our Lord says that He Himself must leave His disciples and this world. It is expedient, profitable, and necessary to bring together the purposes of God that the Son of God leave, and that the Holy Spirit come. The word translated as *expedient* is *sumphero*, which is used also by Caiaphas in John 11:50, where he declares that it is expedient or profitable for Christ to be sentenced to death: only so, can the purposes of their national history be realized.

Our Lord now says that His departure and the Spirit's coming are necessary to God's purposes. He had previously pointed to that coming and its greatness (Jn. 14:15-17). Now with His atoning work and resurrection completed, the Spirit can come.

The Spirit is called *Parakletos*; the word has reference to an advocate or legal assistant in a court of law - such a person is a comforter to one who is accused. He is, however, a prosecutor of the guilty also. Here the Spirit plainly functions as both the Comforter and Advocate of Christ's members, and also as a Judge and Prosecutor of Christ's enemies:

He will reprove the world of sin,
and of righteousness, and of judgment.

The word *reprove* is *elencho*, which can mean rebuke, and also convict. **The Spirit convicts the world.**

We see here the significance of this coming of the Spirit. From creation, the Spirit has been active in creation.

Christ came, and set forth God's sovereign claim on all men preaching "the gospel of the kingdom of God" (Mk 1:14-15).

By His death and resurrection He became the head of the new humanity (1 Cor. 15:20-50). Now the Holy Spirit comes to continue that witness of Jesus Christ in the hearts of all men.

First, He will reprove or convict the world. Christ had come, and the world crucified Him. Moreover, it was not the world at its worst that crucified Christ. The Jews were the most moral, the best educated, and the most disciplined people of that era. With all that, they were at heart humanists and sons of Adam, unregenerate sons. The depravity of man was manifested in this fact, that the fallen world, at its best, crucified Christ, and the fallen world since continues to reject Him and to give assent to that judgment, by their refusal to know Him as Lord.

The world is guilty, but it requires the Spirit to fasten this home. The Spirit convicts the world in two senses. In the first place He "shows the world to be guilty," i.e., He secures a verdict of "Guilty" against the world.

But in the second place we should take the words to mean also that the Spirit brings the world's guilt home to itself. The Spirit convicts the individual sinner's conscience, otherwise men would never be convicted of their sin.

(Comment by Leon Morris)

Churchmen are too accustomed to seeing the relevance of the faith of Christ, and of the Spirit to the believer only, forgetting that the relevance is cosmic. Clearly, the coming of the Spirit means that the Old Testament presence is now an expanded and worldwide one. The Spirit will not allow the world to forget Christ. He works in the hearts of all men, including those not yet evangelized, to bring forth conviction, a recognition of their guilt and their rebellion against Almighty God.

Second, the world is convicted of sin, because it will not believe on Him (Jn. 16:9). The emphasis is on Christ. He is very God of very God, He against Whom mankind is in revolt. The world prefers to make its sins vague and abstract when sin is personal. It is against the Son of God, the incarnate Son, Who came to be the head of the new creation. The world may daydream about a new paradise, but in all its being and actions, it works to re-create the old Babel and the new Hell. Then and now, the world's best and worst cry out, "We will not have this man to reign over us" (Lk. 19:14).

The world would like to forget about Christ, and a sleeping Church seems all too ready to help the world to forget Him. The Spirit, however, will not permit it. He convicts the world of sin, all sin, and supremely its sin in relation to Christ.

Third, the Spirit convicts the world of righteousness. "because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more" (Jn. 16:10). *Righteousness and justice* are the same words. The world outside of Christ seeks to establish a humanistic doctrine of justice: social justice, human rights, equal rights, etc. All of this is injustice, not justice. Christ's death and resurrection set forth true justice. His ascension is the triumphant procession of the King of Justice to His throne.

Because man the rebel deserves to die, Christ's *death* witnesses to the righteousness and binding force of God's Law for all time. Because Christ *arose from the dead*, and by His power makes us alive in Him, we know that "the just shall live by faith (Rom. 1:17)." Because of His *ascension*, we know that God's righteousness and law are forever on the throne.

Fourth, the Holy Spirit convicts the world of judgment, i.e., of the reality of God's Judgment.

The word *judgment* is in the Greek, *krisis*, separation and division. "The prince of this world", Satan, he whom the fallen world sees as its leader in revolt against God, is judged. The cross and the resurrection are the defeat of Satan and his world. The world, however, refuses to acknowledge God's judgment, although their entire being witnesses to it: they suppress and hold down that truth in their unrighteousness, their fanatical adherence to injustice (Rom. 1:18). They are determined on creating a judgment-free or justice-free world.

The philosopher Walter Kaufmann, in his insistence on man's autonomy from God, called for a world *Without Guilt and Justice*. Let there be no conscience and no judgment! The Holy Spirit makes this judgment on Satan and the ungodly respond in their hearts. Hence the world of the unregenerate is the world of neuroses, psychiatrists, and psychoanalysts. Guilt is declared by Freud to be a primitive relic lingering in man's psyche since the days of the primal horde, but guilt haunts all fallen men as a very present and personal fact. The Holy Spirit convicts men of their need for, and their actual judgment by, the court of Almighty God.

Up to this point, the work of the Holy Spirit, i.e., convicting men of sin, justice, and judgment, is a work in relationship to the world outside of Christ. Now, our Lord turns to the Spirit's work in relationship to His followers. While Christ is with them, His followers rely on Him, and they cannot bear the thought of separation. He is the Lord, the miracle-worker, and the Saviour. They cannot think of life without His physical presence. But until He leaves, they cannot do the "greater works" (Jn. 14:12), the world-wide conquest, which is their calling (Mrk. 16:15). How shall this be done?

Our Lord declares, fifth, that the Holy Spirit is "the Spirit of truth" Who shall guide His people into all truth.

The Spirit leads men into all *the Truth*, Jesus Christ, the Word of God. The Greek reading is "truth in all its parts." The Spirit's guidance is not of Himself" it expresses the One Will of the Godhead.

The Spirit's communication is an amazing one:

.....whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak:
and he will show you things to come.

Some have limited this to an understanding of "the whole Christian way."

No doubt, it seems to some to open the door to unrestricted new prophecies and revelations, and some have indeed so interpreted it. But the limits of the Written Word of God must be the limits of His followers: there can be no new revelations [and need not be].

There are gifts of wisdom and light which enable men to see the meaning of His words, and their light on our times.

To say that "the wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23) is a very simple and necessary forecast of things to come. To develop its implications fully and specifically in relation to prayerlessness, inflation, ignorance of Scripture and especially of God's Law (Deut. 28), politics, family life, business, the arts and sciences, and all things else, requires the guidance of "the Spirit of truth." Even more, it requires that we glorify Christ even as the Spirit of truth does.

The coming of the Spirit thus unleashed powerful forces in history, forces of conviction and growth. History cannot be stagnant. The pool of Bethesda had healing only when the angel "troubled the water" (Jn. 5:4). Today the Holy Spirit is troubling the waters of history, as He has since Pentecost. That troubling is conviction and judgment for the ungodly. Churchmen who draw back from the troubled waters

remain impotent. Those who in Christ and in the power of the Spirit move into the troubled waters alone know the power of His salvation and victory.

(By Rev. R. J. Rushdoony, *Chalcedon Report June 2001*)

II

THE IRAQ WAR - ITS EFFECT ON ISRAELI

Twelve months ago a confident George W. Bush was claiming that Iraq would be a beacon of democratic reform in the Middle East. As reported in a newspaper article by Marian Wilkinson (Paper and date unknown), Mr. Bush at that time claimed:

[Quote] "The success of a free Iraq will be watched and noted throughout the region. Millions will see that freedom, equality and material progress are possible at the heart of the Middle East. Leaders in the region will face the clearest evidence that free institutions and open societies are the only path to long-term national success and dignity."

One year on, the terrorist threat in Iraq is growing, with Zarqawi believed to be organising the beheadings and suicide bombings from a secure base in Fallujah. The promised reconstruction funds are largely unspent and the White House has asked Congress to transfer nearly US\$3.5 billion of the money to fight the growing insurgency.

Iraq is indeed being watched throughout the region, but not by those yearning for democracy. Iran and Syria are trying to interfere in Iraq's affairs, and there are mounting fears Iran is advancing a nuclear weapons programme as a counterweight to the US presence there. [End Quote]

That the Neo Conservative pressure within the Bush Administration to act in defence of the Israeli State has not been successful is evident from the following excerpt from *On Target Bulletin 02.07.04*:

[Quote]

By going to war before he had exhausted all diplomatic options, by failing to assemble a genuinely international coalition, by failing to line up moderate Arab support as his father did in 1991, Bush set in motion a catastrophic chain of events that has left the world less stable than it was before. The threat of terrorism has increased, not declined. Movements that were separate and distinct before the war - Iraqi Baathism, Al Qaeda fundamentalism, Palestinian nationalism - are making common cause more than ever, and becoming the global threat that we had imagined them to be.

Jewish institutions around the world have been forced

to fortify themselves like military installations. And in the midst of all this stands America - alone against much of the world - with Israel by its side, more alone and threatened than it was before. [End Quote]

Sharon's actions do not help matters. Although maintaining that his move is in keeping with the "road map" plan for peace, his withdrawal of troops and settlers from the Gaza Strip while at the same time increasing his hold over the West Bank, is a way of avoiding a final peace settlement with the Palestinians - a way of freezing the peace process. This postpones the establishment of a Palestinian state, and discussion on the refugees, Israeli borders and Jerusalem. His recent reprisal attack on the Gaza Strip, for the killing of one Jewish settler and two children, was carried out by hundreds of tanks and attack helicopters, and resulted in 89 Palestinian deaths, 21 of whom were children. (Refer: *The Age* 07.10. 2004)

War in the Middle East, particularly in Palestine, is the subject of a number of Bible prophecies. If the leaders of modern nations understood and believed these prophecies, their planning and actions would be very different. But we must remember that it is the Lord who is bringing the nations together:

I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle.....
(Zech. 14:2)

with a view to cleansing the place where He had put His Name forever (1 Ki. 9:3), and destroying those enemies who would appropriate His Land and supplant His People.

We are expected to recognize fulfilled prophecy when it happens (Jn.14:29), but it is difficult to piece together unfulfilled prophecy. We are not meant to predict the times and forms of future events but to recognize the circumstances of their occurrence (Mark 13:28-29). Incorrect predictions bring Scripture into disrepute. However, world events appear to indicate that we are nearing the end of this present age, as the hostility of nations surrounding the Israeli State increases. *The New Unger's Bible Dictionary*, Moody Press, 1988, offers the following scenario:

[Quote]

In the prophetic Scriptures the last great battle of the age will be fought at Armageddon, the ancient hill of the valley of Megiddo west of Jordan, in the Plain of Jezreel (Rev. 16:14-16).

This great conflict will be that in which Christ and His coming glory will deliver the Jewish remnant besieged at Jerusalem..... (Rev. 16:13-16 & Zech. 12:1-9).

Apparently the besieging hosts, alarmed by the signs

preceding the Lord's Advent (Matt. 24:29-30), fall back to Megiddo after the events of Zechariah 14:2. Here their destruction begins, with the decimation completed in Moab and the plains of Edom (Isa. 63:1-6; 34:1-8)[End Quote] (Ed.)

THE KINGDOM OF GOD - Part 2

THE SELECTION OF A PEOPLE

Read again our definition of the Kingdom of God:

“the sphere in which at any given time His rule is acknowledged”.

Noah brought the knowledge of the **Kingdom of God** through the Flood and it appears that his son Shem was to preserve this knowledge through his posterity. For it was from the descendants of Shem, that God selected **Abraham** to be the progenitor of a People through whom His Kingdom on earth would become manifested, and through whom would come the Seed of the Woman who would be victorious over Satan (Gen. 3:15).

God then told **Isaac** that he would inherit the Promises of the Covenant made with his father Abraham. These promises had been made we are told

“Because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws.” (Gen. 26:5)

So the **Kingdom of God** was already active in the life of **Abraham**, and this was over 400 years before the LAW was given to Israel, or recodified, at Sinai.

THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT

Briefly, the Promises to Abraham (Gen. 12:2&3) were:

He was to become a great nation and would be greatly blessed.

His name was to become great and he would be a blessing, i.e., his descendants would be used to benefit other peoples.

As well as this he and his seed were to be protected by God: *“I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee”.*

These were promises of a physical nature.

Then there was the great spiritual blessing:

“in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.” which looked towards the coming of the One Seed

promised in Genesis 3:15, the son of David and Son of God, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, whose Sacrifice would make restitution for the Sin of the World.

Possession of land: land centred in Palestine was also to be given to Abraham's posterity for an everlasting possession. (Gen. 13:15)

Abraham's descendants were to be multitudinous:

(Gen. 13:16, 15:5-6) "*as the dust of the earth*", as "*the sand upon the sea shore*" (Gen. 22:17) and as *the stars of heaven* in number.

Many nations and kings would come from Abraham.

God's covenant with Abraham was to be an everlasting covenant (Gen. 17:1-8), and was to be established with his miracle son Isaac, and his offspring (v.19):

"And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him."

This Covenant with Abraham was also to be an **UNCONDITIONAL COVENANT** (Gen. 22:16-18)

"...By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice."

This **UNCONDITIONAL COVENANT** has continued in its purpose throughout the centuries.

It is the Abrahamic Covenant that has ensured the continuity and regrouping of the seed of Abraham through Isaac and Jacob, indeed their very existence, throughout millennia of apostasy, trials and tribulation.

"... I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." (Mal. 3:6)

God will faithfully keep His promises and continue His purpose regardless of man's unfaithfulness.

Only the provisions of the **Unconditional, Everlasting Abrahamic Covenant** will enable the seed of Abraham through Isaac and Jacob to endure, and to fulfil their role in the coming Kingdom Age, at the return of our Lord Jesus Christ of whom it was prophesied:

“He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.” (Luke 1:32-33)

JACOB - ISRAEL

Isaac's son, JACOB, was the God-ordained inheritor of the **Abrahamic Covenant**.

In confirmation of this God appeared to him in a dream and restated the Covenant to him, when he was on his way to Haran fleeing from the wrath of Esau - Jacob's elder twin brother. (Ref. Gen. 27:41- 28:22)

Thirty-four years later, as Jacob was returning to Canaan with his family, greatly increased in possessions, he had the experience of wrestling with a supernatural Being (elsewhere referred to as an Angel, and also as God) at the ford Jabbok. Here his name was changed from Jacob to Israel.

Jacob means *supplanter or contender* -

He had contended with Esau for the birthright, with his father for the blessing, with Laban for his possessions and had succeeded - but when he contended with God, he failed, being injured in the thigh. (Gen 32:24)

The meaning of the name *Israel* is given by some authorities as “*Ruling with God*” and signifies the place of restored Israel in the perfected Kingdom of God on earth, when Israel is to operate as a “priestly kingdom and an holy nation” with respect to the other nations of the earth.

Dr. Bullinger, however, inclines to the meaning “*God commands or rules*” (in keeping with other names which end in ‘el’ - Daniel (God judges), Ezekiel (God will strengthen), Jezreel (God scatters), etc.

He considers that this name “*God commands*” was given to Jacob to teach him the greatly needed lesson of dependence upon God. This is in keeping with the Scriptural use of the name “Jacob” for the physical seed

of Jacob, and "Israel" for the Spiritual seed, who as men and women of faith, live lives in which they are "commanded by God", rather than led by their own ambitions and appetites.

The Scripture records that when Joseph's brothers returned from Egypt (c.1700 BC), and told the sorrowing Jacob, who was then 130 years old (dying later at 146), that Joseph was alive, and was governor over all the land of Egypt, Jacob's heart fainted for he believed them not. But when he saw the full wagons which Joseph had sent to him, the Bible records his reaction in this way:

".... the spirit of Jacob their father revived: and Israel said, It is enough; Joseph my son is yet alive: I will go and see him before I die" (Gen 45:27-28).

Jacob's faith in God is restored. He is now truly Israel and willing to be "commanded by God".

It is relevant here to remind ourselves of what occurred when the two sons of Joseph were brought to Israel/Jacob to be blessed before he died. Jacob proclaimed:

"And now thy two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, which were born unto thee in the land of Egypt before I came unto thee into Egypt, are mine; as Reuben and Simeon, they shall be mine."

"As for the offspring born to you after them, they shall be yours. They shall be recorded under the names of their brothers with regard to their inheritance."

"Ephraim and Manasseh..... are mine; as Reuben and Simeon they shall be mine." (Gen. 48:9-22)

What does this mean?

Reuben and Simeon, Jacob's first- and second-born sons, had both disgraced themselves by committing deeds of gross unrighteousness (Gen. Ch. 34; 35:22), and were now to be replaced in their positions at the head of the family.

The aged Jacob in a sense adopted Ephraim and Manasseh as his own sons, giving them the positions of first- and second-born. By this time, however, Jacob had been renamed **ISRAEL** by the Angel at the ford Jabbok. Ephraim and Manasseh, therefore, would have become known as Sons, or **Children of Israel** rather than Sons of **Joseph**.

This is probably why in Palestine the ten northern tribes became known as the **House of Israel**, rather than the **House of Joseph**, as *Ephraim and Manasseh* were the

leading tribes in this confederation, while *Judah* was the leading tribe of the southern House of *Judah*.

Israel and his family removed to Egypt where, known as the *Children of Israel*, they were to live for 400 years, becoming a vigorous and numerous people, until their oppression under Ramessu II, which began at the birth of Moses. However, over this 400 year period the knowledge and sovereignty of God was to decline among them as they became more and more involved in the culture of the Egyptians.

But God's purpose remained, and a further manifestation of the Kingdom of God on earth was to break forth, as the awesome power of Jehovah, the great God of Israel, set His people free from the tyranny of the Egyptian Pharaoh by the events of the Exodus and Crossing of the Red Sea.

What was the purpose of such awesome phenomena? The answer is in the words which God said to Pharaoh:

"And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to show in thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth." (Ex. 9:16)

Until this time the Kingdom of God had been revealed through the witness and experience of individuals.

Now it was to be manifested to the nations of the earth by a nation.

When the Israelite spies enlisted the help of Rahab in the capture of Jericho, 40 years later, Rahab said:

".....I know that the LORD (Jehovah) hath given you the land, and that your terror is fallen upon us,..... For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red sea for you, when ye came out of Egypt; and what ye did unto the two kings of the Amorites,....whom ye utterly destroyed.

And as soon as we had heard these things, our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more courage in any man, because of you: for the LORD your God, he is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath."

(Jos.2:9-11)

This is what all the nations of the world will have learned before the final days of this age have ended. We look forward in eager anticipation to the time when God's Kingdom will function here in its fulness, i.e., when His Will will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

(To be continued)

(Ed.)

NONE OF THESE DISEASES

If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the LORD thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am the LORD that healeth thee.
(Exodus 15:26)

Pestilence and illness in Israel are stated in Leviticus 26:16 & 25 to result from rebellion against God and His Law. When obedient and faithful, Israel Peoples enjoy the protection of their Great God but in apostasy that protection is withdrawn and they become subject to the diseases of the world.

Psalm 91 illustrates this as it describes Israel's journey through the wilderness after their exodus from Egypt. Because of their disobedience and lack of faith in Jehovah after having experienced the miracles of the Exodus, the original generation whose fighting men were numbered from 20 years old and upwards (Num. 1:45-46), were refused entry into the Promised Land (Num. Chs. 13 & 14).

But your little ones, which ye said should be a prey, them will I bring in, and they shall know the land which ye have despised. But as for you, your carcases, they shall fall in this wilderness. (Num. 14:31-32)

Addressed to those who trust in the Lord saying:
He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust, Psalm 91 promises that they shall abide under the shadow of **THE ALMIGHTY**, and so rejoice in His protection:

Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day; nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday.

A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee.

Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked [as they died in the wilderness from various causes].....

There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. (Psa. 91:5-10)

God is willing and able to protect and heal those who put their faith and trust in Him.

Pandemics, have been part of history. The **Black Death** ravaged Europe in 1348-51, reaching England in 1349 and carrying off about one third of Europe's population.

A book review in the *Sunday Herald Sun* 30.06.2002, gave the following information.

[Quote]

Europe's great plague was an *Ebola*-type virus epidemic - and it could come back. That is the theory advanced by two British scientists who have studied the Black Death

In a new book *Biology of Plagues*, epidemiologists Dr. S. Scott and Dr. C. Duncan, argue that accounts of Black Death symptoms are at odds with the idea that it was spread by rat-carried *pestis* bacteria. The rate and pattern of the disease's devastating spread also don't stack up. [They] have warned that the most violent epidemic in history, which killed 25 million people, could resurface. They say it is critical to identify the real microbial culprit

The accepted wisdom is that the *pestis* bacteria caused the Black Death in the 14th century and the Great Plague of London in 1665. That theory was proposed by 19th century French bacteriologist Alexander Yersin, who was studying bubonic plague victims - buboes, or dark painful swellings in the lymph nodes of the armpits or groin. But several other viral and bacterial diseases produce buboes, and other Black Death symptoms included pain, fever, boils and vomiting blood. Victims typically died within three days.

Dr. Scott and Dr. Duncan argue that bubonic plague is among the least likely diseases to have caused the Black Death. The symptoms more closely resemble those of a haemorrhagic virus infection - particularly a filovirus such as *Ebola*.

Their doubts about *pestis* stem from accounts of the disease racing across the European Alps and northern Europe, where conditions are too cold for the rat fleas that transmit the disease to hatch. The rate of spread in France, up to 4 km a day, was also too fast for rats, suggesting it was transmitted from human to human. In mediaeval times, the black rat was Europe's only rat species and it is a homebody, remaining close to human habitation, so it was unlikely to spread rapidly between population centres. People also died of the Black Death in Iceland, which has no rats.....

In Britain, the villagers of Eyam, in Derbyshire, confined themselves to their homes when the Black Death hit. A third of the people died, but the disease did not spread to nearby towns - the measure would not have worked if the disease were spread by rats.....

Hints that the microbe was a haemorrhagic virus come from accounts of the plague of Athens in 430 BC, where victims suffered hiccupping and retching like *Ebola*.

[End Quote]

Influenza was first recognized in the 16th century and since then there have been widespread epidemics, several of which seem to have originated in Asia and spread through Europe to America. The epidemic of 1918 was one of the most serious on record, and was prevalent over Europe, the USA, India, and Australia. During the worst period of this epidemic over 2000 people died in London in a single week.

New Scientist 02.10.04 reported that the one thing bird flu experts were dreading looks as if it has happened. Health officials in Thailand have announced the first probable human-to-human spread of the *HSN1 bird flu*. So far the virus has killed three out of every four people it has infected from birds. If it mutates and becomes more infectious, the chances of preventing a pandemic look slim.

However, much modern day illness is the result of modern life styles and industrial practices, such as the widespread use of asbestos in buildings, petrol and diesel fumes and exhausts. The *International Express* 01.10.2002, stated that couples can be made infertile through eating fish and shellfish containing dangerous levels of mercury. This deadly toxin which can cause brain damage, accumulates to alarming levels in the larger fish such as swordfish, shark and marlin from industrial wastes in the sea.

Modern foods also cause illness. The *Sunday Herald Sun* 11.07.04 reported that children as young as 18 months are having rotting teeth removed. Soft drinks, chocolate milk, cordial and cola are given to young children often to take to bed. The sugar coats the teeth causing them to erode. Orthodontist Steve Atkin from the Queensland Royal Children's Hospital said he was having to perform 500 general anaesthetics a year on toddlers as young as 18 months to remove rotten teeth. Some toddlers were having crowns, stainless steel caps and even dentures after having their teeth removed. Dentures are necessary in some cases to assist with the child's development of speech.

Chemical food additives to lengthen shelf life, and chemical food sweeteners are also health risks. *On Target Bulletin* 01.10.04 reports that a US\$350 million class action lawsuit was filed on September 15, 2004, in the US District Court in San Fancisco against NutraSweet Corporation, American Diabetes Association, Dr. Robert H. Moser and John Does 1-50. The plaintiffs claim that this will prove how deadly is the chemical sweetener, *Aspartame*, when consumed by humans.

Contained in the lawsuit is the key role played by Donald Rumsfeld in helping to get Aspartame pushed through the FDA. In the 1980s Rumsfeld was President and CEO of Searle who originally owned the patent on Aspartame. It is claimed that Rumsfeld used his political muscle to get the neurotoxic Aspartame approved by the FDA as a sugar substitute despite objections of many FDA health researchers, and negative studies.

Aspartame is found in over 5000 food products and all soft drinks sold in the United States. As well as causing a long list of health problems, Aspartame mimics symptoms or worsens diseases such as Fibromyalgia, Arthritis, Multiple Sclerosis, Parkinson's Disease, Lupus, etc., etc.

We would all do well to eat natural foods as far as possible and be guided by the Biblical Food Laws given by God for our physical health. (Leviticus ch. 11 & Deuteronomy ch. 14) We would refer anyone wishing to obtain help in interpreting the Food Laws to *The Biblical Food Laws - Living a Healthy Life in the 21st Century* by V. Cooksley, (obtainable in the Bookroom price \$3.00). (Ed.)

AUSTRALIA'S NEXT "REFORM"?

An article by G. Hywood in *The Age* 07.10.1004, discussed the "three great waves of reform" which have shaped "modern Australia". The "reforms" were cited as:

1. The postwar decision to secure the nation's future by opening the doors to large-scale migration.
2. The use of Keynesian economic management during the 1950s and 60s to shape the cycles of the economy.
3. The economic reform wave of the 1980s (implemented under Hawke and Keating but encouraged by economic rationalists on both sides of politics) which forged the Federation into a more global model.

It was claimed that these reforms produced "a diversified population competing strongly in a well-managed, yet vastly more competitive economy than was envisaged by the nation's founders."

(True this may be, but it is debatable whether this competing population is happier and healthier overall, than their predecessors who were not so materially affluent. The successful ones in this economic climate are "a new generation of Australians who shape their own destinies" in the freer capital and job markets, while many others are left struggling to maintain a home and build a family. Let us not forget that our boasted healthy economy has been

obtained at the cost of selling Commonwealth assets, running down public infrastructure, widening our current account deficit, and doubling Australia's foreign debt.)

The point is made that "the widespread acceptance of the above "reforms" was based on the bi-partisan support for them. Consensus between Labor and the Coalition - unofficial but mostly deliberate - enabled measures that were unsavoury to many Australians to be imposed for a common good."

The author was disappointed that there was no underlying "reform framework", or agreed strategy for shaping public debate as to ways of providing funds to meet the aging population problem. His solution was "the effective tapping of human capital - lifting productivity and workforce participation." Public policy should focus "on attracting the *creative workers* around whom economic growth is based."

He suggests that this could be an argument for **another major buildup in immigration.** (Reform No.4 ?) Such is the solution arising out of our destructive, Babylonian Economic System which values only those who are economically useful, at the expense of national integrity. The author comments that the postwar migration programme saw a yearly influx of 153,000 immigrants beginning in 1950, which peaked at 172,000 in 1988, allowing Greeks, Italians, Slavs, Vietnamese, Chinese and many other nationalities to flow in, changing "the very nature of the Australian community." Such is the result of a multicultural society. Such has been the attack upon all Israel societies during the last 50 years.

May we heed the warning of Phillip Day who, in his book *Ten Minutes to Midnight, 2003*, under the heading "Britain - a cultural war-zone", writes as follows:

[Quote]

The woman in the street and the man on the Clapham omnibus, born during the 1920s into a Britain of deference, duty, respect and long-established British values, have both received a rude awakening. The Britain they once admired and loved has ceased to exist. There was once a Britain where citizens regarded themselves as having the highest ideals of decency and justice. But the character of today's Britons, occupying the same place on the globe as their

empirical predecessors, would be as alien to those old adversaries Gladstone and Disraeli as the dark side of the moon.

To the old soldiers, sailors and airmen of World War 2, the country they loved and fought for is unrecognisable to them today, and so are the inhabitants. Forbidden by law to say anything about what is going on around them, they choke on the 'multiculturalism' and 'cultural diversity' gags that have been stuffed in their mouths. Bitter resentment and anger seethe in their hearts that no one asked them whether they wanted all the changes the liberals and socialists forced upon them anyway. In fact, they couldn't see why anything of their world really needed changing at all. Worse, they came from an era when everyone seemed to care. Today, how shocked they are to find that it is *they* who are viewed as the enemies of 'tolerance' and 'progress'.

Yet many immigrants, who have assimilated successfully into British culture, have known peace and prosperity, and love Britain with a genuine fondness. These have proved the success of Britain's traditional policy of 'fair deal for all'. But others have taken selfish advantage, scorned British culture, and haven't bothered even to learn the language. More than one million people living in Britain today do not speak English..... And why should they? Whole areas have been given over to minority populations whose ethnic rivalries routinely clash like bright steel with those of their neighbours.

Where there are cultural melting pots in Britain, nerves are tuned tighter than a Stradivarius. Why should that be if multiculturalism has been the success its Pollyanna architects have often boasted? White racists stalk black ones, each garbed in the predictable extremism of the other, while neither can see how alike they have actually become. White police, wearing military-style uniforms and Kevlar, learn harsh, politically correct lessons trying to arrest minorities, and now give such areas a wide detour. Others crouch in Ford Transits with their CS gas and anger-proof riot shields, waiting for trouble. Today there are no-go areas in Britain for whites.

While millions of the silent majority resent what has happened and seek a lawful, political solution from one of their major political parties, *not one speaks for them*. The Big Three, New Labour, the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats, are all pushing the death of Britain. New Labour waved the Union Jack at the Queen's Golden

Jubilee, while chortling inwardly at its coming demise. The soft and vacillating Conservative right rubberstamps a multiculturalism it secretly hates, grinning sheepishly up at the British Tower of Babel which hideously offends it, just to appear relevant with the trendy modernizers of Blair's "Third Way".

Yet, in spite of the problems, Britain actually has good reason to be proud of her race record in general. Certainly there are exceptions, and racism, as with other countries, always smoulders below the surface. But what other nation has had to absorb such an astonishing scale of immigration in so short a period of time without major social strife? Britain's national character has been responsible for its sense of fair play, making many a visitor feel at home - so much so, that Britain has become the number one destination of choice for immigrants across Europe. Even the French, desperately trying to escape the closing noose of their own EU regulatory and tax harmonisation procedures, have moved to Britain in unprecedented numbers. There are reported to be some 250,000 French citizens, many of the more wealthy, who have liked Britain enough to make her their home.

It's not that British people are overly welcoming to their immigrants either. They're not. Rooted firmly in a culture that has celebrated personal liberty for centuries, we simply respect the desire of others to better their predicament, the same as we would try to do in their position. The liberal left has made great political capital out of the good old bloke of a Brit, who is stung when accused by them of institutional racism, because most of us don't actually see ourselves that way. What alarms Britons today are the sheer numbers of illegal and possibly criminal elements flooding in while a hopelessly politically correct parliament tries with embarrassment to look the other way.

We are especially angry when we see erstwhile British colonials getting a kicking from tin-horn dictators like Robert Mugabe and worse, our own government cynically ignoring while Zimbabweans' impassioned pleas for help as their farmers are butchered by machete-wielding squatters, or shot. This smacks of running away from your mates in a fight and that's not what we're about. To what extent did 'not upsetting Brussels' figure in Mr. Blair's decision to ignore Mugabe?

Are the British institutionally racist? Well if we are, you'd be hard put to explain why British army and civilian personnel stayed in India, Africa and a hundred places

during the empire years, even as they do today. Millions of Brits over the centuries have married foreign spouses, incorporated foreign cuisine, adopted foreign ways and brought all those great foreign words into our tremendously versatile language. In general, I don't think we've had a problem with race at all. We've enjoyed trading freely with everyone who was over 16 regardless of caste or colour. Today the huge contributions the British have made to the world are still venerated in South Africa, India, Pakistan, Australia, Canada, America, New Zealand and a hundred other countries. Certainly not much of an indication that British culture is at war with the natives is it? In fact, name another empire that has ever withdrawn from its power and still enjoys the kind of relationship we do with most of our former colonies today?

The British, racists? Hardly. Fed up with having our hospitality abused? Absolutely.

Today in Britain, the time is ten minutes to midnight. If I can paraphrase Thomas Jefferson badly, the price of our nation's liberty was eternal vigilance over her rights and freedoms, and we have not been vigilant. We've been diverted; lulled to sleep; preoccupied with our new religion of materialism. We've been too busy watching Jerry Springer, Cilla and the Simpsons; too willing to party, get drunk and go into debt today to possess what we cannot wait for until tomorrow. Meanwhile a European Trojan Horse has been wheeled into our camp and we gaze apathetically up at it. We allow our politicians to negotiate with and appease the foreign usurpers inside it, bargaining away our freedoms that weren't theirs to horse-trade or give away to begin with. We did nothing then: and we're still doing it today.

So Britain is to get the destiny she deserves. Lenin is to have his day. The State is God. Multiculturalism and political correctness became the new faith and morality for Britain round about the time the nation realised it had lost God, in the mud somewhere between the guilt of Passchendaele and the shame of the Anglican Lambeth Conferences.

And to justify all of the upheaval and the misery and the treason and the lying, the woman in the street and the man on the Clapham omnibus were told the ultimate lie, that all this change in Britain was necessary because there were serious things wrong with their country.

But there weren't.

[End Quote]

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British-Israel World Federation

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THE CHRISTIAN ARMOUR

**In Your Spiritual Conflict be Forewarned
and Forearmed**
(Ephesians Ch. 6:10-18)

“In conclusion be strong - not in yourselves but in the Lord, in the power of His boundless resource.

Put on God’s complete armour so that you can successfully resist all the devil’s methods of attack.

For our fight is not against any physical enemy: it is against organisations and powers that are spiritual. We are up against the unseen power that controls this dark world, and spiritual agents from the very headquarters of evil.

Therefore you must wear the whole armour of God that you may be able to resist evil in its day of power, and that even when you have fought to a standstill you may still stand your ground.

Take your stand then with truth as your belt, righteousness your breastplate, the gospel of peace firmly on your feet, salvation as your helmet and in your hand the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God.

Above all be sure you take faith as your shield, for it can quench every burning missile the enemy hurls at you.

Pray at all times with every kind of spiritual prayer, keeping alert and persistent as you pray for all Christ’s men and women.”

(From *The New Testament in Modern English* - J. B. Phillips)

After the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ we are told:

“..... the dragon [Satan] was wroth with the woman [Israel], and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.” (Rev. 12:17)

Satan’s attack on the believer has continued unceasingly throughout the Christian centuries, and will continue to do so with increasing intensity, until our Lord returns.

But the Christian has been given the means to conquer Satan, even the power of the Risen Saviour:

Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through HIM that loved us. (Romans 8:37)

The weapons to use in Christian warfare are *spiritual* weapons which are freely given to us.

..... the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;

They are to be used for

Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;
(2 Cor. 10:4-5)

What is the truth with which one’s loins are to be girded?

Sanctify them through thy truth: **THY WORD IS TRUTH.**
(Jn. 17:17)

Wherefore gird up the loins of your mindso be ye holy
(1 Pet. 1:13-16)

We are to fill our minds with the *Truth of the Word of God* that our thoughts may not lead us astray.

The breastplate is composed of RIGHTEOUSNESS.

My tongue shall speak of THY WORD: for all thy commandments are righteousness. (Psa. 119:172)

Our FAITH is to be our shield.

For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. (1 John 5:4)

The last and crowning piece of armour to put on is our helmet.and for an helmet, the hope of salvation. (1 Th. 5:8)

The helmet is worn to protect the head. So the hope of salvation will preserve our courage, and thus aid in protecting the spiritual life of the believer, when attacked by the enemy of righteousness.

Finally the sword we use is to be THE SWORD OF THE SPIRIT which is, again, the **WORD OF GOD.**

A sword can be used both for defence and for offence.

How important it is for us to know our Bibles! (Ed.)

MORALITY IN OUR TIME

Some interesting comment was contained in an article in *The Age newspaper* for 11.11.2004, written by Gregory Hywood after the Bush “comprehensive election victory”. Discussing the rejection of the *Democrats* in the USA and the *Labor Party* in Australia, he wrote that both these social democratic parties have failed to recognize the need for a sense of social and moral order, a lack of which has accompanied our largely unregulated modern societies. The highest concern among voters in the US was not the economy or social security or health care, but morality.

Denigrated by the “world’s liberal intelligentsia” as fundamentalist, unilateralist, moralist and inarticulate, President Bush is now being attacked for the Christian Fundamentalist basis of his Party’s social policy, viz., *“opposition to gay marriage, opposition to abortion, and the primacy of the family as the preferred method of social organisation.”* And already, with the question of abortion resurfacing and the perceived success of the new Family First Party, Derryn Hinch is warning Australians that “*the religious Right is on the move*”.

We can at least be thankful that our two countries have leaders who are God fearing men who are seeking in some way to remedy the moral malaise of our nations. Yet, as was the case in the last days of the Northern Kingdom of Israel in Palestine, “*My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge*” (Hosea 4:6). As well as the prevailing ignorance of God’s Moral Law, a lack of understanding of Biblical history and prophecy has allowed our leaders to be swayed in foreign affairs by a dominating non-Christian influence.

As pointed out by Simon Tisdall, *The Age* 21.10.2004: “*It was Israel[i] that, as far back as 1967, perfected the concept of pre-emptive war. It is Sharon..... who is the present master of the targeted assassination and mass detention without trial. It is Israeli military tactics that the US now apes in places such as Fallujah Sharon policy is Bush policy..... Whether the issue is Israel’s illegal security fence, unilateral disengagement from Gaza, expanding West Bank settlements, the fate of the moribund “road map” for peace, or US vetoes at the UN, Sharon calls the shots. He has the world’s only superpower dancing to his tune.*”

Simon Tisdall also points out that Bush followed Sharon’s refusal to deal with Yasser Arafat. He has adopted Sharon’s

contention that Israeli is being attacked by forces bent on its utter destruction, and has applied this to the US, having made such “politics of fear” an important part of his re-election platform. He is now being encouraged to confront Israel’s enemies - Iran and Syria.

Michael Sterner, who was a former ambassador to the United Arab Emirates, has complained that Bush had abandoned his search for peace in the Middle East for *complete support* of the Israeli invasion and occupation of Palestinian lands. (AFP 28.06.2004) Indeed, earlier this year Bush endorsed Sharon’s intention to continue the process of annexing and settling other territories in the occupied West Bank.

Only a thorough understanding of God’s Law/Word can prevent our leaders from making tragic mistakes. God’s instructions for kings were:

And it shall be, when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book out of that which is before the priests the Levites: And it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life: that he may learn to fear the LORD his God, to keep all the words of this law and these statutes, to do them: that his heart be not lifted up above his brethren, and that he turn not aside from the commandment, to the right hand, or to the left: to the end that he may prolong his days in his kingdom, he, and his children, in the midst of Israel. (Deut. 17:18-20)

Israel’s rulers were to accept God’s Law as their constitution, and rule in accordance with it. They were to believe, reverence and obtain wisdom from the **Word of God**. This is not easy in these days of humanist clergy, the Social Gospel, the denigration of the Old Testament, the current (mis)-translations of the Scriptures, and the setting aside by some of the Word of God in lieu of spiritual experiences.

As well as upholding a righteous, national position in the world, a godly ruler can influence his people spiritually and morally, and thus bring God’s blessings upon them. This was demonstrated by the “good” kings in ancient Israel and Judah, such as Kings David, Hezekiah, and Josiah; and by godly sovereigns in the Christian era, such as Alfred the Great and Queen Victoria.

*[Quote]

A Church of Scotland minister described [Queen Victoria] as ‘the nursing-mother of a Christian population’. After sixty years of presiding over a period of unexampled prosperity, during which the British Empire had grown by more than ten

times to encompass a quarter of the earth's land mass and a third of its population, it was hardly surprising that Victoria had become an icon to many of her subjects. Her own strong Christian faith, firm moral rectitude, unwavering attention to duty, high seriousness and simple, unpretentious bourgeois tastes did nothing to diminish the attitude of reverence. One of the many poems written after her death links Crown, Cross and expansion of empire in a somewhat unorthodox trinity:

*A Righteous Ruler! Thou Thy throne hast planted
Beneath the Cross, where love was crucified,
Thy prayer for grace, in deep abundance granted,
Hath spread Thine Empire, far as flows the tide.*

[Unquote]

Reflecting on the Silver Jubilee celebrations for King George V in 1935, Harold Nicholson wrote:

**[Quote]

There was pride in the first place, pride in the fact that, whereas the other thrones had fallen, our own monarchy, unimpaired in dignity, had survived for more than a thousand years. Reverence in the thought that in the Crown we possessed a symbol of patriotism, a focus for unison, an emblem of continuity in a rapidly dissolving world.

Satisfaction in feeling that the sovereign stood above all class animosities, all political ambitions, all sectional interests.

Comfort in the realisation that here was a strong, benevolent patriarch, personifying the highest standards of the race. Gratitude to a man who by his probity had earned the esteem of the whole world. King George represented and enhanced those domestic and public virtues which the British regarded as specifically their own. In him, they saw, reflected and magnified, what they cherished as their own individual ideals - *faith, duty, honesty, courage, common sense, tolerance, decency and truth.*

[End quote]

In his Empire Day broadcast in 1939 King George VI ended with a special message for all young people:

***[Quote]

Hold fast to all that is just and of good report in the heritage which your fathers have left to you, but strive also to improve and equalize that heritage for all men and women in the years to come. Remember too that the key to all progress lies in *faith, hope and love.* May God give you their support, and may God help them to prevail. [End quote]

Our present Queen Elizabeth II while preparing for her coronation with prayer and meditation gave her first broadcast in 1952 in which she asked her subjects:

****[Quote]

Pray for me on that day. Pray that God may give me wisdom and strength to carry out the solemn promises I shall be making. [End quote]

She has continued to demonstrate by example the Christian attributes of faith, service, integrity and dedication to duty, which work towards national stability and continuity. Unfortunately the Sovereign is but one person and as an upholder of traditional British character can be an example only. She requires the assistance of righteous leaders in Church and State and the loyalty of her institutions and people, if her example is to be effective nationally.

Sadly the British character expressed in the Christian values of faith, duty, loyalty and sacrifice, which the Monarch epitomised has been changed during the last half century. This has been the result of an increasing assault by the forces of evil designed to destroy God's Servant Nation - His witnesses to the reality of His Person and His Word (Isaiah 43:12). It has been a sustained attempt to prevent God's Kingdom being established on earth to the end that His "will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. (Matt. 6:10)

As a result of humanistic moral standards, a widespread belief in the Theory of Evolution, and a lack of valid Bible teaching, there is a dearth of religious faith and an increased degree of self-indulgent behaviour. The age of deference and reverence has given way to an attitude of disrespect for authority, traditional institutions, ceremony, religion, law, tradition and history.

Ian Bradley in his book *God Save the Queen* writes:

*****[Quote]

In part this loss of respect for institutions springs from the cult of novelty and the dismissal of tradition and history. It is also the result of the steady drip-drip effect of the debunking, satirical, cynical mentality that has prevailed in Britain, and especially in the British media, since the later 1960s. The monarchy has perhaps been particularly vulnerable to the assaults of cynics and satirists because it is so personal and because it cannot hit back.....

The assault of the tabloids on the sacred nature of monarchy has been multi-pronged. It is driven in part by a **blatant anti-monarchical agenda**, most evident in the newspapers owned by the Republican-inclined Rupert Murdoch. [End Quote]

The constant denigration of HRH The Prince of Wales by the media over a long period of years is but a further ploy in the goal of replacing the British Monarchy with a republic, by making the heir to the Throne unpopular. The demise of the British Monarchy would mean the disintegration of the Commonwealth of Nations into a number of small republics more easily controlled by the globalists of our day, who seek not only to control the world's economy but its laws and its peoples as well.

Great acclaim was given in the media to the charitable works of Princess Diana, but how many of us know what Prince Charles has achieved?

*****[Quote]

The supreme contemporary exponent of royal philanthropy is the Prince of Wales who has throughout his adult life immersed himself in good works, acting not just as a patron of voluntary societies but in a much more proactive role, setting up a host of agencies and piloting major initiatives in the field of employment, homelessness and social and physical disadvantage. As early as 1978, Anthony Holden estimated that Prince Charles' 'social work', as he called it, consumed a third of his working hours. Since then his involvement has grown so that he has become, in the words of the author of a recent study of this still underrated aspect of his life, 'the executive chairman of an enormous charitable conglomerate' and 'a seed capitalist for social issues'.

The Prince's Trust, set up in 1976 with his own money to give grants directly to young people to help themselves, and inspired by a probation officer's description of the cycle of alienation suffered by young people who were without jobs, family and other support, was followed by the creation in 1982 of the Youth Business Initiative to facilitate youth training and the development of self-employment and small businesses.

In 1985 came Community Venture, a 43-week course combining team-building, skills training, personal development, work experience and community service, and in 1990 the Prince's Trust Volunteers, which set itself the task of putting 10,000 young people into community service projects.

The practical results of these various schemes are chronicled in James Morton's book, *Prince Charles - Breaking the Cycle*. It points out that by the time of his 50th birthday Prince Charles had set up a self-employment scheme which had started 39,000 businesses and created 50,000 jobs, helped over 60,000 other young people to find work through his other programmes, enabled 30,000 people to take part in community service projects, assisted over 100,000 school pupils to do their homework through his Study Support scheme, encouraged over 400 of the largest companies in Britain to contribute to the regeneration of depressed communities across the country and been the principal catalyst of improvement in the quality of life of many disabled people. Overall Morton calculates that the Prince's work up to 1998 had brought tangible improvement to the lives of over 600,000 disadvantaged young people and in the process generated benefits for the country with a value approaching 12 billion pounds. His book is full of moving testaments of lives turned round from despair to hope and transformed as a direct result of schemes set up by the Prince.

Prince Charles' 'hands-on' commitment to philanthropic projects has been driven by a restless idealism, a passionate

concern for the disadvantaged and a vision of voluntary community service binding together a fractured and divided nation. It also has deep spiritual roots and is strongly influenced by the example of Jesus Christ.' [End Quote]

All our monarchs, as human beings, have been less than perfect but we can be thankful that so many have been committed to the principle of Christian monarchy and have exercised spiritual leadership. Let us give our present Sovereign and Heirs to the Throne our prayerful support and our loyalty in these days of trial and testing. (Ed.)

(Quotes * to ***** are from *God Save the Queen* by Ian Bradley)

CIVIL POWERS AND THE BIBLICAL DOCTRINE OF SUBMISSION

Among the Biblical texts commonly used to affirm the doctrine of *submission*, two notable ones stand out:

Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well. (1 Pet. 2:13-14)

Let every person be subject to the governing authorities; for there is no authority except from God, and those authorities that exist have been instituted by God.

Therefore whoever resists authority resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment.

For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad.

Do you wish to have no fear of the authority?

Then do what is good, and you will receive its approval; for it is God's servant for your good.

But if you do what is wrong, you should be afraid, for the authority does not bear the sword in vain! It is the servant of God to execute wrath on the wrongdoer.

Therefore one must be subject, not only because of wrath but also because of conscience. (Rom. 13:1-5 NRSV)

SUBMISSION TO THE STATE

These two texts do not deal with submission in the church, nor in the family, but in the *Civil State*, in the state or civil government. The texts' basic premise is, first, that we live in a world under God's authority. Our rebellion, however evil the circumstances, is a revolt against God. The world indeed is full of sin, but our rebellion does not remove the fact of sin but aggravates it.

Second, God's way of transformation is not revolution but regeneration. The state is a ministry of *justice*, the church a ministry of *salvation*.

Man finds it easier to turn to revolution and conflict because it demands no change in himself. God's way requires not only that we submit to His Will and be obedient, but also that in Him we be made a new creation. The only efficacious change, therefore, comes by regeneration.

The fallen man wants revolution, or an external imposition, as the only way he sees of effecting change. If he believes in education as an alternative, it is in compulsory statist education, no less a revolutionary device. The Christian must affirm that humanistic efforts and devices are superficial and that only God's regenerating power can truly effect change. Thus we cannot separate submission from regeneration.

Third, social order is not maintained by every man doing that which is right in his own eyes, as in the days of the Judges. Such a condition prevails when God is not King over the nation and its peoples (Jud. 21:25). Even the worst rulers must maintain some kind of social order.

Fourth, rulers are ordained of God. If we have bad rulers, it is because we are a bad people, and the solution again is not in revolution but in regeneration. This does not preclude using peaceful means to alter society, but it does mean that our essential hope is in regeneration.

Rulers are "ministers of God." Not all ministers are good, as any look at the church will tell us, but neither are we, the people. Godly submission begins with submission to God and His Law/Word. It means that the problem of *sin and evil* is not countered with *violence and death*, and that His regenerating power makes us into a new human race, one empowered to do good and to establish justice.

Fifth, this makes submission a matter of conscience. It is emphatically not a surrender to evil. It is a recognition that sin is not eliminated nor curtailed by revolution and violence, but by good works, and these Christ's people must supply.

The Romans 13:1-5 text (above) cannot be separated from that which follows it.

(1) According to verse 6 paying taxes is a religious duty, in order to maintain some semblance of social order. Verse 7 requires all due tribute, custom, fear, honour, and

dues to be paid as a form of obedience to God: in other words, **no tax revolt!**

For the same reason you also pay taxes, for the authorities are God's servants, busy with this very thing. (Vs. 6)

Pay to all what is due them--taxes to whom taxes are due, revenue to whom revenue is due, respect to whom respect is due, honour to whom honour is due. (Vs. 7)

(2) We are to be debt free as a normal thing, although debts for up to six years are permitted by God's Law. Our service to God involves avoiding bondage to men. Our obligation to other men should not be money or debt, but love.

Owe no one anything, except to love one another; for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. (Vs. 8)

(3) Love is the fulfilling or putting into force of God's Law. We do not commit adultery, meaning that we respect the integrity of our neighbour's marriage.

We do not kill, i.e., we respect the integrity of his life. We do not steal, i.e., we do not violate his property or possessions.

We do not bear false witness: we respect his good name and reputation.

And we do not covet what is our neighbour's so that in *word, thought, and deed*, we manifest our love for our neighbour by obeying God's Law in relation to him.

"Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law" (vs. 10)

Love is thus defined as keeping the Law of God in relation one to another.

SUBMISSION TO CHRIST

It is time for us to wake up out of the sleep of our dark world and to put on the armour of light (vs. 12).

The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.

We can only change the world by submission to Jesus Christ and His Law/Word.

Let us behave decently, as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and debauchery, not in dissension and jealousy. (Vs. 13 NIV)

We are a people with work to do.

This means put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.

We are not here to please ourselves but to please God, and we dare not forget this. It is not what we want from God that is all-important, *but what God wants from us.*

The verses which follow 1 Peter 13-14 are similar to those in Romans. The alternative to civil revolution is the godly re-ordering or reconstruction of our lives and our world. We are told, first, that it is the will of God for us that we submit to evil to “**put to silence the ignorance of foolish men**” (vs. 15).

All kinds of foolish charges are made against Christians by the ungodly: we must not provide grounds for more.

We are to live as free men in Christ, as servants of God, never using our freedom as an excuse for misconduct. This means that we love our fellow believers, honour all men, reverence God, and honour the king (vs. 17).

The world looks with hatred towards others than its own: we must treat all men as God would have us do.

Servants are now addressed. This term can include anyone who works for another person. Such a relationship is not perfect, and it does involve sometimes “suffering wrongfully.” We must be patient. We are called to live in an evil world, as did Jesus Christ, and this means “suffering wrongfully” at times. He sets the example for us of patient endurance (vs. 19-25).

In 1 Peter 3:1-7 we are told about the duties of wives and husbands, the *regenerated life rather than a revolutionary* one. Peter goes on to say much more, but this is enough to indicate that the Christian life is *regenerative*, not revolutionary and destructive.

Our texts have dealt with the Christian in a **civil and social** context, in an unsaved world as in the New Testament era. Submission thus has been viewed in the context of a fallen and unchristian world. But what about submission within the Christian Community? In part, Peter touches on this in his counsel to husbands and wives. This is submission in the Lord.

Now let us use the premise of regeneration versus revolution to examine a contemporary problem. We have two kinds of opposition within the Christian community. On the one hand, we have had some who aggressively oppose abortion by lawless acts aimed at abortuaries, imitating radical civil tactics. But though man cannot be regenerated by violence, the way of *fallen man* is to try to change the world by *violence* not by regeneration.

On the other hand, many Christians have worked to counsel women seeking abortion, to offer godly help and Biblical solutions. Much remarkable work has been done because the basis of their effort is to save the life of the unborn child and the soul of the mother.

The answer of humanism to problems is compulsion and violence, ultimately death. For the Christian, it is **Christ and life**. The two ways could not be more different.

(By Rev. R. J. Rushdoony - *Chalcedon Report April 2002.*)

THE KINGDOM OF GOD - Part 3

ISRAEL THE NATION

During the 40 years of journeying in the wilderness Israel had become a nation.

In another awesome demonstration of power and majesty, God had made another Covenant - this time a **CONDITIONAL COVENANT** - with the emerging Nation of Israel.

At Mount Sinai He had given them the great **Moral Precepts of the Law of God** as their constitution, His Statutes and Judgments for Social Order, and the Ordinances of Worship which prefigured the destined Sacrifice of the Son of God for the spiritual healing of mankind.

He had told national Israel that if they would obey His instructions - i.e. keep His Covenant - they would be a peculiar treasure unto Him above all peoples. They would be amazingly blessed and protected at all times provided they kept their side of the Covenant. That is they were to conduct their society in **conformity with His Commandments, Statutes and Judgments** by obeying them from the heart. They were to follow the **Ordinances of Worship and remain faithful to worshipping the Lord as their only God**.

This, all the people agreed to do. "*All that the Lord hath spoken we will do*". (Ex. 19:8).

Such was the so-called **MOSAIC COVENANT** which is also termed the **OLD COVENANT**. It is not to be confused with the **ABRAHAMIC COVENANT**, that great foundation of God's dealings with His People, made with Abraham nearly 400 years earlier.

God's purpose for His Nation was spelled out by Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist in Luke 1:74-75 -

“....that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might SERVE HIM without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life.”

This **Nation of Israel** was warned that where obedience would bring *blessing*, disobedience would bring *judgment* in the form of adversity - famine, war, loss of riches, loss of power and prestige, internal conflict, etc. For periods of gross disobedience they were to be assigned the “seven times” **periods of punishment** (i.e. periods of 2520 years or 7x360 years) which Israel peoples endured historically, while the Times of the Gentiles ran their course (beginning with the domination of Jerusalem by Babylon in 604 BC and ending with the freeing of Jerusalem from Moslem domination in AD 1917 - a corresponding period of 2520 years).

As it was set up the Nation of Israel was a **theocracy** - the **Lord God was their King**, His presence dwelling in the Holy of Holies in the Tabernacle.

However, for nearly 400 years after its inception, Israel lived largely without complying with the Law of God. It was a period when the Bible says “*every man did that which was right in his own eyes.*” (Judges 17:6; 21:25)

Though God raised up leaders (Judges) to free the people from their enemies when they cried to Him for help, it was not a time of national blessing and expansion. Finally, eager to have a visible king like the other nations round about them, the people **rejected the Lord God as their King**.

In His foreknowledge God had provided for this eventuality, and Deut. 17:14-20 spells out His requirements regarding the conduct of kings.

KING DAVID

Under the leadership of King David, Israel's second king, Israel was brought back to reverencing and worshipping the Lord their God, and to acknowledging His Glory, His power and His beneficence. Under David a religious revival began in Israel. The service of praise was for the first time introduced into public worship, and Zion became

'God's holy hill'. King David wrote about 80 of the 150 Psalms recorded in our Bibles.

It has been said that he lived in harmony with both the priesthood and the prophets; a sure sign that the spirit of his government had been thoroughly loyal to the higher aims of the Theocracy. In other words, he **ruled in accordance with the precepts of the Law of God**. The nation had not been oppressed by him: he had striven to act justly to all, furnishing an example of righteous kingship.

The Bible records that "*David executed judgment and justice to all his people*". (2 Sam. 8:15)

At the height of his glory, King David reigned over a vast empire and his capital was enriched with goods from many lands. The whole territory from the Euphrates to the river of Egypt, and from Gaza on the west to Thapsacus on the east, was under his sway (2 Sam. 8:3-13; 10).

Sadly, it was at the height of his glory and power that he fell to committing adultery and murder - a warning to all of the dangerous influence which power and glory has on the character of natural man. David, however, became a true penitent, and bitterly repented of his sin before God.

But David had brought the Nation Israel into an era of great NATIONAL blessing.

Nationally, Israel honoured God and lived, to a large degree, according to His law. Because of this God blessed Israel abundantly in all walks of life.

KING SOLOMON

King Solomon inherited this prosperous empire. At the beginning of his reign he built the beautiful Temple which housed the Ark of the Covenant in which the Presence of the Lord God dwelt, an event for which his father David had prepared meticulously for a long period before his death.

Solomon built a magnificent palace, constructed great waterworks, and great fortifications for the defence of his kingdom. Due to extensive trafficking by land and sea, Israel enjoyed great commercial prosperity and great wealth.

Solomon's reign was a period remarkable also for its intellectual activity of which he was a leader, writing many

proverbs and songs. People came from many countries to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and peace reigned throughout the land.

But again, in the power and glory of his reign Solomon forsook the Lord his God and began to worship idols. He disobeyed the provisions God had laid down for monarchy by "multiplying horses" to himself and marrying many wives, and he disregarded the Law of God. The breakup of this much-blessed empire was to come rapidly.

Professor G. Rawlinson wrote about this memorable period of Israel's history as follows:

[Quote]

"The kingdom of Solomon is one of the most striking facts in the Biblical history. A petty nation, which for hundreds of years has with difficulty maintained a separate existence in the midst of warlike tribes, each of which has in turn exercised dominion over it and oppressed it, is suddenly raised by the genius of a soldier-monarch (ref. to David) to glory and greatness.

An empire is established which extends from the Euphrates to the borders of Egypt, a distance of 450 miles; and this empire rapidly constructed, enters almost immediately on a period of peace which lasts for half a century.

Wealth, grandeur, architectural magnificence, artistic excellence, commercial enterprise, a position of dignity among the great nations of the earth, are enjoyed during this space, at the end of which there is a sudden collapse.

The ruling nation is split in twain - the subject races fall off, the pre-eminence lately gained being wholly lost - the scene of struggle, strife, oppression, recovery, inglorious submission, and desperate effort recommences."

[End quote]

Such is the blessing of God upon an **obedient Covenant-keeping people.** Such is the result of disobedience and apostasy.

This period of blessing and expansion in ancient Israel may well be compared with the growth, glory, and fall, of the British Empire and Commonwealth of Nations. The **reasons are the same.** A decline in reverence for, and faith in, God and His Word, and departure from the Law of God in national life lead inevitably to a period of national apostasy, which results in national chastisement as spelt out in Leviticus ch. 26 and Deuteronomy chs. 27 & 28..

(To be Continued)

(Ed.)

“ECLIPSE”

In his booklet *Britain's Future*, published in 1977, Dr. Michael Bennett discusses under the above heading, the sad fact of Britain's rapid demise. His comments are prophetic in that what he wrote in 1977 is a very apt summation of Britain's position today.

[Quote]

Just a generation ago Great Britain was the richest and the most powerful nation on earth - the head of the Commonwealth and ruler of the mightiest empire this world has ever seen, upon which, it was proudly boasted, “the sun never sets”. Today Great Britain is a poor and weak member of the Common Market; her empire is no more, and the Commonwealth is in almost total disarray. History provides no comparable example of such a reversal occurring within so short a space of time. True, other empires have fallen more quickly, but only as the result of crushing military defeat. Great Britain was victorious in both World Wars which took place during the years in question, yet still her power was broken.

In that the past is the key to the future, it is vital to discover the reason for the eclipse of our national fortune if we are ever to rise from the ashes. Many explanations have been advanced which suggest that the retreat of British power was brought about by the action and interaction of world military, social, economic and political factors. Such explanations, which attempt to rationalize our present predicament by putting its cause on people and forces beyond our control, are widely accepted. As such, they are both dangerous and perpetuate our national slide towards obscurity and oblivion. This is because they distract our people from understanding the truth, and thereby ensure that no effective action is taken to reverse the present trend.

The real cause of our sudden and unprecedented loss of power never was, and still is not, external. It was, and remains, an internal matter and concerns the relationship of the British people to their God and His Law. It is essential that this truth be grasped by the people if the British decline is not to lead inexorably to the British fall. As God has chosen to reveal Himself and His laws predominantly by a written revelation (the Bible), it follows that British power in the world is directly proportional to the amount of acceptance of Bible truth here in the British Isles. In particular, British power mirrors the degree of understanding of, and obedience to, Bible truth in the national life, and in the lives of its leaders.

Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law (God's Law), happy is he. (Prov. 29:18)

What vision graced the eyes of our British forefathers, bringing health, progress and power to our people? It was a two-fold vision with a two-edged effect.

First and foremost, it was a clear recognition of the existence and activity of the second Person of the Trinity as creator and sustainer of all things, and the only Saviour of men. This common understanding led British men and women to order their individual lives in accordance with His teaching, and drove them to all forms of Christian activity; to worship; to pray; and to missionize the farthest corners of the earth. It also led them to *study their Bibles* very carefully.

The deep study of the Bible led in turn to a second vision, namely, to an unshakable understanding of the real identity of the British people, and realization of the real purpose for which God had created them. I mean that tens of thousands of our forefathers were led to understand that the British people are Israelites - the descendants of the so-called 'lost tribes of Israel' - and as such, the only rightful inheritors of the covenants which God made with His chosen people.

This revelation which 100 years ago was believed by many of those responsible for the affairs of state, as well as by the reigning British monarch, Queen Victoria, led directly to a desire to order our national life in accordance with the Constitution which God gave in the Old Testament. It led, for instance, to a desire to make British law a reproduction of the Law which God gave to Israel. It also led to a desire to serve the Lord by teaching His laws to other nations in accordance with Israel's commission as the servant nation. It was but a short step from the desire to actually governing the heathen.

British power in the world stemmed directly from the dual sense of purpose generated in the British people by their embracing the light of the glorious Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, and by their recognizing themselves to be the people chosen and called to serve the God of Israel in the world. God's Word was, "a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (Psalm 119:105).

So the Bible was taught in our schools and churches at its face value, and honoured in our national life as God's truth. Laws given to Israel graced our statute book, Sunday was established as a day of holy rest by law. Murderers were put to death. Honesty and industry were common virtues.

We inherited the prophecy of Moses:-

Behold, I have taught you statutes and judgments, even as the LORD my God commanded me

Keep therefore and do them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these statutes, and say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.

For what nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the LORD our God is in all things that we call upon him for?

And what nation is there so great, that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day?

Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life: but teach them thy sons, and thy sons' sons;.... (Deut. 4:5-9)

The subsequent decline of British power in the world was caused by the loss of these visions and their resulting sense of purpose. It started with the failure to ensure that every child was taught to believe God's Word. At first our leaders tolerated the disbelief of a few, but later they themselves joined the disbelieving majority. Men of science were allowed to demolish the people's acceptance of God as creator. Belief in God as creator was replaced by belief in the theory of evolution. This was achieved by teaching the theory of evolution as though it were "gospel truth" in our state schools. Men of philosophy who denied and ridiculed the notion of God's existence were hailed as great thinkers, and promoted to high office in our Universities where they could infect the future leaders of our nation with their poisonous teaching.

Men of the cloth who failed to stand by the truths of the Bible were tolerated in the churches. They were allowed to repeat the sayings of men instead of teaching THE WORD OF THE LORD. Politicians were allowed to tamper with our statute book, and to remove God's laws from it, thereby opening wide the floodgates of disaster.

Here is the cause of the sudden collapse of the greatest power on earth. Acceptance of dynamic true Christianity was replaced first by unprofitable agnosticism, and then by the purposeless vacuum of atheism. Without purpose, robbed of any worthwhile message to take, with no reason to build, with no pure law to enforce, with no God to serve, small wonder the stream of British

missionaries, engineers, farmers, soldiers and teachers dried up. Small wonder British power, whose life blood they were, dried up also.

Today the British people are (apart from a small and enlightened minority) blind to their national identity as God's servant nation of Israel. Sadly, they are also fast losing their remaining vision of the Lord Jesus Christ. In consequence a tidal wave of sin and unrighteousness is sweeping our land bringing the inevitable evils in its wake. Ministers of the church have mostly allowed themselves to be moulded by present intellectual fashion into becoming the epitome of conformity "to this world". Far from condemning or opposing the current climate of unbelief and permissiveness, they have frequently become its leaders. It was a churchman who recently coined the phrase, "God is dead", right here in Britain. Today, ministers of the church can be heard condoning every immoral and unchristian teaching and practice.

Bible truth is ignored in our churches and mocked in our schools. Our law makers are God's law-breakers. Sunday is funday and anything goes. The millionth 'legal' recorded abortion took place in 1976. Terrorists and murderers roam our streets, and if they are apprehended they are not executed. So our poor nation sinks ever lower as God's Word says it must:

Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people. (Prov. 14:34)

The recent history of our nation serves to prove the truth of Christ's words:

"And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch."
(Matt. 15:14)

Britain has wilfully abdicated her responsibility to be a shining light to the other nations. Now she is trying to commit national suicide by merging herself with the other nations to whom she should be God's working example of His Kingdom on earth. Britain has denied her calling and her God. As a result the whole world is turned upside down. It is we, like Jonah fleeing to Tarshish, who are responsible for the storm, and truly, there is no hope left for us unless God intervenes on our behalf.

**For they are a nation void of counsel,
neither is there any understanding in them.**

**O that they were wise, that they understood this,
that they would consider their latter end! (Deut.32:28-29)**

..... Britain's future [is] revealed in the unchanging words of the Bible. In the present world of strife and uncertainty, here and here alone is hope; and here is certainty. We do still have "a more sure word of prophecy", and it is still necessary to pay close attention to its unerring light.

Our national course is not the chance result of the interaction of numerous random forces of nature. Neither is it determined ultimately by the will of man. It is God with whom we, as a nation, have to do. Our route is all foreknown, and much is foretold. Each step and each stop was planned by the Mind of our God. What does the future hold for us? [End quote]

The answer lies in God's Word. May we search it daily, earnestly and prayerfully, seeking the wisdom that is of God rather than delighting in the wisdom of men. May our Israel peoples turn again to Him who is their Rock, their Saviour and their Redeemer. May they repent of their faithlessness and choose willingly to walk in His ways.

O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the LORD our maker. (Psa. 95:6)

(Ed.)

THE GIANT REVISITED

In the *Monthly Notes* for August, 2004, we wrote of the discovery of a giant skeleton in south-east Saudi Arabia, but in the September issue we reported that this had been a hoax as the photograph had been digitally doctored by a notorious Internet prank organization. However, the recent *Update International Newsletter No. 48*, gives the following information and photo.

A skeleton of a giant human was found and there was a police coverup. The photo (below) was transferred to a laptop just prior to the police confiscating all the cameras. The skeleton in the photo is of a more reasonable size - between 15 and 20 feet tall. It is thought that "the doctored photo was purposely attached to the story and spread through e-mail by Evolutionists as a type of agitprop designed to make Biblical science look bad when the 'hoax' was finally revealed." (Refer page 8 of the above *Update*)





British-Israel World Federation (Victorian Headquarters) Inc.

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THE PRINCE OF PEACE

For unto us a child is born,
unto us a son is given:

and the government shall be upon his shoulder:

and his name shall be called Wonderful,

Counsellor, The mighty God, the everlasting Father,

THE PRINCE OF PEACE.

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.
(Isaiah 9:6-7)

This well-known prophecy of the Messiah stresses the final outcome of the mighty task He came willingly to accomplish on this planet.

Because of His subjection to His Father's will in becoming, as the Son of man, the Perfect Sacrifice for sin, which involved a terrible death, entombment, resurrection, appearing before witnesses and returning to His Father's presence, ... the Father ...hath committed all judgment unto the Son: that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father...."

"And hath given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of man."

(John 5:22-23 & 27)

It is to complete His great task that He is to return the second time to reign as King. 1 Corinthians 15 tells us that

**He must reign, till He hath put all enemies under His feet, and that
the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.**

At this time of the year the first chapter of Luke's Gospel is often read. It contains the wonderful promise made to Mary by the Angel Gabriel.

**And the angel said unto her,
Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God.
And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and
bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS.**

He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David:

**And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever;
and of his kingdom there shall be no end. (vs.30-33)**

His Throne is to be the restored throne of David over God's restored Israel families. This is the culmination of what was promised in the above two verses of Isaiah chapter 9. The government (i.e. the PRINCELY POWER) is to be upon the shoulder of our Lord Jesus Christ, and His authority and peace will increase continually.

While the world today studies the prophecies of men, fearing the destruction of the world, while many Christians fear a coming reign of "ANTICHRIST", we look ahead with joyous anticipation to the return of the Prince of Peace Whose governance will restore the peace of God to our disrupted and suffering planet.

God be merciful unto us, and bless us;
and cause his face to shine upon us;
That thy way may be known upon earth,
thy saving health among all nations.
Let the people praise thee, O God;
let all the people praise thee.

O let the nations be glad and sing for joy:
for thou shalt judge the people righteously,
and govern the nations upon earth. Selah.

Let the people praise thee, O God;
let all the people praise thee.

Then shall the earth yield her increase;
and God, even our own God, shall bless us.
God shall bless us;
and all the ends of the earth shall fear him.

(Psalm 67)

(Ed.)

THE ANNUNCIATION (Luke 1:26-38)

It is difficult to approach the story of our Lord's virgin birth without a sense of holy awe. It is one of the most moving and inspiring of all stories.

Luke tells us that in the sixth month the angel Gabriel came to Mary in Nazareth. The sixth month of what? The sixth month of Elizabeth's conception. Elizabeth, a kinswoman of Mary, was a greatly older woman, well along in years after a lifetime of barrenness. But God had announced that through her the forerunner, the prophet who should prepare the way for the coming of the Messiah, would be born (Refer: Luke 1:5-17; 26-38).

Ave Maria:

The birth of John the Baptist was announced in the solemn grandeur of the temple; that of Jesus, in a humble home in Galilee. And yet the beauty and holiness which accompanies that annunciation and the events that follow are unrivalled in all of history. An hymn written in the very earliest times of the Christian church echoes the sense of reverence which the church has felt as it has sung of that event: "Ave Maria".

This song in its original form is purely Biblical, however, the third portion, which begins *:Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us,*" was added in the 15th century and was not even officially in use until 1568. The original form of

the hymn, the first two parts, comes from the earliest days of the Christian church.

Mary, we are told, was a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the House of David. In those days in [Judah], betrothal, or we would say "engagement," was the *legal* act of marriage. The only way a betrothal could be broken was by divorce. The property settlement was made at that time; the girl's property was vested in the future husband; and although they did not live together until at least a year was passed, they were legally man and wife.

Commonly during that year the young man earned the dowry which was to go to the bride to be part of the family capital, her treasury, and the inheritance of her children. Thus, any unfaithfulness on the part of a betrothed girl was, according to law, punishable by death; which is clearly stated in Deuteronomy 22: 23 and 24.

The angel came in unto her and said,

Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women.

Mary's Reaction:

The reaction of Mary to the appearance of the angel Gabriel and this salutation perhaps comes through to us a little more clearly, because the wording is unfamiliar enough to give us a little bit sharper focus on it, in the translation by the great Lutheran scholar Lenski in his commentary. He translates Luke 1 verses 29 and 30 thus:

But she was greatly perturbed at the word and began to argue with herself of what kind this greeting might be.

And the angel said to her, "Stop being afraid, Mary, for thou didst find favour with God."

Then Gabriel went on to make the great announcement:

And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus."

The name JESUS means, "God is our salvation".

He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest (or, Son of the Most High): and the Lord God, shall give unto Him the throne of His father David.

(He who shall be born of you miraculously shall be the Son of God, very God of very God; but He shall also be the son of David, very man of very man.)

And He shall reign over the House of Jacob for ever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end."

He shall be the Messianic King foretold by David and the prophets of old, and He shall also be the eternal King, King of kings and Lord of lords, eternally King, so that His rule

shall be over time and over eternity, over this world and over the world to come.

Then Mary said unto the angel,

How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?

Mary was not only a woman full of grace but also a woman with a down-to-earth realism, and this is real holiness; she realized immediately that this glorious miracle presented for her a tremendous problem: she was legally wed to someone: and if she became pregnant, she was liable to the death penalty if her husband filed charges against her. She knew she would be wide open to gossip, to accusations; and indeed, we do know that for a time, according to Matthew, Joseph thought of putting her away until God spoke to him in a vision.

And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. (v. 35)

The *virgin birth* is the greatest miracle of Scripture. It is in every real respect the key miracle because we cannot take away the supernaturalness of our Lord's birth without destroying Christianity. Without the *virgin birth* we reduce the Christian Faith to the level of all paganism because the essence of all paganism is man's apotheosis - man becoming God. But the essence of the Christmas story is that the character of Deity was expressed in human form.

This was an act of sheer grace on God's part. Man's salvation is not man becoming God as it is in all of paganism, but in the Word of God becoming man, and for our salvation assuming the fulness of humanity, fulfilling the full requirements of the Law, dying as our sin-bearer, and rising as He who had conquered sin and death for us.

And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren (v. 36)

Here Gabriel, in effect, hints to Mary, "Go to your cousin Elisabeth. She, too, is the object of a miracle. Rejoice with her and she with you in that which God has done."

For with God nothing shall be impossible. (v. 37)

This then is a tremendous declaration. Problems, yes, of a certainty. God cannot enter into this sinful world without the sinful world striking back. Men cannot take the course of holiness and truth and righteousness without the world lashing out at them in hatred. Problems, of a certainty; but with God nothing shall be impossible.

Mary's Faith and Ours

And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord;
be it unto me according to thy word.
And the angel departed from her. (v. 38)

Here we see the greatness of Mary's faith. The word "handmaid" has a beauty, an old-fashioned ring to it that takes away, to a certain extent, the literalness of the word and its meaning. It means simply, "*Behold the female slave of the Lord.*" And with that statement she avows her total submission to whatever God does, whatever God brings upon her.

Here we have true faith, this total submission, and there cannot be true faith without this kind of submission. Where men pick and choose at God's Word and declare, "*I will believe this and I will not believe that,*" they have denied Scripture and set themselves as gods above God, as judge over His Word. But true faith everywhere will say even as Mary, "**Behold the handmaid (or, manservant) of the Lord. Be it unto me according to thy word.**"

The New Humanity

This was the annunciation of our Lord's birth. His birth marked the beginning of a new creation, of the new heavens and the new earth. He was the second Adam, born from above, come to usher in a new world.

That new world grows day by day. Whenever a Christian enters into the kingdom, is converted, he is born into the citizenship of that new creation so that we have, as it were, a life in two worlds: by virtue of our birth in the old Adam we belong to a world which is under sentence of death; by virtue of our rebirth in Jesus Christ we belong to that new creation which shall grow and abound unto eternal life and to the fulness of all hope, all the promises of life.

Moreover, the birth of our Lord sets forth God's continuity in His work. He did not destroy the old creation to make way for the new Adam and the new world. He used the old to create the new: Mary, a daughter of Adam, to give birth to Christ, the second Adam.

And there is the same continuity in our lives. He uses the material and the framework of the old man in us, the old Adam, to create the new man in Christ. When Scripture declares, "**Behold, I make all things new,**" this is what the Lord means.

We understand this continuity of the new or renewed work of creation, in terms of Christ, so that we are fully recognizable as what we were before we became members of Christ, and yet we are wholly new in that we have a new heart, a new life, a new perspective. We are fully recognizable and yet truly new.

And so is the new creation which is our destiny. It is beyond our imagination; but when we enter into it, it shall be fully recognizable; and we shall know it to be the fulfilment of all this in our being, of all our hopes, of all the potentialities of nature and men. “Behold, I make all things new” (Rev. 21:5)

This then is the glorious annunciation of our Lord’s birth declared unto Mary and in Mary finding a response which is the type (meaning “symbol” or “foreshadowing”) of true faith:

“Behold the handmaid of the Lord;
be it unto me according to thy word.”

Let us pray:

Almighty God, our heavenly Father,
we give thanks unto Thee for the glory of Thy Word
and of Thy so great salvation made known to us
through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Saviour.
We thank Thee, our Father, that He as born of us,
of the virgin Mary,
is very man of very man,
in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

But we thank Thee, our Father,
that He is also very God of very God, the eternal One,
and that in Him we have access
unto the Throne of Grace.

Our God, we thank Thee.
In the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ.
Amen.

(Rev. R. J. Rushdoony, *Chalcedon Report*, December, 2003.)

THE KINGDOM OF GOD - Part 4

SOLOMON’S EMPIRE IS SPLIT IN TWO

In direct disobedience to the Law of God Solomon’s son, Rehoboam, oppressed his subjects with unjust taxes, causing the northern Ten Tribes to revolt and break away from the House of David, making Jeroboam of Bethlehem their king instead of Solomon’s heir Rehoboam (1 Kings 12:4-16).

Jeroboam erected Golden Calves for the people to worship at Dan and Bethel - the two extremities of his Kingdom, to stop them travelling to Jerusalem to worship, in case they were drawn back in loyalty to the House of David. In this way the new Kingdom of the **House of Israel** - that of the Ten Tribes led by Ephraim and Manasseh - nationally **forsook the Lord God and His Law**, becoming idolaters, with all the depravity which was involved, right at the outset of its history.

Because of this introduction of idol worship many of the Levites returned to the territory of the Kingdom of Judah, as did numbers of faithful individuals. However, the bulk of the much more numerous population of the Ten Tribes remained in the **northern Kingdom of Israel**. The **southern kingdom** - the **Kingdom of the House of Judah**, consisting only of the Tribes of Judah and Benjamin, and many Levites - remained under the rule of Rehoboam. And the **Temple worship** was continued to a degree within the **Kingdom of Judah**.

The history of both these sections of the Israel People is a sad story of decline, wars - even against each other, natural disasters and moral depravity.

THE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL

The northern Kingdom of Israel was the first to be cast out of the land because they were the first to reject the sovereignty of the Lord God and **break their national Covenant with Him**.

They no longer witnessed to the **Kingdom of God** and nationally became **alienated** from it.

THE ASSYRIAN CAPTIVITY

During the period 735-717 BC this once very populous and wealthy kingdom was invaded by Assyria, and its people, other than those who escaped, were deported as exiles to Assyria and Media.

Their Palestine homeland became Assyrian territory and **foreign peoples were settled there**. Thus through disobedience and apostasy the Ten Tribes lost their place in God's land as well as their **IDENTITY as God's People Israel**.

They quite soon became known by names other than Israel.

The Assyrians called them the Bit-Khumri or Ghomri meaning Sons of Omri (the Israel King who substituted his own laws, the Statutes of Omri, for the Law of God).

The Greeks called them the Kimmerioi (or Cimmerians) later to be known as Celts or Gauls.

The Romans called them Cimbri.

Those deported to Media were later referred to as Iskuza (derived from the name of Isaac)

while the Persians called them Sakka or Sacae, (later to be known as Saxons).

The Greeks called these Scythians.

Multiplying in the lands of their captivity the Ten Tribes by 550 BC (at the time of the Babylonian Captivity of Judah) were already spread over a wide area from the Rhine and Baltic in the west, to Central Asia in the east.

In the 1st century AD Josephus wrote:

“...there are but two tribes in Asia and Europe subject to the Romans, while the ten tribes are beyond the Euphrates till now, and are an immense multitude, and not to be estimated by numbers.”

Though lost as to identity and disinherited, the Ten Tribes - as the seed of Abraham - were still under the protection of the Unconditional Everlasting Abrahamic Covenant, which had promised multitudinous seed, nations and kings -

“And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee.” (Gen. 17:6)

THE KINGDOM OF JUDAH

What happened to the Kingdom of Judah?

Judah was still in possession of the Ordinances of Worship, the Temple and its holy accoutrements, the Law of God, the Prophets and, in the Most Holy Place the Glory Presence of the Lord God, which is recorded as departing from the Temple in the time of Ezekiel the Prophet (ref. Exod. 40:34-38; 1 Kings 8:6-11; Ezekiel 11:23), i.e., the Kingdom of Judah was the custodian of the national manifestation of the Kingdom of God on earth.

But, the Kingdom of Judah became even more apostate than had the Ten Tribes (Ezek. 16:51). They also were

invaded by an Assyrian King in 710 BC, only a decade after the final collapse of the northern Kingdom.

The Assyrian invader, King Sennacherib, took all the 42 fenced cities of Judah (2 Ki. 18:13), leaving only Jerusalem intact, and deported 200,000 people to Saka territory south-east of the Caspian Sea.

It is likely that many of those Israelites who had moved into Judah to escape the idolatry of the northern Kingdom would have been captured at this time. Not all would have chosen to live in Jerusalem.

Though this attack brought about a brief revival of faith, under King Hezekiah, Judah's apostacy and depravity had reached an all time low by the time of Jehoiakim King of Judah.

God's judgment then fell on the Kingdom of Judah.

THE BABYLONIAN CAPTIVITY

In 604 BC, over 100 years after their compatriots had followed the Ten Tribes into captivity in Assyria, the **Babylonian King**, Nebuchadnezzar, began a series of invasions and deportations of **Judah** which were to cover a period of 19 years, ending finally in the fearful siege of Jerusalem and destruction of the Temple in 585/4 BC.

Thus the **Kingdom of the House of Judah** came to an end, its people cast out of their place in God's land, and its King and his sons executed. Only the King's daughters, heirs to the Throne of David, remained alive to make their escape with the Prophet Jeremiah.

However, the witness of the **Kingdom of God** was carried into Babylonian territory by faithful individuals such as Daniel and his associates, Ezekiel the Prophet, and others. These **individuals** remained faithful witnesses to the **Sovereignty of God** throughout their lives.

But the Judah Kingdom's national witness to the **Kingdom of God** had come to an end.

RETURN OF JUDAH

The next phase of the **national manifestation of the Kingdom of God** was to follow the fall of the Babylonian Empire to the Medo Persians, after which exiles from the old Kingdom of Judah were permitted to return to their homeland in Palestine.

It is important to realise that unlike the Ten Tribes, the Babylonian exiles from the Kingdom of Judah had not lost their identity as the **People of Jehovah**, and many INDIVIDUALS remained His faithful worshippers.

But, of all the Judahites who had been removed to Babylonia **only about 50,000** returned in 535 BC, to rebuild the Temple and the Nation (Ezra 2:64-65). The rest were to become dispersed throughout the Medo-Persian Empire, which extended from the Mediterranean to India (Esther 8:9), while others settled in Egypt.

But those who did return were to revive once again the national witness to the **Kingdom of God on earth**.

THE NATION OF THE JEWS

The Judahites of the old Kingdom of Judah did, however, suffer a name change after the Babylonian Captivity when **all worshippers of Jehovah** became known as **JEWS**, a name derived from **JUDEA** their country of origin.

This name was applied from then on to all worshippers of Jehovah - **Judahites and proselytes** of many different races - living both in Palestine or elsewhere in the world. And the **nation** which developed from the **returned exiles** became known as the **NATION of the JEWS**. It was not a kingdom as it was ruled by the High Priests.

This nation also became a **national witness to the Kingdom of God on earth**, having the rebuilt Temple and the Law of God as their guide for living. It also received the **Word of the Lord** through **Prophets** until about 490 BC, and acted as **custodian of the Holy Scriptures**.

Romans 3:1-2 reads:

“What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision? Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God.” (oracles = utterances, and refer to the Inspired Scriptures.)

THE JEWS BECOME A MIXED PEOPLE

As time went on the Jewish Nation became racially mixed. The making of proselytes has always been a feature of the Jews. This is mentioned as early as the time of Esther when “... *many of the people of the land* (the Persian Empire) *became Jews; for the fear of the Jews fell upon them.*” (Esther 8:17)

Large numbers of foreign people became Jews under the proselytizing efforts of the Maccabees (176-135 BC), and again under the reigns of John Hyrcanus (134-104 BC) and Alexander Jannaeus (103-76 BC.), when surrounding territories were conquered and the inhabitants forcibly circumcised, notably the Edomite descendants of Esau settled in Idumea an area to the south of Judah.

More recently, was the conversion near the beginning of the 8th Century AD, of the Turko/Mongol **Chazar Empire of South Russia**, which embraced Judaism as their State Religion. It is considered that it is the descendants of these people who form the bulk of modern day Jewry.

The sad history of the Jewish Nation ended in 70 AD, after its rejection of The Messiah, and its devastation by the Roman armies. But the Nation had fulfilled the purpose for which it was ordained. It had brought forth the Messiah, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, had provided the circumstances for His great Sacrifice of Himself, and it had witnessed His Resurrection and ascent to heaven, as the great Saviour of men and Redeemer of His People Israel.

Many thousands of Jews in all walks of life had believed on Jesus Christ as had many non Jews. These became the first missionaries and founders of the Christian Church, calling upon individuals of all nations, through Jesus Christ, to submit their lives to the sovereignty of God. But such individuals cannot perceive the Kingdom of God or understand its operation unless they are born again (or rather begotten from above) by the Spirit of God, thus becoming SONS OF GOD by belief in His only begotten Son.

“But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:...” (John 1:12)

These believing individuals are spoken of as living stones in 1 Pet. 2:5, which are being “*built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.*” As members of the spiritual Body of Christ they are to be resurrected to meet Him at His return, and will reign with Him in His coming Kingdom on earth. (Rev. 20:4-5)

Those Jews who, in unbelief and ignorance of the Scriptures, remained in rejection of their Messiah, were dispersed into the world, once again losing their nationhood

in God's land, and their standing as **national witnesses** of the Kingdom of God.

They have continued to regulate their lives by a man-inspired interpretation of the Law, known as the Talmud, on which their religion of **Judaism** is based, and they continue to reject the Messiah and Saviour of Israel, Jesus Christ our Lord.

When the **Pharisees** demanded to know when the Kingdom of God should come our Lord replied:

"The kingdom of God is not coming with things that can be observed; nor will they say, 'Look, here it is!' or 'There it is!'

For, in fact, the kingdom of God is among you." (NRSV)

The King was there, the Scriptures were there which were able to make them wise unto salvation, others could recognise the King and submit to His sovereignty, but they remained blind.

Our Lord also warned the **Chief Priests and Elders of the People** - the leaders of the Jewish Nation, that the Kingdom of God would be taken away from them.

This came to pass as stated in 70 AD when Jerusalem and the Temple were destroyed by the Romans and the people killed or scattered abroad. They were no longer a kingdom - their national witness as the Kingdom of God was at an end. It had happened largely because the teachings of Scripture had been reinterpreted according to the ideas of men, and foreigners within the nation had been allowed to usurp its leadership.

Our Lord had said to these blind leaders:

"Therefore say I unto you, the kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation (ethnos) bringing forth the fruits thereof." (Matt. 21:43)

This passage of Scripture is often, unthinkingly, applied to the Church. However, the word translated as "nation" is the Greek word 'ethnos' which means a Nation or a People, rather than a group of individuals from many different nations or peoples, as is the Church.

But what Nation could this be? Could that other Nation, cast off 800 years earlier for breaking God's Covenant be meant? How could the descendants of the cast off Ten

Tribes be allowed to return in forgiveness to their place in the service of their King?

We left the Ten Tribes scattered in large numbers beyond the Euphrates, across Central Asia to the Baltic and the Rhine, and living under many different names.

In the New Testament they are included only as part of the *“Twelve Tribes scattered abroad”* as addressed by James in his Epistle (James 1:1). They are included again in the “twelve tribes” as they are to feature in the future perfected Kingdom of God, e.g., the disciples were promised:

“...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.” (Matt. 19:28)

The Old Testament, however, gives more light on the destiny of the Ten Tribes in the writings of the Prophet Hosea..

(Ed.)

(To be continued)

A DEPRAVED NEW WORLD

It is sad to realise at a time when we are celebrating the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, and contemplating how much the world has benefited from the light of His Gospel, that powerful forces are planning for a world without Him. Lee Duigon, a Christian free-lance writer and reporter from New Jersey, USA, warns of the radical feminists' plan for America. Let us beware, because what happens in America often finds its way here. As we approach the end of this Age the machinations of the Enemy intensify as he seeks to destroy God's People and remove the name of Jesus Christ from the world's consciousness.

We are warned:

Discipline yourselves, keep alert.

Like a roaring lion your adversary the devil prowls around,
looking for someone to devour.

Resist him, steadfast in your faith,
for you know that your brothers and sisters in all the world
are undergoing the same kinds of suffering.

And after you have suffered for a little while,
the God of all grace, who has called you
to his eternal glory in Christ,
will himself restore, support, strengthen, and establish you.

(1 Peter 5:8-10 NRSV)

Let us be aware, therefore, of the subtleties of the Adversary.

Mr. Duigon states that “behind today’s push for homosexual marriage lies a detailed plan to deconstruct American society from top to bottom - abolishing marriage, the family, and the Christian basis of our civilization. The gay activists get the publicity, but the serious work is being done behind the scenes by academic feminists. They have a plan for America, and they have clearly articulated it in print, at public meetings, and in their classrooms.”

Following the philosophy of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, the 18th century Swiss scholar who claimed that “*man is born free, but is everywhere in chains*,” they believe basic human nature to be good, but that humanity’s problems all stem from our corrupt and restrictive social, political, and economic institutions. While Christians believe that the concept of original sin explains why fallen human beings cannot create perfect institutions, feminists and gay activists believe they can create a virtually perfect society. Existing society, however, must first be deconstructed.

“This means, in their view, that “bad” and “restrictive” institutions like marriage, family, and Christianity must be torn down like derelict buildings to make room for the better, freer institutions.”

Mr. Duigon reports that “in 2003, Hofstra University on Long Island, New York, hosted a conference on “Marriage, Democracy, and Families.” The participants included the elite of America’s family law profession, many of whom are lesbians and radical feminists.

A notable panel discussion was “*Intimate Affiliations and Democracy: Beyond Marriage?*” Panellists included:

- Martha Fineman, Professor of Feminist Jurisprudence at Cornell University, author of *The Neutered Mother*.
- Martha Ertman, University of Utah law professor, **Gender Studies**, University of Southern California.
- Judith Stacey, former Barbra Streisand, Professor of **Contemporary Gender Studies**, University of Southern California.
- Linda McClain, law professor at Cornell, author of *Toward a Formative Project of Securing Freedom and Equality*. ”

These people are “respected, highly paid professors at prestigious universities. Some of them are on a career track that can lead to a federal judgeship” and as such are “teachers and trainers of future lawyers and judges, founders and members of legal advocacy groups (such as Fineman’s Feminism and Legal Theory Project), authors whose works are regularly published in America’s law journals..... and they are in a strong position to influence public policy - especially through the courts.”

They want first, an end to marriage, which they consider is a failed institution, and the family exploitive.

Mr. Duigon reports that "gay marriage, for them, is only a step toward the goal of abolishing marriage altogether. This makes good sense to *Washington Post* columnist Michael Kinsley. Rather than fall into endless debate over gay marriage, "The solution is to end the institution of marriage." Family law revolutionaries ignore the public debate and seek ends well beyond gay marriage. In place of traditional marriage, they would, in Professor Stacey's words, completely "redesign" kinship "with creativity and verve."

Between them, Fineman and Ertman have developed a scheme to replace marriage by treating every "intimate affiliation" - any relationship involving any number of consenting adults - as a legal contract among private parties, subject to enforcement by the courts as other contracts - say, between a swimming pool owner and a cleaning service - are enforced. Existing contract law could be adapted for this purpose.....

The goal of this is to establish, as a basis for organizing American society, "polyamory." Polyamory, according to Ertman, takes many forms, including polygamy (multiple wives), polyandry (multiple husbands), group marriage, and assorted gay and lesbian menages - "myriad variations." Family law, she says, should recognize polyamory. Otherwise, the law would be guilty of "imposing norms of sexual fidelity and continuous cohabitation - in other words, of forging chains for people who are born free." Mr. Duigon continues:

"The gay marriage campaign is only a camel's nose in the tent. The camel itself is a wholesale deconstruction of society in favour of polyamory and an economy based on a massive welfare pyramid.

One need hardly say that such a re-engineering of society is incompatible with Christian doctrine and tradition. The question for Christians is: How far can these trends go before their proponents demand more absurd hate speech laws, penalties for churches that refuse to perform "gay marriage" ceremonies, restrictions on Christian homeschooling, and an end to the church itself as one more "restrictive" social institution?

It must be emphasized that all of the above are already under discussion among the Left's anointed." []

[One can understand the concentration on 'sleaze' in so many films and television programmes produced today, conditioning people gradually to accept a new morality.]

KABBALAH

The Faithworks column in a recent *Sunday Herald Sun* reported that the Catholic-born Madonna who once championed sleaze, tattoos and Botox, has publicly backed a pop offshoot of the ancient mystical Jewish sect and turned it into a new celebrity religion. She drinks only blessed water and wears red string with seven knots on her wrist to ward off the evil eye. These red strings constitute *fashion statements* and many of Madonna's friends have been seen wearing them.

The mass embrace of *pop kabbalah* has worried some Jewish rabbis and scholars who say it has little to do with traditional Jewish values or the genuine Kabbalah, but more with superstition and potty New Age spirituality.

Traditionally, Jews who study Kabbalah are over 40, married and male.

The term Kabbalah means **orally received tradition** and describes **Jewish mysticism** in all its forms. It represents spiritual traditions transmitted from earliest ages, mingled with impure or foreign elements absorbed over the centuries, and is the culmination of ancient Jewish esoteric (**secret**) theosophy.

The Kabbalah systems contain mythological and magical elements, **reinterpretations** of Biblical and Talmudic passages and of prayers and commandments, as well as Messianic speculations.

The modern Kabbalah consists of two books: the Sepher Yetzirah and the Zohar. The Sepher Yetzirah (or Book of Creation) is of great antiquity and obscurity. In the Talmud Rabbis are described as studying it for **magical purposes**. However, as well as devising their own magical ideas, despite the injunction against sorcery in the Law of God, Jews have inherited in the Kabbalah magical ideas from other races.

They also borrowed philosophy from the Magi of Persia, the Neoplatonists of the 3rd century B.C. and the Neopythagorians of the 1st century A.D. The Magi were the priestly caste among the ancient Medians and later Persians who worshipped the elements, particularly fire, and also claimed to possess supernatural powers. Our word "magic" derives therefrom, Black Magic being used with evil purposes and involving witchcraft, sorcery, evil eye, evil spirits, spells and enchantments.

Natural Magic involves the use of superior or secret knowledge of the Laws of Nature, e.g., chemistry and magnetism, to work 'wonders'. Celestial Magic involves the supposed power of spirits over the planets and the planets' influence over human destiny as developed in Astrology.

In Ancient Babylon and Egypt magic flourished side by side with religion. The star worshippers of Chaldea were adepts in astrology and necromancy (the supposed contact with the dead for the purpose of revealing future events - Ref. 1 Sam. 28:7-15). In Classical times magic became known as sorcery and the magician was believed to be in communication with the unseen world.

The Neoplatonists of the 3rd century BC stressed ascetic discipline and sought mystical ecstasy to attain union with God. The Neopythagorians of the 1st century A.D. considered God wholly spiritual and matter the source of evil from which men must try to free themselves by ascetic practices.

The Sepher-Ha-Zohar (or Book of Light) contains Kabbalah philosophy - the Mysteries of Wisdom said to have been given orally to the 70 elders by Moses. This book professes to describe the dynamic nature of the Godhead and offers a powerful symbolic interpretation of the Torah. The Godhead is depicted as a dynamic flow of force composed of numerous aspects. God as He is in Himself, the unknowable, immutable Infinite is above and beyond all human contemplation.

*"The Zohar provides a cosmic-symbolic interpretation of Judaism and of the history of Israel in which the Torah and Commandments, as well as Israel's life in exile, become symbols for events and processes of the inner life of God. Thus interpreted, the proper observance of the commandments assumes a cosmic significance." **

Tradition says that until the Christian Era it remained a purely oral tradition but was then written down by the disciples of Rabbi Simon ben Jochai. It appeared at the end of the 13th century written by a Spanish Jew, Moses de Leon, who claimed to have discovered and reproduced Rabbi Simon's original document. However, the Zohar, the main ideas of which find confirmation in the Talmud, is said to be a compilation of various documents dating from early times, and it is not known when this mystical tradition became known as Kabbalah.

In the 16th century a mythical, Messianic reinterpretation of the Kabbalah made by Isaac Luria "explained to the exiles the cosmic meaning of their suffering and gave them a crucial role in the cosmic drama of redemption." ** The human task, through prayer and proper observance of the commandments, was said to become nothing less than the **redemption of the world and the reunification of the Godhead**, thus continuing the idea of redemption through the works of the Law.

The Kabbalah gradually became transformed into a popular Messianic movement resulting in the 18th century Polish Hasidism which addressed itself to the unlearned masses, teaching them a simple and joyous faith and encouraging them to express their religious feelings in **ecstatic song and dance.**

The converted Jew Drach writing in the mid 19th century contended that the **ancient Kabbalah** had contained true wisdom including the truth of the Trinity in One God, and that the coming of the Promised Redeemer had formed the foundation of the whole system of ancient tradition. In other words it was in harmony with the later Christian teaching.

However, the Messianic idea which forms the dominating theme of the modern Kabbalah is made to serve purely **Jewish interests.**

"In the teaching of the later synagogue the philosophy of the earlier sages was narrowed down to suit the exclusive system of the Jewish hierarchy, and the ancient hope of a Redeemer who should restore man to the state of felicity he had lost at the Fall was transformed into the idea of salvation for the Jews alone under the aegis of a triumphant and even an avenging Messiah. "#

Rather than the salvation of the world the picture presented was the **exaltation of the Jews, national restoration and glory.** The Messiah was to be but the instrument in obtaining this. Drach claims that *"the tradition of a Man-God who should present Himself as the teacher and liberator of the fallen human race was constantly taught amongst all the enlightened nations of the globe. "#*

But it was to the humble (the shepherds) **and devout** (Simon and Anna) **that His birth was announced**, not to the mighty. The manner of His coming was abhorrent to the Jewish leaders who looked for a resplendent Messiah whose power and glory they would share.

But our Lord taught the sacred doctrines to the common people and denounced their leaders.

"But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in." (Matt. 23:13)

"Woe unto you, lawyers! For ye have taken away the key of knowledge: ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered." (Luke 11:52)

The Rabbis had indeed ignored the Prophets and perverted the ancient teaching which would have enabled the people to recognize the Messiah in the Person of Jesus Christ.

It was the **Chief Priests** who delivered Him up "from envy" and who "moved the people" to choose Barabbas.

Microsoft Encarta Ency. * *

"Secret Societies....." by Nesta Webster p.14 # ##

(From *Monthly Notes September 1997*)

(Ed.)

We wish all our readers a time of blessing and of happy fellowship with loved ones during the Christmas period. May we all be comforted and strengthened by the Holy Spirit as we contemplate God's great Gift of His Son, and the debt of gratitude we owe to Him who came willingly to do His Father's will.

Oh for that flame of living fire
Which shone so bright in saints of old;
Which bade their souls to heaven aspire,
Calm in distress, in danger bold!

Where is that spirit, Lord, which dwelt
In Abram's breast, and sealed him thine?
Which made Paul's heart with sorrow melt,
And glow with energy divine?

That spirit which from age to age
Proclaimed thy love, and taught thy ways?
Brightened Isaiah's vivid page,
And breathed in David's hallowed lays?

Is not thy grace as mighty now
As when Elijah felt its power?
When glory beamed from Moses' brow,
Or Job endured the trying hour?

Remember, Lord, the ancient days;
Renew thy work, thy grace restore;
And while to thee our hearts we raise,
On us thy Holy Spirit pour.

WM. H. BATHURST