



# The International News

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## Great National Tribulation Coming on America and Britain—But WHY?

by Garner Ted Armstrong

Why would the Bible show that God is angry with a "Christian" nation like the United States; nations like France, Denmark, Sweden, Britain, South Africa, Australia, Canada, or Israel?

Isn't it easier to imagine God being "mad" at Iraq, Libya, Syria, Vietnam, China, Cuba, Lebanon, Angola, Liberia or Bangladesh? Many nations are ruled by despots. Millions suffer under dictatorial, repressive regimes which deprive them of the most basic of human rights; millions die of starvation, suffer from endemic disease, poverty, squalor and hopelessness as power-mad political leaders pursue their own insane, egocentric goals.

How many horror stories are then throughout history where evil, sadistic rulers have committed atrocities on a monumental, genocidal scale?

Hitler was responsible for the deaths of ~~uncounted millions~~ ~~of Jews~~ ~~and~~ ~~Christians~~ ~~and~~ ~~others~~ ~~and~~ ~~was~~ ~~not~~ ~~far~~ ~~behind~~ ~~the~~ ~~bloody~~ ~~truth~~, or much of it, emerged following his death of vast "purges" within his own country, not to mention the brutal rape of countries overrun by the Red Army.

Historians will never know the hideous toll of life in China, Vietnam, or Cambodia. Pol Pot's horrifying regime may have murdered more than one millioa. Refugees fleeing the country told of "cutting their feet on the bones" of others lying in jungle trails. In Africa, brutal, repressive leaders have savagely carried out genocide against other tribal groups; in Nigeria, Kenya, Tanzania, Angola, the Sudan, South Africa,

World events loudly proclaim we are nearing the beginning of the prophesied "Great Tribulation," a time of horrifying national punishments for many nations, especially the United States, Britain, and some of the nations of Europe and the Mideast. But why?

tribal warfare has taken countless lives.

Does the Bible say anything whatsoever about such massive brutality? It most certainly does.

But with so many countries guilty of such horrible excesses, why would God be wrathful toward The United States, or Britain?

Some would scoff at the suggestion God is angry with our peoples. They would discount such a statement as wild hysteria; fanciful theological nonsense by a doomsdayer who, like chicken little, runs about crying "the sky is falling," or who delights in pretending to be a prophet crying, "Doom! Doom!"

Yet, the Bible contains dozens of powerful indictments against specific nations—naming them, listing their terrible individual and national sins! Not only are such seemingly insignificant nations as Jordan, Egypt and Turkey mentioned by their ancient, tribal names, but major nations are identified, and their horrible sins are clearly catalogued!

Believe it or not, God is wrathful toward all nations, not just a few! He says, "Come near, ye nations, to hear; and hearken, ye people: let the earth hear, and all that is therein; the world, and all things that come

forth of it.

"For the indignation of the Eternal is upon all nations, and His fury upon their armies..." (Isaiah 34:1-2).

Yet, God specifically focuses His wrath upon His "elect"—the "House of Israel" and the "House of Judah"—detailing their enormous individual and national sins from the earliest books in the Bible to the prophecies dealing with the end time!

### Great Tribulation Coming Upon Modern "Israel"

The prophesied Great Tribulation is

## Radio Broadcast Now Reaching Europe via Satellite

Transtar Satellite Television of Hampshire, England, began making radio broadcasting time available over their Astra Satellite in October, 1990.

According to Vincent Monsey, Managing Director, "It is a major achievement for the Astra Satellite to reach 17 million homes so soon after launch. Realistic projections show that by the end of 1990 some 25 million homes will be receiving radio and television broadcasts from the satellite."

Initially, we were offered one-half hour, five days per week, between 5 and 7 p.m. at the rate of \$2,860 per week. Because of budgetary constraints involving our many television stations in the United States, we were unable to avail ourselves of this offer. However, we are commencing with two fifteen-minute broadcasts each week, much of which will be underwritten by members of the Church of God, International in Britain and Europe.

Garner Ted Armstrong began making new radio programs about a month ago, commencing with current programs on the Crisis in the Gulf, and following on with a new series on the Gospels.

primarily the time of God's national punishments to come upon the United States of America and the British Commonwealth!

"...lo, the days come, saith the Eternal, that I will bring [back] again [the second time—this has never happened yet in history] the captivity of my people Israel and Judah, saith the Eternal: and I will cause them to return to the land that I gave their fathers, and they shall possess it.

"...For it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Eternal of Hosts, that I will break his yoke from off thy neck, and will burst thy bonds, and strangers shall no more serve themselves of him:

"But they shall serve the Eternal their God, and David their king, whom I will raise up unto them" (Jeremiah 30:1-9).

When does the Bible picture these stragglers, these beaten slaves, like

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Construction is underway at church property on Lake Palestine

"I intend using the 'Harmony of the Gospels' by Robertson; wading through Matthew, Mark, Luke and John verse by verse, expounding, explaining," Mr. Armstrong said.

"I will emphasize the vast difference between what people have always casually assumed the Bible says, and what it really says," he commented. "Already, I have emphasized how Matthew 1:18 plainly says Mary was 'found with Child of the Holy Spirit,' and went into the 'trinity' doctrine in great detail, advertising our brochure on the trinity by Vance Stinson," he said.

"Most of the time, I will be explaining the difference between the worldly concept of a 'gospel' about Christ, and the real gospel message He brought; preaching the Gospel of the soon-coming Kingdom of God, both as a witness and a warning," Mr. Armstrong said.

As the accompanying map of Britain and Europe shows, the satellite reaches people in many, many countries:

Among them are Austria, Belgium, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Ireland, Finland

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Personal from

*Garnet Ted Armstrong*

Dear Friend and Subscriber:

We all know a terrible shooting war could break out at any moment in the Mideast! The United States and major European powers, to say nothing of tiny Israel, DARE NOT leave Saddam Hussein's military machine, chemical weapon plants and nuclear capability intact to destabilize the entire region, and create an entirely new awkward imbalance in the power structure of the Middle East.

While many were cheering the release of the hostages, surely it must dawn on some that now that most Americans (except for those few who wanted to stay) are out of Kuwait and Iraq, it means war may be more likely than before, for the simple reason that United States armed forces commanders do not need to worry about killing American civilians!

Bible prophecy says war will come to the region, eventually! Christ's prophecy in Matthew 24:15 about the abomination of desolation was the subject of my most recent booklet—which, if you have not yet written for it, I urge you to do so at this time! This brand-new booklet, *The Abomination of Desolation*, clearly identifies who really is the infamous "Antichrist"—the "man of sin" of II Thessalonians 2, the "little horn" of Daniel 8 and 9—who will set up something that is an obscene affront to God in the "holy

place" in Jerusalem.

Over the last couple of years, many articles have been appearing in the world press concerning the intent of various right-wing Jewish religious organizations to build another temple! Back in October of 1989, a flurry of articles appeared in newspapers all over the United States, in *Time* magazine, and in the *Jerusalem Post*. The *Post* article said, "...members of the Faithful of the Temple Mount marched last week from the western wall to the Pool of Siloam to consecrate what they have designated as the cornerstone of the third temple. Police had prevented the group from laying the 'cornerstone' in the western wall plaza, as they originally intended.... Salomon [Gershon Salomon, who is leader of the Faithful of the Temple Mount] said that the stone, which he described as 'holy,' would soon be put in its rightful place" (*Jerusalem Post*, October 28, 1989).

A couple of weeks earlier, *Time* magazine reported, "Next week Israel's Minister of Religious Affairs will sponsor a Conference of Temple Research to discuss whether contemporary Jews are obligated to rebuild. However, several small organizations in Jerusalem believe the question is settled. They are zealously making preparations for the new temple in spite of the doctrinal obstacles and the certainty of Muslim fury.

"They point out that animal sacrifices and other aspects of temple worship are so ingrained in Judaism that they take up to a third of the 613 biblical commandments, plus main portions of the Talmud and the daily ritual.

"No group is more zealous than the Temple Institute whose spiritual leader is 50-year-old Rabbi Israel Ariel.... 'Our task,' states the Institute's American-born director, Zev Golan, 'is to advance the

cause of the temple and to prepare for its establishment, not just talk about it.'

"During six years of research, the Institute has reconstructed 38 of the ritual implements that will be required when temple sacrifices are restored; it will complete the other items as funds permit. A museum of the completed pieces has drawn ten thousand visitors during the current holy days" (*Time*, 1989).

As the article indicates, all such attempts, by right-wing Jewish organizations, make the Islamic Arabs absolutely furious. As you saw in the news, the most recent attempt, late in 1990, led to about 20 deaths; as rock-throwing Palestinian youths were shot by Israeli police when the youths attempted to prevent another symbolic laying of a cornerstone.

As a result of the extremely unstable condition in the Middle East; the imminency of war; we have decided not to produce our expected year-end full-color issue of *Twentieth Century WATCH*, at the beginning of this new year. Obviously, because of the possibility of day-to-day changes occurring in the situation, we did not want to send to the press a full issue of our magazine which could prove to be virtually "out of date" by the time it got to your mail box!

Therefore, while I had originally intended the article "The Abomination of Desolation" to be included in the special year-end issue of *Twentieth Century WATCH*, we opted to make it into a booklet as a permanent part of our literature

inventory instead.

As always, we will continually strive to produce this publication, *The International News*, and get it to your address in timely fashion.

We just recently completed another annual meeting of the *Ministerial Council*, in our home office here in Tyler. All in attendance felt it was our best council meeting ever, and we are sure that thousands will rejoice when they learn of the new ordinations which were approved.

Work is progressing on the grounds of our newly-acquired properties on beautiful Lake Palestine. The slab has been poured for our large "Family Life Center" which will prove to be an extremely practical and functional building for many different purposes.

We hope to have it completed in ample time to accommodate the more than one hundred youngsters we anticipate will be attending the summer youth program on the grounds this coming June. All the youths will be notified via their own mailing list, and in our new youth publication. Any of you who are not currently on that mailing list and want to receive information concerning summer camp and other youth activities, please write to us and let us know as soon as possible.

The new building will provide us with an air-conditioned recreation area, for indoor basketball, volleyball and badminton, as well as spacious kitchen, and adequate restrooms, and classroom facilities.

The International News

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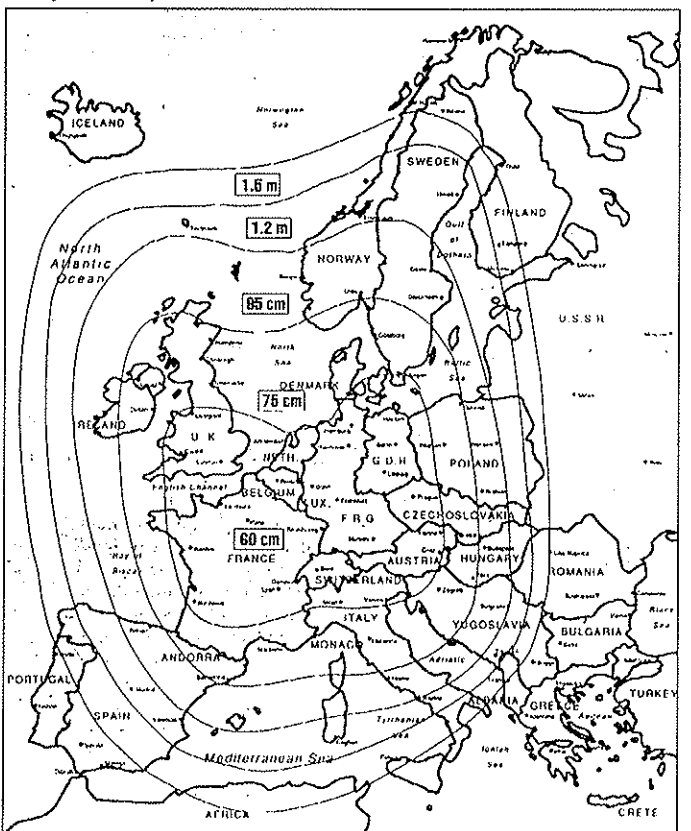
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Radio

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 France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Israel, Italy, Luxembourg, Holland, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Britain, and Yugoslavia.

"I remember waiting at a red light in traffic on a sunny day back in the mid '60s by Selfridges' department store in London," Mr. Armstrong said. "My windows were rolled down, and I was amazed to hear my own voice coming back at me from two automobiles, one on each side, from one of the 'ship stations' which happened to be airing the program at that precise time. It is elating to know that millions will now be able to hear the broadcast once again—people who have not heard my voice since the late 1970s!"

Tapes of the broadcasts to England and Europe will also be sent to Jamaica, and other countries. ☐



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As soon as it is in sufficient shape, the local Tyler church will begin meeting in the building, and we are presently contemplating designating it as an alternative festival site for 1991! An official announcement to this effect, listing accommodations, discussing the entire situation involving camping, etc., will come out a little later.

We hope this will relieve pressure on already overcrowded facilities at both Wagoner, Oklahoma, and Panama City Beach, Florida.

The auditorium/gymnasium in the new building is expected to seat approximately 450 people.

Also, we are in the concept and design phase of our much-needed new office building to be constructed on the same grounds, on a bluff overlooking beautiful Lake Palestine!

Our present building in the south part of Tyler has been completely outgrown! Though we know it may take quite a bit of time, we have listed it for sale; a sign is clearly visible to passersby on the highway, and we hope that within the next year and a half or two years, we will be working in a much more practical facility.

My wife and I are very much looking forward to another visit to southern California this early January, and a special church visit in Pasadena on January 5 at 58 South Sierra Madre, Pasadena, 10:30 a.m. God willing, I will be speaking to brethren from the central part of California in San Jose at the LeBarron Hotel, 1350 North 1st Street, Provenances Room, San Jose, 2:00 p.m., on December 29.

New Radio Programs Being Made

Currently, I am committed to making two new radio programs each week, and sending them to Mr. Jim McBride in England, where they're being placed on ASTRA Satellite (see accompanying article and map).

Even though it adds a good bit to my workload, it does feel good to be back in front of the microphone and radio studio, with my large studio Bible and Robertson's Harmony of the Gospels, doing the same kind of radio programs I have done for thirty-five and a half years.

New Booklet Program

Presently, we are committed to producing one new booklet each month in the calendar year 1991! I am already making rapid progress on a major new booklet explaining WHY the Great Tribulation is coming on Britain and America; showing the many, many scriptures that deal with our collective personal and national sins, and why it is that Almighty God says He is wrathful toward our peoples!

Other major upcoming booklets will be on the subject of the Sabbath, race, evolution/creation, and many doctrinal and biblical subjects.

It is our intention to be able to announce at least one new publication each time I

write a third-class letter to our entire mailing list!

In addition, we are intending to continue publishing The International News once each month, and we certainly want to urge all of you contributing writers, and those who report to us on local church activities, weddings, births and the like to stay busy! We also appreciate the inclusion of black and white snapshots and pictures to accompany any such articles.

Finally, a sincere thank you to those who are joining us on the prayer line on a daily basis, and especially remembering the time when all of us ministers are assembled together each Friday morning, going through the many heart-rending, tearful and painful cries and pleas for help we receive. Truly, some of the letters we receive are absolutely sickening, when they relate to us the heartbreaking circumstances in many people's lives as a result of drugs, rape,

murder, so many crimes and sins it is impossible to catalog them all.

THANK YOU to those who are faithfully standing with us, giving as they able so that we may have to GIVE all of this free literature, the television programs and new radio broadcasts to the world!

Sincerely, in Jesus' name,

Garner Ted Armstrong

# Saddam's Dignity

by Mark Armstrong

Iraq's Ambassador to the United Nations has said that war in the Gulf will bring about the isolation of the United States in the Middle East and the world community at large (CNN, Larry King Live, 11/28/90). Bombing any Arab territory, according to the ambassador, would insult collective Arab honor and result in the violent overthrow of all regimes which have supported the U.S. against Iraq.

Even taking into account the Ambassador's polarized line of logic, his convoluted reasoning and lame explanations, he may have a point. Anyone familiar with the social culture of Arab society knows they are a people intensely passionate in their loyalties to tradition, religious belief, and above all, in upholding personal dignity. Study of the Arab way of life reveals that the maintenance of honor is at its very foundation.

Iraq's Ambassador to the U.S., Mohamed Al-Shamat, has become a familiar face to American television viewers. He appears almost daily to promote the Iraqi line and denounce U.S. actions and policy. Statements made by the Iraqi Ambassador to the United States often refer to an attempt to "humiliate" Saddam Hussein. He claims that U.S. military presence in the region is proof that America intends to control Arab natural resources by force, in effect robbing Arab countries of their very sovereignty. Will those types of representations offend the sensibilities of the vast populations of the Arab world at large?

Might a consensus that Arab honor has been trampled upon by the United States with the consent of Arab leaders lead to the fall of moderate regimes throughout the region?

Not at all implausible.

What of the constant referral to the fact that Iraq is justified in ignoring UN resolutions demanding immediate withdrawal from Kuwait due to the fact that Israel has ignored similar resolutions demanding withdrawal from conquered territories over a period of decades. That those territories were acquired in response to Arab attack constitutes a dissimilarity to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait (President Bush accurately calls it "naked aggression") that seems to have evaded the grasp of Iraqis and the news media.

Saddam Hussein has indeed gained ground in convincing the United States and the world that Israel's occupation of Arab lands must be a top priority, just as soon as this current crisis is resolved. But how can it be resolved without damaging Saddam Hussein's perception of his own dignity? Is that not the very crux of the matter?

Why would an intelligent man, as Saddam is reputed to be, risk everything; the lives of over a million soldiers; the lives of millions of citizens; the entire infrastructure of his relatively prosperous nation; his own life? What could he possibly stand to gain by maintaining an intransigent position in the face of overwhelming world opinion, and all the conventional military force the planet's most powerful nation can muster?

Didn't Iraqi forces pillage and plunder all the Kuwaiti wealth that could be carried or hauled months ago? Most analysts have concluded that Saddam Hussein never dreamed that his invasion of Kuwait would result in the swift action and vehement international resolve he now faces. And in response to his calls for comprehensive resolutions of all Mideast problems (read Israel's withdrawal from all occupied territories), the U.S. has said, "Fine, but first get out of Kuwait." But as most observers know in their heart of hearts, there is virtually no hope for the outcome the Arab world demands in Israeli occupied territories, ever.

Other than what was gained in the early stages of the invasion, what has Iraq benefited? It has lost the ability to export or import aside from whatever smuggling and clandestine trade manages to evade the embargo, lost the ability to sell oil which is the Iraqi economy's life blood. Saddam has had to mobilize his entire standing army including ill-trained and ill-equipped reserves. He now faces an enormous assemblage of might and is threatened by air, sea and land attack with all of his military and industrial capacity targeted. What has he to gain by standing firm? The answer sounds rhetorical, even silly from a pragmatic point of view. It is honor.

And while the Western world shakes its collective head, incredulous at what demented logic, what insanity must be at work in a mind that values mere pride above millions of lives and all the relative prosperity of a nation built over decades, it makes perfect sense to millions upon millions of Arabs who share that definition

of honor.

Why, after all, was Anwar Sadat, perhaps the most pragmatic and hopeful of all modern Arab leaders assassinated and buried virtually without mourning or outrage expressed by those we'd have expected to preserve his memory and build on his successes? Because he was seen to have sullied Arab honor. He committed the unpardonable sin of recognizing the existence of a nation with which he'd shared a border for nearly three decades. He actually flew to Israel, embraced Menachem Begin, formally recognized Israel's sovereignty. Such fraternization with a sworn enemy of the Arab world earned him designation as a traitor. One who put practical considerations, including the hope for an improvement of life for the impoverished masses of his country ahead of Arab honor. His sentence was death. Unmourned, and in accordance with the code of Arab honor, just.

Capital Hill hearings on the use of force have produced a majority counseling patience in the interests of avoiding confrontation. Some participants note however that the avoidance of war cannot result in the achievement of U.S. goals. Former Joint Chiefs of Staff and advisors seem to feel that the casualty risks inherent in such a confrontation are so great that U.S. dominance could not be maintained in a war of attrition, and that U.S. public support could not be maintained under the spectre of multiple thousands of American boys being shipped home in body bags.

Isn't it odd the way the news media play the double role of reporting on public opinion while allowing a built-in bias to shape it? Here is an example of just that. Newsweek magazine reported in the December 17th issue that 56 percent of Americans asked in a poll conducted by Gallup for Newsweek said they felt that now that the hostages are out, the U.S. should "engage in combat if Iraq fails to leave Kuwait...." Fifty-six percent said engage in combat, 33 percent said don't. In response to the November 26th issue "Should We Fight?" Newsweek said that they received a majority response saying "no" to war. All but one of the letters they chose to print said "no." Not only did they say no, each and every one was angrily critical of Bush Administration policy. Some excerpts: "Bush has to stop acting like a wimp-bully...." "Is the world ready to

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MARKY

# What Was the "Law of Commandments" That Christ Abolished?

by Vance A. Stinson

Have you ever been told that the introduction of the New Covenant brought an end to the Ten Commandments? Many thousands have been taught that Christ came to this earth and *abolished* the entire Law of Moses, including the Ten Commandments, and replaced the "old law" with a brand new law.

One of the "prooftexts" most often used to support this "abolished law" theory is Ephesians 2:15, where Paul, speaking of Christ, says, "Having *abolished* in His flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace."

This "law of commandments" is commonly believed to be the Ten Commandments, among other "Old Testament" laws. But was it? Or was Paul speaking of something entirely unrelated to the Ten Commandments?

## What Did Jesus Say About the Law?

Before drawing any conclusions about the "law of commandments" that Christ abolished, let's first see what Christ Himself had to say about the so-called "Old Testament Law."

"Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets," said Jesus, in the famous "Sermon on the Mount"; "I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill" (Matthew 5:17).

If Jesus says He did NOT come to destroy (or abolish) the Law, why do so many say that He DID come to destroy the Law?

Not only did Jesus say that He did not come to destroy the Law, He stated clearly that He came to *fulfill* the Law. The Greek word translated "fulfill" does not mean "bring to an end." It means "fill up," or "fill full." It agrees perfectly with the Messianic prophecy of Isaiah 42:21, which declares that Christ "will *magnify* the law, and make it honourable."

Does *magnify* mean "abolish"? Hardly!

If anyone is not yet convinced that Christ did not abolish the Law, then take a close look at His very next statement:

"For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled" (verse 18).

If heaven and earth have not passed away, then neither has the Law! Yet, incredibly, some disregard this clear statement of Christ's, claiming it is a "hard saying." The truth is, it is "hard" only to those who try to force it into agreement with the "abolished law" theory.

It is not such a "hard saying," however, for those who read and believe what God

The redemptive work of Jesus Christ brought about the abolishment of a certain "law of commandments." What was that "law"? Was it the Ten Commandments? The Law of Moses?

said about the New Covenant. Notice it, in Jeremiah 31:

"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...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" (verses 31, 33).

Was God speaking of some "law" different from the one He gave to Israel through Moses? Of course not! He was obviously speaking of *His Law*—the same Law He speaks of in Matthew the fifth chapter?

Christ's declaration that He did not come to destroy the Law should be enough to at least raise serious doubts about the "abolished law" theory; and, certainly, His declaration that one jot or tittle would by no means pass from the Law "Till heaven and earth pass," should erase any doubts about the permanent nature of God's Law!

But if these crystal clear statements are not enough, then look at Christ's next statement:

"Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the Kingdom of Heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven" (verse 19).

Go back and carefully reread the passage, beginning in verse 17 and reading through verse 19. How much more clarity do we need to prove once and for all that Jesus Christ did NOT abolish the Ten Commandments?

Rather than abolish, He *magnified* God's Law. To see just how He magnified the Law, simply read through the remainder of the chapter. You will find that there is no possible way—without twisting the plain teachings of Scripture—to conclude that Jesus brought an end to the Ten Commandments.

## Did Paul Contradict His Own Teaching?

In Romans the seventh chapter, the apostle Paul asks, "What shall we say then? Is the law sin?" He then answers his own question; and, as we shall see, his answer is most revealing. Notice: "God forbid [may it never be so!]. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust [concupiscence], except the law had said, *Thou shalt not covet*" (verse 1).

His reference to the Tenth Commandment leaves us with no doubt as to which

law Paul has in mind. Further, he tells us that he would not have known sin had it not been for the Law—for the Law *defines* sin, tells us what constitutes sin.

Sin, then, is *law-breaking*! With this in mind, notice what Paul says about sin:

"What shall we say then? Shall we continue to sin [i.e., *break the law*], that grace may abound? *God forbid*. How shall we, that are dead to sin [*law-breaking*], live any longer therein?" (Romans 6:1-2).

Clearly, if we are converted Christians, and if we intend to continue being converted Christians, then we cannot willfully persist in *breaking God's Law*! So says Paul! The Law, then, could not have been abolished at the death of Jesus Christ!

Further, if the Law were now an obsolete thing of the past, no longer applicable to New Covenant believers, then Paul could hardly have declared, "Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good" (Romans 7:12). Nor could he have said, "For we know that the law is *spiritual*..." (verse 14). Nor could he have *continually* taught against living in sin, or law-breaking.

But did Paul contradict his own teaching? Did he admonish the Romans to refrain from breaking the Law, while telling the Ephesians that the Law has been abolished?

We can come to one of two conclusions: Either Paul flatly contradicted his own teaching, or Ephesians 2:15 *does not* say that the Ten Commandments have been abolished! It's one or the other!

## The "Middle Wall of Partition"

Let's return to Ephesians the second chapter, and note the context before drawing conclusions about the meaning of verse 15.

Paul writes: "Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands [note that Paul is addressing Gentile converts]; That at that time ye [Gentiles] were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:

"But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For He is our peace, who hath made both [Jew and Gentile] one [i.e. one people], and hath broken down the *middle wall of partition* between us"

(verses 11-14).

What was the "middle wall of partition" that stood between the Jews and Gentiles?

Bullinger's *Companion Bible* offers an interesting, and revealing, comment on this verse. Notice: "The type is seen in the stone palisade, about three cubits high, which separated the Court of the Gentiles from that of the Jews, to pass which was death to any Gentile. A notice, of which Josephus speaks, was found in 1871."

The "middle wall of partition," then, was a stone palisade that stood in the Temple, separating the Court of the Gentiles from the inner courts. Of course, Paul's allusion to it is metaphorical. The wall's destruction represents the removal of the barrier between Jews and Gentiles where worship of God is concerned. Thus, the two groups, formerly separated, are now one people in Christ.

Now, with this in mind, continue the account: "Having abolished in His flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in Himself of twain one new man, so making peace; And that He might reconcile both [Jew and Gentile] unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby."

Notice that this "law of commandments contained in ordinances" is described as the "enmity" that separated Jews from Gentiles. Do the laws of the Ten Commandments separate people? Obviously, they do not! If everyone obeyed the commandments, our divided society would experience greater unity than ever before. The different races would be able to live together at peace, for there would be no more murder, and no more hatred, which is the spirit of murder.

The "law of commandments," then, could not possibly be the Ten Commandments.

The only "law of commandments" that stood as an "enmity" separating Gentiles from Jews in the worship of God was inscribed on the "middle wall of partition," or stone palisade, that stood in the Temple. And that law forbade Gentiles from passing beyond the stone palisade, on penalty of death. It had *nothing whatsoever* to do with the Ten Commandments, or with any part of the Law of Moses!

A replica of a broken piece of the wall, with the inscription forbidding Gentiles to pass, is on display at the Dallas Theological Seminary library. There can be no question that this is what Paul is alluding to in Ephesians the second chapter.

So, no, the Ten Commandments have not been abolished. They are as meaningful, as holy, and as binding as they ever were.

Now is as good a time as any to resolve to keep them! □

# Where's Your Phylactery?

by James McBride

He stands out in the crowd. On his forehead suspended from a leather thong is a hollow cube maybe an inch long, made of skin. There's another suspended from his wrist. They are black, and each contains a scrip of inscribed parchment. On his head is a shawl, and his chin sprouts an untidy beard. Around the lower end of his jacket is a long fringe.

That's how the typical Pharisee *may* have appeared in the first and second centuries A.D. Does this mode of dress reflect a Bible command? And if it does, ought Christians to deck themselves in this bizarre fashion? After all, we are a "peculiar people"!

## Common Attire?

Historically, it's unlikely that phylacteries (that cube made from skin), fringes, shaggy beards, etc., were the common attire of the average Jew in the street. Most commentaries recognize their existence—but limit them to pious Jews on religious occasions. They are considered to be an overly exuberant interpretation of such scriptures as Exodus 13:9 and Deuteronomy 6:8.

But even if a real demand of the Law—did the early church encourage them? Should we?

Undoubtedly the average converted Jew

in New Testament times reflected the customs of the non-Messianic Jew. He continued to attend Temple services (Acts 2:46). His worship was often a continuation of synagogue services with the same psalmody, prayers, etc. Indeed, converted Jews even continued to make vows and fulfill the demands of the Law—"...they are all zealous for the Law" (Acts 21:20-26). Even the apostle to the Gentiles, Paul, wholeheartedly sacrificed in God's Temple! So it's not unlikely that Christian Jews *dressed* as did their contemporaries—though without the excesses condemned by Jesus (Matthew 23:5).

But—*should we?* Is there a Bible injunction for the twentieth century Christian to emulate them in the matter of the externals of religious belief?

## Heart of the Matter

The matter strikes at the nature of our faith. Is the Christian life composed of externals such as our mode of apparel? Or whether we're circumcised or not? Or outward tokens of our faith, like amulets—or phylacteries? Or the growing of appropriately shaped—or unshaped—facial hair?

In our sophisticated Western world such outward show would be bizarre and ridiculous indeed! But—if the Scriptures command it—shouldn't we, for the sake of

our Christian witness, be unashamed?

Of course, our outward appearance is important. The way we stay clean and dress and groom ourselves should be of the highest standard, truly reflecting the best we can do within our means. But does God really say we ought to wear special "Christian" clothing? Or dress like our—probably faulty—perception of a first century Jew?

A more likely interpretation of the Scriptures is expressed in Proverbs: "Let not mercy and truth forsake you; bind them about your neck; write them upon the table of your heart" (3:3). In other words, these abstract qualities are to be part and parcel of our daily life. Simply wearing special amulets or crucifixes or crosses or unkempt beards or religious fringes doesn't mark us as being especially "spiritual"—or obedient.

In fact, Jesus—because this outward show was the typical behavior of the "religious" Jew of His day—explicitly warned against such external expressions of our faith. Whether in our praying (it should be private) or our giving (it ought to be discreet and not public—Matthew 6:1-4) or our fasting (no one should know from our appearance and demeanor—verses 5-6). And the principle of "inwardness" in our clothing applied by the apostle Peter to women (1 Peter 3:1-6) surely applies in general to all Christians.

In contrast to the faith of ancient

Judaism, *true Christianity is a matter of the heart.*

That is, the Christian is transformed inwardly by the working of the Spirit of God. No longer is circumcision an essential (Philippians 3:3). Nor worship in a temple through the agency of a priesthood (John 2:24). Nor special clothing and outward material signs of our faith.

Why? Because "God is Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit [i.e., inwardly] and in truth."

So when we walk the streets, or attend to our business, or gather as commanded to observe God's Sabbaths (Hebrews 10:25), such artifacts *don't* commend us to God—or to men!

This inwardness is *not*, of course, a teaching confined to the New Testament. Isaiah points out that fasting—especially on the Day of Atonement—was of no consequence if not accompanied by an attitude of concern for others expressed in a life of service (Isaiah 58). And Jeremiah looked forward to a new covenant between God and mankind by which "I will put my law in their inward parts, and will write it in their hearts" (Jeremiah 32:33).

Let us, then, develop all those inner spiritual characteristics which reflect the mind of Christ. As these virtues grow in us, they will manifest as godly behavior, which is the true "outer apparel" of the people of God! □

# Tribulation

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refugees, returning to their own lands? At the time of the Second Coming of Christ and the RESURRECTION! There is no question concerning the time setting of these prophecies.

Notice how many scriptures picture the condition of God's people, the so-called "lost ten tribes" of the House of Israel, and the House of Judah, at the time of God's intervention, the time of Christ's return, and the beginning of the millennium:

"And it shall come to pass in that day, that the remnant of Israel, and such as are escaped of the house of Jacob, shall no more again stay upon him that smote them; but shall stay upon the Eternal, the Holy One of Israel, in truth.

"The remnant shall return, even the remnant of Jacob [Israel: the "lost ten tribes"], unto the mighty GOD. For though thy people Israel be as the sand of the sea, yet a remnant of them shall return...for the Eternal of hosts shall make a consumption [full end, or finish], even determined [which God has previously planned], in the midst of all the land.

"Therefore thus saith the Lord God of hosts, O My people that dwellest in Zion, be not afraid of the Assyrian; he shall smite thee with a rod, and shall lift up his staff against thee, after the manner of Egypt

[slavery! Captivity, as in the days of Joshua and the early Israelites]....

"And it shall come to pass in that day, that his burden shall be taken away from off thy shoulder, and his yoke from off thy neck, and the yoke shall be destroyed because of the anointing" (Isaiah 10:20-27).

The yoke is used as a symbol of slavery! It is laid upon God's "elect," Israel, by two powers: the great false church, headed by the false prophet, or Antichrist (Isaiah 47:6), and the "beast" power, which is the final head of the seven successive heads of Rome, the Germanic rulers over the so-called "Holy Roman Empire" (Isaiah 10:27; 14:25).

Hitler deported millions from nations all over eastern Europe; Jews from many countries, countless Poles, Czechs, Hungarians, Greeks, Slavs, Serbs, Croats, Romanians, French; many others. They were used as forced laborers in hundreds of German factories all over Germany and occupied Europe. More than half of these wretched people, forced to live in squalor and privation, without adequate food or clothing, with no medical assistance, died!

The ancient Assyrians did the same thing. If you have not yet read our free book *Europe and America in Prophecy*, you need to write for it immediately, and

read it carefully! It is perhaps one of the most important missing "keys" to the understanding of prophecy one could discover—the identity of Britain and the United States; of Germany, and the early Europeans.

The scripture clearly says it is the modern nation of Assyria that will conquer the modern nations identified as the "lost ten tribes," or the House of Israel. This modern nation called "Assyria" in prophecy will take them captive, and use them as forced labor; as household servants!

Notice again how modern "Israel" (not the Jews in Palestine, but the nations of modern Manasseh, Ephraim, and all the others of ten-tribed Israel) is said to be held captive by Assyria at the time of the Second Coming of Christ:

"And it shall come to pass in that day, that his burden shall be taken away from off thy shoulder, and his yoke from off thy neck, and the yoke shall be destroyed because of the anointing." This "anointing" refers to the return of Christ; the establishment of His millennial reign.

God says, "...He shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah [two separate peoples] from the four corners of the earth...and there shall be an highway for the remnant of His people, which shall be left, from Assyria; like as it was in the day that he

came up out of the land of Egypt" (Isaiah 11:12-16).

Again, He promises, "The Eternal of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand:

"That I will break the Assyrian in my land, and upon my mountains tread him under foot: then shall his yoke depart from off them, and his burden depart from their shoulders" (Isaiah 14:24-26).

Never did this take place in history. Assyria carried ancient Israel captive in successive waves of invasion in about 721 to 718 BC. Assyria was subjugated by Babylon, which became the first true world ruling empire. But Babylon gained the ascendancy over its sister nation Assyria in its own indigenous area, not in the land of Palestine.

This prophecy has *not yet occurred!* Yet, here is a nation identified only as "Assyria," who will be holding God's people "Israel" captive at the time of the Second Coming of Christ! You will see surprising information on the identity of the modern Assyrians in our free book, *Europe and America in Prophecy*, and a smaller booklet, *The Abomination of Desolation*.

Notice that the modern nation of Assyria has a partner in its crimes.

John saw, in vision, a great false church which would be led by Satan, and which would be allowed of God to horribly

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# Tribulation

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martyr many of Christ's true servants:

"And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, 'Come hither: I will show unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters...' (Revelation 17:1).

Obviously, a woman cannot "sit upon" water. This is symbolic language, indicating a great false church which is comprised of members in many different nations—a multi-racial, universal church!

Notice the proof: "With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication [God labels political intrigue, secret alliances; cynical disregard for human suffering carried out by evil regimes as "fornication," spiritually speaking], and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication" (Revelation 17:2).

This is spiritual drunkenness. (Compare with Isaiah 29:9 and 59:8-10). Notice, in passing, that the Greek word is *oinos*, which is the only Greek word translated "wine" in the New Testament, including the word used in Jesus' first miracle at Cana, in Galilee, when He changed water into *oinos* or "wine." That *oinos* is a drink which, when taken to excess, can cause drunkenness is obvious. But here, it is used for the teaching of this great false church; its doctrines and its elaborate, mystical rituals.

The prophecy continues, "So he carried me away in the Spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet colored beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns" (Revelation 17:3).

What is the meaning of this scarlet colored beast? (If you have not yet read our brochure, "Who, What is the Beast of Revelation?," or our booklet *What is the Mark of the Beast?* please write immediately for both: gratis, of course. Also, write for our booklet, *The Abomination of Desolation*, which makes PLAIN the identity of this great false church!)

Notice the Bible interprets the Bible; we dare not attempt to put our own interpretation on it. God says, "The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sitteth, and there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh [the seventh and last "head" of political system—human government of this "beast"], he must continue a short space...and the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast.

"These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast" (Revelation 17:9-14).

Having "one mind" obviously means they are in complete agreement regarding policy. Unitedly, they will use their gigantic economic and military strength, pooling

their military forces into one great army.

"These shall make war with the lamb [they will actually attempt to FIGHT CHRIST at His return!], and the lamb shall overcome them: for He is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with Him are called, and chosen, and faithful" (Revelation 17:9-14).

The seven heads were to rise and fall in succession as is obvious from the context. John was projected forward in time, in the spirit, into the time of the Tribulation, Heavenly Signs, and the Day of the Lord. The seven successive heads were to come, one after another, down through history. Finally, the last head of the "beast" was to endure but a "short time."

But this final system, the "scarlet-colored beast" ridden by the great false church, was to consist of ten different governments, represented by the "ten horns" of this prophecy.

Daniel's second chapter says the same thing. Nebuchadnezzar's vision consisted of a great figure representing the four great world-dominating empires down through history, culminating in the final great kingdom, which would consist of ten nations.

"And in the days of these kings [the kings depicted by the ten toes of the image] shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever" (Daniel 2:44).

The stone cut out without hands is symbolic of Christ, who returns to smash this ten-nation combine. The prophecy shows the "stone" smashing the image on the toes (ten of them), then, as the image is blown away to disappear, the stone, Christ, becomes like a "great mountain" (Christ's millennial reign) that ultimately fills the whole earth.

God is going to use a powerful group of ten nations which will form the prophesied "beast" of Revelation 13:1-10 to punish our peoples! But the primary power which will accomplish the martyrdom of saints (Matthew 24:9; Revelation 12:11-17; 13:7) will be the "Antichrist," or the false prophet.

## God is Furious With Our Peoples

God's Word warns, "A third part of these shall die with the pestilence, and with famine shall they be consumed in the midst of thee; and a third part shall fall by the sword round about thee; and I will scatter a third part into all the winds [in all directions of the compass], and I will draw out a sword after them.

"Thus shall mine anger be accomplished, and I will cause my fury to rest upon them, and I will be comforted: and they shall know that I the Eternal have spoken it in my zeal, when I have accomplished my fury in them" (Ezekiel 5:12-13).

But why? some will ask!

God responds, "And they that escape of you shall remember Me among the nations whither they shall be carried captives, because I am broken [heartbroken] with their whorish heart, which hath departed from Me, and with their eyes, which go a whoring after their idols: and they shall loathe themselves for the evils which they have committed in all their abominations" (Ezekiel 6:9).

One of the first great sins mentioned in the Ten Commandments is the sin of idolatry.

Are America and Britain guilty of idolatry? Idolatry is placing another "god" between oneself and the true God. It is false worship. Paul said even coveting, lust, passionately desiring something which is sinful, is idolatry! (Colossians 3:5).

Almighty God appeared to Israel as Creator! The memorial of His vast, limitless power—a weekly reminder of His awesome, overwhelming universe; this good, green earth and all life upon it, was God's Holy Sabbath day!

At the end of creation week, God said, "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them.

"And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made..." (Genesis 2:2). God's work was finished, but He was not finished creating! Note this well, "...and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which he had made.

"And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it He had rested from all His work which God created and made" (Genesis 2:1-3).

By resting on the Sabbath day, and by "setting it apart," or sanctifying it for holy use, God blessed this period of time for all eternity—gave it a name, "Sabbath," the only day of the week so dignified, and commanded mankind to continually observe this special day down through all ages as a memorial of creation.

Prior to codifying His Ten Commandments at Sinai, God revealed His Sabbath day anew to Israelites, who had grown into a nation in pagan slavery (Exodus 16:23). He specifically commanded them to gather twice as much manna on the sixth day of the week, and rest on the Sabbath day.

When stiff-necked Israelites disobeyed, God said, "How long refuse ye to keep my commandments and my laws?" (Exodus 16:28). God's Ten Commandments did not come into existence at Sinai, they were merely codified, written in tables of the most durable writing materials available—stone!

Notice the language of the Fourth Commandment: "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy..." (Exodus 20:8). The Sabbath had been instituted at creation. It was something that was created; brought into being by Almighty God for a special, holy purpose. It was to remind mankind to look back to creation; to acknowledge God in all His awesome and majestic power as Creator! It also looks forward, toward the seventh one-thousand year period of time,

the millennial reign of Jesus Christ.

God said, "Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: but the seventh day [this is not "one day out of seven," but a specific day] is the Sabbath of the Eternal thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates:

"For in six days the Eternal made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Eternal blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it" (Exodus 20:8-11).

Was the Sabbath only for the Jews? No "Jew" ever existed until after the children of Judah, who was one of the twelve sons of Jacob, whose name was changed to Israel. Eventually, the progeny of Judah became known by a shortened nickname, "Jew." But Judah was not born until long after the flood. God had made known His Holy Sabbath to the ancients. Those righteous patriarchs who kept God's laws are catalogued in the Bible.

The first time the name "Jew" appears, the northern ten tribes, called "The House of Israel" are seen to be AT WAR WITH THE JEWS! Study II Kings 16:1-6. Here, Israel and its allies are locked in a war with the Jews!

The "House of Israel" was never referred to as "the Jews," even though by Jesus' time some members of tribes other than Judah were commonly called Jews.

Christ says, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath: therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath" (Mark 2:27-28).

Was the Sabbath made for the Jews? No! Christ said it was made for man! For his benefit, for his blessing; for his day of blessed rest; a day of relaxation, worship, rejuvenation, recreation—the one day of the week when he may pause, reflect on God's marvelous creation, study God's Word, pray to God, get his mind off the mundane pursuits of earning a living, and think on spiritual things.

The Sabbath was made to be a blessing to mankind!

Yet, there are millions today who scorn it, spurn it, shun it—who go very far out of their way to argue it away, to claim it was "nailed to the cross," and was only "for the Jews." Millions suppose God endorsed worship on the day pagans labeled the day of the SUN, Sunday, in supposed honor of Christ's resurrection.

Yet, God had said the Sabbath was the only perpetual sign He made between Himself and His people. "Verily My Sabbaths shall ye keep: for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Eternal that doth sanctify you" (Exodus 31:13).

A sign is an identifying mark, or label. The "mark of God" upon His people is His Sabbath! This perpetually enduring symbol, or mark of identity, would continually remind God's people that He is God, their Creator, Who has specially chosen them!



He said, "Ye shall keep the Sabbath therefore; for it is *holy* unto you; every one that defileth it shall surely be *put to death* [Sabbath-breaking was on a par with *murder*, and the penalty was the *death* penalty!]; for whosoever doeth any work therein, that soul shall be cut off from among his people.

"Six days may work be done; but in the seventh is the Sabbath of rest, holy to the Eternal: whosoever doeth any work in the Sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death.

"Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant" (Exodus 31:14-16).

This identifying mark, or sign, between God and His elect was for all their generations. It was not to cease at the end of some supposed "dispensation" or other; not to fail at some time in the future. It was to be "in perpetuity"—forever!

"It is a *sign* between me and the children of Israel for ever: for in six days the Eternal made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He rested, and was refreshed.

The Sabbath was created *for man*, said Jesus Christ. It was not "for the Jews," but *for mankind*! It was created—*made*—by the act of God, Who *rested* on that special day, setting it apart for holy use and purpose. It was made *when man was made*—the very day following!

Yet, millions, deceived by Satan (Revelation 12:9), have falsely assumed God's Sabbath day was "Jewish." Anti-Semitism among millions of professing "Christians" has led them to *reject* anything faintly smacking of "Jewishness." Millions assume the Sabbath was *done away* by Christ.

Not so. Christ Himself said "the Sabbath was made *for man*," and called Himself "Lord of the Sabbath day."

Notice what God promises *gentiles* concerning His sabbaths: "Blessed is the man that layeth hold on it; that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil.

"Neither let the son of the stranger [gentile, not a member of the House of Israel or Judah], that hath joined himself to

the Eternal, speak, saying, 'The Eternal hath utterly separated me from His people:' neither let the eunuch say, 'Behold, I am a dry tree.'

"For thus saith the Eternal unto the eunuchs that keep my Sabbaths, and choose the things that please me, and take hold of my covenant;

"Even to them will I give in mine house and within my walls a place and a name better than of sons and daughters: I will give them an *everlasting* name, that shall not be cut off.

"Also the sons of the stranger [gentiles; non-Israelitish nations], that join themselves to the Eternal, to serve Him, and to love the name of the Eternal, to be His servants, *every one that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it*, and taketh hold of my covenant;

"Even them will I *bring to my holy mountain* [the Kingdom of God—salvation! Eternal life!...] (Isaiah 56:1-7).

If you have never seen positive, Bible *proof* that God's Sabbath day is absolutely *binding* upon all mankind today, then write immediately for our free booklets about God's Sabbath days.

#### The Sabbath: The Test Commandment

Today, millions *profess Christ*. They claim to "believe on Jesus," accepting Him as Savior. Yet, those same millions would be aghast if told they *must obey* Jesus Christ! to show them, from the Bible, that God is the RULER; that Christ was, in fact, the God of the Old Testament (John 1, Hebrews 1); that it was *Christ*, in His pre-human state as the *Logos*, or "Spokesman," the Executive Member of the Godhead [*Elohim*] who *created* the earth and all upon it; who hallowed the Sabbath; who parted the Red Sea; who wrote the Ten Commandments with His own finger. Millions would scoff and sneer, confidently contemptuous of God's commandments, or any need to OBEY GOD!

How many repentant people who "come forward" in massive religious campaigns are instructed from God's Word about *what is sin*; what is true repentance; about water baptism; about receiving God's Holy Spirit? How many are told sin is the

TRANSGRESSION OF THE LAW (1 John 3:4); that God's Ten Commandments, including the *fourth* one about the Sabbath, are to be *obeyed*?

Not one in ten thousand.

Instead, millions are told, "only *believe*, and you will be saved." They think Christ only wants their belief, their acceptance, their love.

But what did *Christ* say when He was asked what a repentant sinner must DO, if anything, in order to be saved?

"And, behold, one came and said unto Him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?" (Matthew 19:16). What an *opportunity* for Jesus! IF Christ's teaching were the same as thousands of professing "Christian" ministers today, He would have said something to this effect:

"Why, you poor, misguided person. Don't you know there is nothing you must DO to be saved? Don't you know I *did it all for you*? Don't you know you need ONLY BELIEVE ON ME—believe I am the Christ, believe you have sinned; believe I can forgive you of your sins; accept me as your Savior, and you will be *SAVED*?"

But Jesus Christ said nothing of the sort.

Read it, in your own Bible! He said, "Why callest me thou good? There is none good but one, that is, God: but IF THOU WILL ENTER INTO LIFE, KEEP THE COMMANDMENTS" (Matthew 19:17).

Christ then followed up by showing the young man He was referring to the *only law called "commandments" in the Bible*, the *Ten Commandments* (Exodus 20; Deuteronomy 5).

Make no mistake! You cannot keep the Ten Commandments perfectly by your own strength. No man or woman can. Even if you *could*, you could not "earn" salvation, for salvation is the free, loving GIFT of God, and cannot be "earned."

What you have "earned" by Sabbath-breaking; by coveting, lusting, cursing, stealing, lying, cheating, committing fornication; by breaking any of the Ten Commandments is *death*!

When we repent of sin, or when we are emotionally broken up over the knowledge of how *wrong* we have been, we repent of having *broken God's perfect laws* (1 John

3:4).

Sin is the transgression of God's law. When we repent, God says, in essence, "Go, and *sin no more*," meaning, obviously, "Do not continue breaking my laws."

When the Pharisees brought before Jesus a woman taken in the act of adultery, they supposed He would consent to stoning her. They were trying to trick Him; get Him to say something contrary to God's Word, so they could murder Him.

"...the scribes and Pharisees brought unto Him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst,

"They say unto Him, 'Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act.

"Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned; but what sayest Thou?"

"This they said, tempting Him, that they might have to accuse Him. But Jesus stooped down, and with His finger wrote on the ground, as though He heard them not.

"So when they continued asking Him, He lifted up Himself, and said unto them, 'He that is without sin among you, let him cast the first stone at her.'

"And again He stooped down, and wrote on the ground.

"And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one; beginning at the *eldest*, even unto the last; and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst.

"When Jesus had lifted up Himself, and saw none but the woman, He said unto her, 'Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee?'

"She said, 'No man, Lord.' And Jesus said unto her, 'Neither do I condemn thee: go, and *SIN NO MORE*'" (John 8:3-11).

No doubt, Jesus had written a series of *names* on the ground; Perhaps those names *linked* the Pharisees with women? Perhaps the names which Jesus wrote so *shamed* the Pharisees that they practically fled the scene, forgetting the woman they had accused?

The point is, Jesus saw the woman's tears of humiliation, of deep shame, and  
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## Parables

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bones and say, "Thus saith the Lord God unto the bones; Behold I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live: And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the Lord" (Ezekiel 37:5-6).

Now, it is fairly obvious that this verse is talking about a resurrection from the dead. But this is a resurrection totally different from the resurrection spoken of by Jesus and Paul in which those resurrected would be like the angels in

heaven—no longer flesh and bone. This is a resurrection to *physical* life—note that sinews, flesh and skin are put back on bones and breath is put back in the body. These resurrected ones are not to be taken off to meet the Lord in the air. They are not to be spirit beings able to come and go like the wind.

Who are they? What are they?

When they had been raised and were standing upon their feet—an exceeding great army—God told Ezekiel who they were. He said, "Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel; behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost; we are cut off for our parts. Therefore,

prophesy and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, O My people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel" (verses 11-12). Note that they are brought into the *land* of Israel—they don't go into the clouds to meet the Lord.

To what purpose are they brought up? "And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, O My people, and brought you up out of your graves, and shall put My Spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land; then shall ye know that I the Lord have spoken it, and performed it, saith the Lord" (verses 13-14).

These people are going to come to know God and receive His Spirit—they will be

converted. Those who lived out their life in a blinded state—those who *never* came to know God—will, at last, receive mercy.

It may have seemed harsh at first to consider that God would have concluded these people to unbelief—seemingly denying them a chance at salvation. But as Paul put it in Romans 11:32, "For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that He might have mercy upon all."

Jesus knew that *all* those who heard Him were not ready to believe. He knew that there was still a *great deal* of rebellion, stubbornness and *self-will* in their hearts. Had He spoken to them plainly, they would have had no excuse for their sins. So He withheld the truth from them—for a *time*—by speaking to them in parables. But their day of salvation *will come*. □