

## Four Reasons the Jews are "JUDAH"

by Steven M. Collins (Sioux Falls, South Dakota)  
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### INTRODUCTION:

Because this report will be read by individuals with different viewpoints, some introductory comments are needed. After writing a book entitled *The "Lost" Ten Tribes of Israel...Found!*, this author has received many letters, tracts, pamphlets, etc. presenting so many different theories about the identity of the Jews that they are too numerous to mention.

These divergent views on Jewish origins/identity have made it apparent to this author that a report on this subject is needed (in fact, some who have discussed this subject with me have urged the printing of a research report on Jewish origins and their modern identity). This report is being presented not as an exhaustive treatise on the subject, but rather as an effort to introduce essential information into this discussion.

Some readers will look at the title of this report and say: "Why write this material, everyone knows the Jews are Judah." It is equally true that others will have the following reaction: "No, the Jews are not Judah, they are actually Khazar-Edomites." The author

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## What is "The Law of the Husband? (Rom. 7:2) How Does it Affect Church Policy on Divorce and Remarriage?"

by Philip Todd Derstine (Puckett, Mississippi)

The subject of divorce and remarriage has been the cause of much heated debate over the years in both the Church of God Sabbath-keeping movement as well as among the Sacred Name assemblies. According to the grace that has been given to me as one who has labored in the Word and in Doctrine (see I Tim. 5:17), I herein present a thumbnail sketch of my unique findings on this subject. Whether I have labored well I leave to the judgment of the body of Christ. So far the comments I've received have been favorable.

There have been many zealous commandment-keeping churches who have looked at Yeshua's statements on divorce and remarriage and concluded that He forbade remarriage altogether, or only allowed it for the cause of *porneia* (which they usually limit to adultery and/or fornication). In the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Old Testament, we find

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## God and the Gays -- Chapter #2

by David Ben-Ariel (Toledo, Ohio)

### Chapter Two

#### ALL THAT GLITTERS ISN'T GOLD

The gay bar scene or high risk promiscuous sex... Is it so happy-go-lucky? Something so sweet and wonderful we'd "wish you were here?" Or is it actually something you wouldn't wish upon your worst enemy? Is it simply a matter of being well-adjusted? Or resigned? What's so gay about it all anyway? Who ever dreamed up that label? What about truth in advertising? Some want their money back. Were they sold a line? Is homosexuality a victimless crime? What about their minds? Aren't they victimized? When they refuse to even "think straight" - aren't they denying themselves the opportunity to change? After all, isn't the brain the biggest sex organ?

God has provided for proper sexual satisfaction in marriage; but there's always that allure of the unknown, the forbidden zone. It arouses our curiosity, attempts to lower our resistance, and seduces our weakened will. In such a state, intoxicated with lust, we could engage in a deadly liaison and only discover later what a fatal attraction it really was (Prov. 5:11). "You play, you pay" (Prov. 6:27). Don't let

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## The Passion of the Christ --- Part #2

by Bill Bratt (Portsmouth, Ohio)

### Pilate Finds Jesus Innocent

"Then Pilate said to them, "You take Him and judge Him according to your law." Therefore the Jews said to him, "It is not lawful for us to put anyone to death," {32} that the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled which He spoke, signifying by what death He would die. {33} Then Pilate entered the Praetorium again, called Jesus, and said to Him, "Are You the King of the Jews?" {34} Jesus answered him, "Are you speaking for yourself about this, or did others tell you this concerning Me?" {35} Pilate answered, "Am I a Jew? Your own nation and the chief priests have delivered You to me. What have You done?" {36} Jesus answered, "My kingdom is

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## Intelligent Design Concept and Atheism

by Doyle Carter (Tulsa, Oklahoma)

Recently a friend introduced me to a new concept proposed by scientists called "Intelligent Design." This concept stated that by looking at life forms and other parts of the universe that we can see that an intelligence --whether God or whatever-- has designed the world around us. This new theory of science is strongly disliked by atheists who believe that this theory opens the door to the possibility of the existence of God.

As you may know, atheism is defined as the disbelief in the existence of a God. This concept doesn't allow the possibility of a Supreme Being or even a possibility of a designer of the universe.

But, just looking at life forms on this planet, we can see design

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## LETTERS SECTION

*("Disclaimer..." continued from Issue #34)*

### **Disclaimer of Arlan Weight's Article: Go To Your Brother... -- Part #4 (January 2006)**

#### **Arlan Weight's article:**

So then "Let him be to you as a heathen man and a Publican" simply means let him alone, but treat him with the same dignity and respect you should have for all human beings. Don't shun him and don't carry a grudge.

"Don't take the law into your own hands. Instead, feed your enemy if he is hungry. If he is thirsty, give him something to drink and you will be heaping coals of fire on his head. In other words, he will feel ashamed of himself for what he has done to you. Don't let evil get the upper hand, but conquer evil by doing good." (Rom. 12:20-21)

If the intent is to bring awareness of the wrongdoing to the one who has trespassed, this is the way it is to be done, by doing good to them, not by shunning or avoiding them... just the opposite. Even after you've done all of the above steps, this last approach remains and is to be in force as long as you both shall live. It is the last attempt, but who can tell, if after a long time, the offender will really come to himself and he or she will have a change of heart.

Was all the effort worth it? Indeed it was! If, after a lifetime of effort... if it takes that long, will it have been worth it? Absolutely. Reread again God's will in seeking out them that go astray. What is the final end?... Great Joy!... greater than that of the one who went not astray.

"If a man has a hundred sheep, and one wanders away and is lost, what will he do: Won't he leave the ninety-nine others and go out into the hills to search for the lost one? And if he finds it, he will rejoice over it more than the ninety-nine others safe at home! Just so, it is not my Father's will that even one of these little ones should perish."

#### **Summary**

**When we look at Christ's instruction and compare it to our actual performance** we can see why people feel jaded or betrayed. It comes down to the fact of not carrying out the instruction explicitly. **Often, we put our own twist on it or read into it something that's not there.**

If we deeply value the fact that it is God who does the calling and causes the repentance, and if we deeply recognize our own failures and need for forgiveness, we can then be useful tools in God's hands to... "Go to your brother"

#### **Darwin & Laura write:**

In conclusion, we do not believe in disfellowshipment as is practiced in today's world. That is disfellowshipment for matters which are not sin, nor do we believe in total avoidance or shunning of another person. If you have taken a matter to a brother or sister according to Matthew 18:15-17 and no reconciliation took place, this does not mean that you get even, go out of your way to avoid the other person or go out of your way to shun the other person. In practice one should just leave the person alone after you have completed the process as stated in Matthew 18:15-17. When you see him or her in a store or on the street or even at another persons house, be cordial in saying hi, but do not feel obligated to hold a conversation with the person which pretends to be as if you are long lost friends or something. In other words be friendly (cordial) when it is called for, other wise just don't go and bother the other person as he or she has made it clear that they don't want to reconcile with you at this point in time.

If you know this person is in need of clothing, food, shelter, or medical assistance, do not hesitate to help even if you must do it from a distance. What you need to keep in mind here is that you did all that God instructed you to do in order to try to reconcile with your brother or sister by going through the process as stated in Matthew 18:15-17 and God can work with you. The other person who refused to reconcile with you is in direct opposition to God according to Matthew 5:23-24 and God is not even listening to him or her at this point unless he or she changes (repents) and comes to reconcile with you.

Many in the world today believe that people should just forgive and forget and that will take care of all problems which arise in life. In other words, sweep the problem under the rug or throw it in the garbage. Out of sight, out of mind, then we don't need to deal with the problem, so it does not occur again. We will venture to say that the world is in the mess that it is in, because not too many people ever reconcile with each other, not even many who claim to be in God's church. Many people are familiar with repentance before baptism in order to receive forgiveness, but how many understand that there are requirements in this regard among people also?

In regard to forgiveness, we are to forgive others not just seven times, but seventy times seven, but did you also know that forgiving another person is contingent only on if that other person repents? Read it for yourself in Luke 17:3 "Take heed to yourselves; If thy brother trespass against thee, **rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive**

### **The Church of God Messenger** A Newsletter for the People of God

Darwin & Laura Lee, PO Box 2333,  
Bismarck, ND 58502

*The Church of God Messenger* is published in January, March, May, July, September and November.

**Change of Address:** Send change of address notices to Darwin & Laura Lee, PO Box 2333, Bismarck, ND 58502 or [darwin-laura@earthlink.net](mailto:darwin-laura@earthlink.net)

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**Price:** This Newsletter is supported by freewill offerings of individuals. Your gift donation can be sent to: Darwin & Laura Lee, PO Box 2333, Bismarck, ND 58502 or use Pay Pal on our Web Site at: <http://www.darwinlauralee.com>

**To Submit Items for Print:** Send to: [newsletter-only-darwin-laura@earthlink.net](mailto:newsletter-only-darwin-laura@earthlink.net) or Mail to: Darwin & Laura Lee, PO Box 2333, Bismarck, ND 58502

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him." In other words we do it just like God and Christ. If a person is sinning against us, we rebuke him as per Matthew 18:15-17, and if he repents according to Matthew 5:23-24 then we forgive him, but if he is not sorry we just let him be, so he can do whatever he wants after the completion of Matthew 18:17 if we are able to carry the instruction that far  
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## ("Four Reasons the..." continued from page 1)

is under no illusion that the information in this article will satisfy everyone, and the right of all readers to form their own respective opinions on this subject is fully recognized. However, this article is written from the viewpoint that God's Word, the Bible, is the arbiter of truth on all matters, and human opinions and theories must yield to the ultimate truth of the Word of God.

The title of this article indicates that the author believes that modern Jews are the biblical, prophetic "House of Judah." The pages that follow will present: (A) an examination of secular evidence about the Jews, and (B) a faithful presentation of the Bible's information and prophecies on this subject. Presented below are four reasons why I believe that modern Jews are, indeed, the biblical and prophetic "house of Judah."

### REASON 1: FULFILLMENT OF ZEPHANIAH'S PROPHECY

Zephaniah chapter two begins with statements clearly indicating it is a "latter day" prophecy. Verse two sets the time-frame of this chapter as being just "before the day of the Lord's anger," and verse three reiterates that this prophecy applies to the time just prior to "the day of the Lord." Verses 4 - 5 pronounce "woe" upon the cities and inhabitants "of the seacoast," and it is clear that the "seacoast" of Palestine is being discussed due to the mention of the cities of Gaza, Ashdod, and Ekron. Verse seven describes the "woe" that will befall these people (also called "Cherethites" and "Philistines" in verse 5) in the following prophecy of God:

"the coast shall be for **the remnant of Judah**; they shall feed thereupon; in the houses of Ashkelon shall they lie down in the evening; for the Lord their God shall visit them, **and turn away their captivity.**" (Emphasis added.)

This prophecy clearly states that God will give the historic land of the Philistines (Palestine) to "Judah" just prior to the "day of the Lord." It furthermore indicates that God was not going to "turn away [Judah's] captivity" until just prior to the day of the Lord. The phrase "turn away their captivity" is a bit clumsy; it simply means "end their captivity." In 1948, the Jewish nation called Israel was born in the "seacoast" region of old Palestine, fulfilling this prophecy. Indeed, the 1988 Edition of the *Encyclopedia Americana* notes this about Israel's population: "About 70% of it is concentrated in the Mediterranean coastal strip..." This is exactly what Zephaniah 2 prophesied would occur to Judah in the latter days.

Because the Jews had been a stateless people scattered among the nations for

centuries (even millennia), the prophecy's language that their captivity would be "turned away" (i.e. "ended") is very descriptive of the fate of the Jews, a people who had not had their own nation for a very long time.

Furthermore, we must accept the fact that God, in his perfect knowledge, has always known where "the house of Judah" was! **The historic fact is that God chose to use modern Jews to fulfill this prophecy about "the house of Judah."** This is powerful evidence that modern Jews are the modern house of Judah. Zephaniah 2:6 also prophesies that agricultural pursuits were to prosper when the "house of Judah" reestablished a nation in Palestine, and much has been written documenting that the Israelis have "made the desert bloom" with their innovative, high-tech agricultural efforts.

A prophecy in Zechariah 14 supports the above analysis of Zephaniah 2. Zechariah 14:1 begins with "Behold the day of the Lord cometh..." This is the same time frame as Zephaniah 2 (just prior to the day of the Lord). Zechariah 14:2-3 prophesies that "all nations" will be gathered to battle in the region of Jerusalem, and that the Lord will come to fight against the nations attacking Jerusalem when "his feet shall stand on the mount of olives." Christians understand this to be a prophesy of the second coming of Jesus Christ, and verse five adds that the Lord will bring "all the saints" with him (an obvious reference to the resurrection of the dead). The rest of the chapter gives more information about this climactic battle and the establishment of the Lord's rule on earth. Verse 14 states: **"Judah also shall fight at Jerusalem."** None of the other tribes of Israel is specifically mentioned in this prophecy, but "Judah" is there in sufficiently large numbers to warrant God's mentioning them by name. This is consistent with Zephaniah's prophecy that Judah will build a nation in Palestine in the latter days. Zechariah's prophecy indicates that Judah will be fighting to defend Jerusalem in a great war which climaxes with the return of the Conquering Messiah! What people now live in and have sovereignty over the city of Jerusalem? The Jews! Again, Bible prophecies for the latter days indicate that modern Jews are the house (or tribe) of Judah.

To conclude this point, it is acknowledged that placing the name "Israel" on the modern Jewish nation is a misnomer which causes much confusion to many students of the Bible. The Jewish state was named after the historic **land** of Israel, even though the people establishing the nation were from the house of Judah, not the house of Israel (the descendants of the ten tribes of Israel). A prophecy in Ezekiel 37:15-28 confirms that "Judah" and "Israel" will remain

separate entities on the earth until they are reunited under a resurrected King David after the return of Christ.

### REASON 2: THE JEWS ARE NOT A CHRISTIAN PEOPLE

Some material sent to me argues that "the Jews can't be an Israelite tribe because they did not become Christians like the rest of the tribes." In fact, there is a biblical prophecy which foretells that "Judah" will not "become Christian" until Jesus Christ returns as the "Conquering Messiah" (this terminology reflects the Christian viewpoint of Messianic prophecies).

Zechariah 12 is a prophecy devoted to the reaction of the house of Judah (and Levi, a large percentage of whom remained with Judah) when the Messiah returns and saves them from imminent destruction. Many times the phrase "in that day" is repeated in this chapter, a phrase indicating the general time of the latter days and/or the day of the Lord. Verse two prophesies that God "will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling to all the people round about, **when they shall be in the siege against Judah and Jerusalem.**" This parallels Zechariah 14 which speaks of a time when "all nations are gathered against Jerusalem." Notice that many nations are besieging "Judah and Jerusalem." The Bible presents "Judah and Jerusalem" as so closely linked with each other in the latter days that they are mentioned together. This has happened as the Israelis have made Jerusalem the capital of the Jewish state, and Jerusalem has become a "cup of trembling" (a major flashpoint) in world politics. Verse six prophesies that God will make:

"...the governors of Judah like a hearth of fire among the wood...and they shall **devour** all the people round about, on the right hand and on the left: and **Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own place, even in Jerusalem.**"

God prophesies that "Judah" would be a militarily victorious nation **in the Mideast** (the geographic setting of this entire chapter is the region around Jerusalem) during the latter days. This prophecy also indicates that Judah will "devour" the people who border them ("devour" indicates not just conquering people but an absorbing of their territory as well). This has been dramatically fulfilled by the Israelis in the Arab-Israeli wars of 1948, 1956, 1967 and 1973; the Israelis conquered ("devoured") territory all around them, taking control of the Egyptian Sinai, Syria's Golan Heights, the Gaza Strip and Jordan's West Bank. Some of this territory has been bartered away as part of the "Mideast Peace Process," but the prophecy was fulfilled nonetheless.

This prophecy also indicates a time will come when God will intervene personally to "save Judah" and "defend Jerusalem" (verses seven and eight). Zechariah 14 prophesies that Judah and Jerusalem will be invaded just prior to the Lord's return, and the phrase "mount of olives" in Zechariah 14:4 confirms the setting is the geographical city of Jerusalem in the modern Jewish nation. This chapter parallels Acts 1:9-12 which states Jesus Christ ascended to heaven from the "mount called Olivet" (the mount of olives), and as He ascended to heaven an angel announced that He would return "in like manner." Revelation 16:12-16 shows an invading army headed by "the kings of the east" will march westward toward Jerusalem across the Euphrates River toward the valley of Meggido (i.e. "Armageddon") in the Israeli nation. [1]

Zechariah 12:9 prophesies the Messiah will "destroy" the nations that come against Jerusalem, and verses 10-14 reveal some surprising information. Judah, the house of David, "the inhabitants of Jerusalem," and the Levites (all these groups are part of the house of Judah) are astounded and dismayed at the identity of their Messiah!

The God of the Bible who inspired this prophecy declares that "Judah" (the Jews) will "look upon me **whom they have pierced,**" and will "mourn" for him as for an "only son" as God gives them "the spirit of grace and supplication." This prophecy indicates that "Judah" and "Levi" will not accept or recognize Jesus Christ as the Messiah **until** he rescues them from an invading army at the culmination of this age. Judah never accepted Jesus Christ when he came as the "suffering Messiah," but they will accept him when he returns as the "conquering Messiah."

This prophecy further answers the question of who is modern Judah. Did the Jewish leadership of Judea (the Sanhedrin) cause Jesus Christ (Yeshua the "Anointed One") to be "pierced" by the Romans when He was crucified? Yes. His hands and his side were "pierced" in the crucifixion process (John 19:34, 20:25). Do modern Jews now live in the area of Jerusalem, and are they non-Christian? Yes. Does Zechariah 12's prophecy support the view that modern, non-Christian Jews living in the Jerusalem region are the descendants of "Judah" and "Levi"? Yes. Therefore, does God's Word indicate that today's Jews are the modern "house of Judah"? Yes!

### REASON 3: FULFILLMENT OF GENESIS 49'S PROPHECY

Genesis 49 contains prophecies about the identities and roles of each of the tribes of Israel in the latter days. The prophecies about the tribes of the house of Israel (the

northern ten tribes) are extensively discussed in chapter 11 of my book (*The "Lost" Ten Tribes of Israel...Found!*), but little was said about Judah as "Judah" was not the subject of that book. If this was an oversight, it will now be remedied. Genesis 49:8-12 states (emphasis added throughout):

**"Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise: thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies;** thy father's children shall bow down before thee.

**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 scepter 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.

Binding his **foal** unto the **vine,** and his **ass's colt** unto the **choice vine;** he washed his garments in **wine,** and his clothes in the blood of **grapes:** his eyes shall be red **with wine** and his teeth white with **milk.**"

This prophecy reveals much information about modern Judah. To begin with, there is a seeming paradox in this prophecy: Judah is referred to as both a "lion's whelp" and "as an old lion." However, this actually fits the modern Jews/Israelis very well. The term "lion's whelp" (a young cub) predicts Judah will be a young (or recently-born) nation in the latter days: a fitting description of the young Israeli nation which was founded in 1948. This prophecy is very consistent with Zephaniah 2, which prophesied Judah would found a nation in Palestine just prior to "the day of the Lord." Yet, the Jews are also a people with a continuous history traceable for over three millennia, and they also had a nation in Palestine in ancient times (i.e. "as an old lion"). The Jews/Israelis fulfill this prophecy as they are a very young nation which was founded by a people with an ancient tradition and heritage.

Genesis 49:8-9 states Judah's "hand shall be in the neck of thy enemies," and refers to Judah "as a lion going up from the prey." This prophecy foretells that Judah will be an aggressive nation and victorious in warfare during the latter days, conquering its enemies like a lion brings down its prey. This has been amply fulfilled by Israeli victories in its wars, and this prophecy meshes perfectly with Zechariah 12:6's prophecy which states Judah would "devour" her enemies in the latter days. Not only have the Israelis been successful in warfare, they have leaped out at their enemies even as a lion leaps and stretches out toward its intended prey. The

Israelis do not "run and hide" like a prey animal; they attack like a predator. They leaped out to attack their enemies in the 1976 raid on Entebbe, Uganda, and in their destruction of an Iraqi nuclear reactor in 1981 via a bold air strike.

Surprisingly, after predicting military prowess for Judah, Genesis 49 next prophesies agricultural success for latter-day Judah. Notice the agricultural words printed in bold type in the above prophecy. Verses 11-12 predict Judah's agricultural success in the latter days, and the Israelis have truly "made the desert bloom" by applying advanced Western technology in an inherently dry climate. Confirming this fact, the *Encyclopedia Americana* notes that "of the goods exported [by Israel] in the mid-1980's about one-third were agricultural..." [2] Genesis 49:11-12 parallels Zephaniah 2:6's prophecy, further illustrating the consistency of the Bible's prophecies about Judah in the latter days.

Genesis 49:1 also prophesies: "Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise." This has been fulfilled in the fact that modern Christendom widely regards the Jews as "the chosen people." Ironically, many of the Christians who regard the Jews as "the chosen people" are themselves Israelites (members of the ten tribes of Israel). Indeed, Christians have labeled the Jews as "the chosen people" even though the Jews have clearly inherited none of the birthright blessings promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob! It is the descendants of Ephraim and Manasseh (the British and Americans) who inherited the birthright promises of population growth, national wealth, empires, and control of strategic geographical "gates." These facts are documented in my book: *The "Lost" Ten Tribes of Israel...Found!*, and need not be repeated here. Why have the other tribes acknowledged Judah's Israelite heritage even though they have lost sight of their own? Because the Jews have preserved identifiably biblical customs such as the Sabbath, the holydays of Leviticus 23, and a diet avoiding "unclean" meats such as pork and shellfish. If the descendants of the ten tribes had also retained these biblical customs throughout history, their Israelite heritage would never have become obscured.

It is further prophesied in Genesis 49:8 that: "thy father's children [the other tribes of Israel] shall bow down to thee." This is explained in verse 10, which states:

"the scepter [a symbol of kings] shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come: and unto him shall the gathering [hope, expectation] of the people be."

Beginning with the dynasty founded by

Kings David and Solomon, there have **always** been Israelites of the various tribes ruled by monarchs descended from David and Solomon. This is examined more in the next section (and at length in my book), but the fact that the hereditary ruling houses of Europe can be traced to Davidic kings who once ruled over Scythian kingdoms and the widespread Parthian Empire of the ten tribes [in Asia] fulfills the prophecy of Genesis 49:3 and 10. The ancestry of the kings of England can be continuously traced to the ancient kings of Judah via the royal houses of Ireland and Scotland [3], and the seed of David was spread throughout the royal houses of Europe by frequent intermarriages among Europe's royalty.

Genesis 49:10 also prophesies that Judah will have kings ruling over the other tribes of Israel "until Shiloh come." This is a Messianic prophecy which predicts that David's bloodline will be present in the royal houses of the Israelite nations until the coming of the Messiah (Yeshua the Anointed One or Jesus Christ). Even though Europe's remaining royalty now have largely ceremonial roles, the prophecy has still been fulfilled. And, finally, it is the coming of the Messiah toward which the "hope" or "expectation" of both Christians and Jews is directed.

We see that the modern Jews and Israelis have fulfilled Genesis 49's prophecy about Judah in the latter days (in fact, no other people on earth do so). All prophecies about Judah in the latter days point to and are fulfilled by modern Jews/Israelis. Secular evidence supporting this identification follows in the next section.

#### REASON 4: THE "ASHKEN-AZI" AND "ASHKAN-IAN" JEW LINKAGE

The linchpin of arguments opposing a Judaic identity for modern Jews is the contention that modern Ashkenazi Jews are "religious" but not "racial" Jews. This argument asserts that the Ashkenazi Jews (i.e. central and eastern European Jews) descended from Khazar-Edomite (non-Israelite) bloodlines, and therefore cannot truly constitute "Judah" in the modern world. This author is aware that some who espouse the "Khazar-Edomite origin of the Jews" theory do acknowledge that some Sephardic Jews (i.e. Spanish/Mediterranean Jews) are members of the house of Judah.

This section will document the following points: (A) While some base their judgment on the identity of the house of Judah by differentiating between the terms "religious Jews" and "racial Jews," two biblical passages indicate that God regards these terms as a "distinction without a difference," and (B) There is a major misunderstanding about the origin of the term "Ashkenazi" Jew,

and that secular evidence indicates they are, in fact, the Israelite house of Judah.

Those who say that modern Jews include Edomite and Khazar bloodlines are correct. Now, let's examine the historical extent of these facts and determine from the Bible if this really matters in the eyes of God.

To assert that any of the tribes of Israel was ever a pristinely, non-Gentile entity is a myth. The Israelites have always included gentile bloodlines in their midst, and God's word allowed them to do so. In the time of the Exodus, God allowed the Israelites to be accompanied by a "mixed multitude" of people who had been slaves in Egypt. Numbers 12 records that God swiftly punished Miriam (Moses' sister), because she dared to criticize Moses for having a Gentile (Cushite) wife. In the days of Kings David and Solomon, the Israelites virtually merged with the Gentile residents of the city-states of Tyre and Sidon (I Chronicles 14:1, II Chronicles 2, 8:18). II Chronicles 2:17 records 153,600 "strangers" (Gentiles) lived in Israel during Solomon's rule. King David had a Gentile leader in his army called "Uriah the Hittite" (II Samuel 11), and David's royal bodyguard was composed of "Cherethites and Pelethites" (II Samuel 8:18), who were likely Philistines and Cretans. [4] Ruth, a Moabitess, was an ancestor of both King David and Jesus Christ (Ruth 1:4).

God knew that many Gentiles would intermarry with the Israelites, and gave directions on how "strangers" (or "sojourners") could be lawfully blended into the Israelite tribes. In Leviticus 19:33 - 34, God commanded:

"...if a stranger sojourn with you in your land, you shall not vex him. But **the stranger that dwells with you shall be unto you as one born among you, and you shall love him as yourself;** for you were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God."

About 800 years later, God again cited this command in Ezekiel 47:21-23:

"So you shall divide this land unto you according to the tribes of Israel...you shall divide it by lot for an inheritance unto you, **and to the strangers that sojourn among you,** which shall beget children among you: and **they shall be unto you as born in the country among the children of Israel;** they shall have an inheritance with you among the tribes of Israel...**In what tribe the stranger sojourns, there shall you give him his inheritance, saith the Lord."**

Interesting! God commanded the Israelites to give equal inheritances to Gentile "sojourners" who intermarried with

the Israelites, and **THEY ARE TO BE REGARDED AS FULL MEMBERS OF THE TRIBE** in which they "sojourned." Indeed, despite the various wars between the Israelites and the Edomites, God also commanded the Israelites in Deuteronomy 23:7-8:

**"You shall not abhor an Edomite; for he is your brother** ...the children that are begotten of them shall enter into the congregation of the Lord in their third generation."

Strangely, some who deny the "Jewishness" of the Jews use the term "Edomite" as a pejorative epithet. In the above scripture, God ordered Israelites not to despise Edomites! It is easy to see why God regarded the Edomites as "brothers" to the Israelites.

Edomites descend from Esau (Genesis 36:43), and Esau was Jacob's twin brother (Genesis 25:19-26). Jacob was renamed Israel (Genesis 32:28), and Judah was one of his twelve sons. This means Esau (Edom) was an uncle to Judah, the first Jew. Edomites are descended from Abraham and Isaac, so they are also descended from Eber (from whom we derive the term "Hebrew"). [5] Since Edomites are both Semite and Hebrew, Edomites are as closely-related to the Israelites as any Gentile can be!

God decreed that when strangers (Gentiles) "sojourned" among the Israelites, they could intermarry with Israelites and be regarded as Israelites as surely as if they were "born in the land." The term "sojourn" encompasses more than just "dwell" in the land, however. A Gentile had to adopt the religion and culture of the Israelites to be considered an Israelite. Now we will apply this biblical principle to the history of the Jewish people.

#### History of the Asian Jews

After the fall of Judah and Jerusalem, the house of Judah was removed into an Asian captivity. In the 6th century B.C., Cyrus, the Persian Emperor, allowed a small contingent of Jews to return to Judea. Ezra 1:5 and Nehemiah 11:3-4 confirm that remnants of only three tribes (Judah, Levi and Benjamin) returned to Judea at that time, and Nehemiah 7:66 records there were only 42,360 returnees to Judea. Josephus records that the Persian Jews held a great festival to celebrate this event. He writes that four million people attended this Jewish celebration, and that when it was over, a "certain part" of this multitude emigrated to Jerusalem, but "the rest of the multitude returned every one to **their own countries** [i.e. the nations within Persia's Empire]." [5] (NOTE: Your volume of Josephus may have a footnote discrediting Josephus' four million figure because the writer of the footnote

didn't carefully read the text. Josephus did not claim four million emigrated to Jerusalem; he simply recorded the number of people who attended the festival in Persia celebrating the return of a small contingent of Jews to Jerusalem. Josephus tells us the vast majority of Jewish captives chose to remain in Persia's Asian provinces rather than join the pioneers who returned to rebuild Judea.) What is critically important to realize is that the vast majority of the tribe of Judah **stayed in Asia** even when a few went from their midst to rebuild a portion of Jerusalem.

The small contingent under Ezra and Nehemiah formed the population base of the Jews who later inhabited Judea at the time of Christ. However, during the time of the Maccabees, John Hyrcanus (circa 135 - 105 B.C.) and the Jews conquered a body of Edomites who adopted the Jews' religion and customs and merged with the Jews. [7] Josephus gives this account of the Jewish-Edomite merger:

"Hyrcanus...subdued all the Idumeans [Edomites]; and permitted them to stay in that country, if they would circumcise their genitals, and make use of the laws of the Jews; and they were so desirous of living in the country of their forefathers, that **they submitted to the use of circumcision, and the rest of the Jewish ways of living...that they were hereafter no other than Jews.**" [8] (Emphasis added.)

Josephus was on solid biblical ground in his judgment of the merged Edomites as "no other than Jews." Based on God's laws governing the admittance of Gentiles into the tribes of Israel (Leviticus 19:33-34, Ezekiel 47:22-23), the Edomites "became Jews" because they embraced circumcision (the key sign of the Old Covenant with God) and "the rest of the Jewish way of living." God's assimilation laws considered them as much a part of the tribe of Judah as those "born in the land." Even allowing for the added restriction of Deuteronomy 23:7-8 (that children of Edomite-Israelite unions will be fully "Israelite" in the third generation), the progeny of the Edomite-Israelite union around 110 B.C. would have been past the "third generation" by the time of Christ's ministry (circa 30 A.D.). By the time the first century A.D. ended, God's law recognized the Edomite-Jewish merger as complete and all progeny of this merger would have been regarded as fully Jewish (members of the house of Judah). Many Sephardic Jews have descended from the Judean Jews who were scattered throughout the Roman and Mediterranean region after the Temple was destroyed in 70 A.D. and also in 135 A.D. when Jews were expelled from Jerusalem after the Bar Kochba revolt.[9] In this

account, there is no reason for doubting the "Jewishness" of Sephardic Jews. The Edomites (and any other Gentiles) who adopted circumcision and Jewish customs over the centuries had become full members of the tribe of Judah under God's laws governing such mergers by the time they scattered to Spain and other Mediterranean regions.

Next we will consider the Ashkenazi Jews, who settled in central and eastern Europe. To understand their history, we must examine the history of the great empire of Parthia (which is almost entirely ignored in history books). The Parthian Empire replaced the Persian and Seleucid Greek Empires, and it flourished from approximately 250 B.C. - 226 A.D. At its greatest extent, it dominated the region from the Caucasus Mountains and Russian steppes in the north to the Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean in the south, and from the Euphrates River in the west to the Indus River in the east. Rome tried many times to conquer Parthia, but was never able to do so. The great 19th century English historian, George Rawlinson, decried the fact that Rome was being presented as "a Universal Monarchy, a power unchecked" when the Greco-Roman historians themselves recorded that Parthia was "a rival state dividing with Rome the attention of mankind and the sovereignty of the known earth." [10]

The Parthian empire was formed by a group of related tribes who were called "exiles" in their Asian lands. [11] Classical writers record that the Parthians were under the domination of the Assyrians and Medes prior to their becoming independent. [12] Their tribal names reflected the names of the clans of the ten tribes of Israel, and their cities bore Semitic names and their Semitic kings often bore the name of the root-word "Phares," which identified the royal line of King David, who descended from Phares (I Chronicles 2:3-15). The Parthians were the descendants of the ten tribes of Israel, and their kings were David's descendants, fulfilling God's promise that David's progeny would rule over the ten tribes of Israel (Jeremiah 33:17). Many are familiar with the account of the Magi worshipping the baby Jesus soon after his birth, but few are aware that the Magi were a delegation of Parthian nobles and the hereditary priests of Parthia. The Parthians wrested control of Palestine from the Romans a few decades prior to Jesus Christ's birth, and ruled it for several years.

The entire fascinating story of the ten tribes' relocation into Asia and their eventual restoration to independence and power in the Parthian Empire are thoroughly documented in this author's book, *The "Lost" Ten Tribes of Israel...Found!* Whereas the Roman Empire oppressed the Jews, the Parthian

Empire granted them great freedoms, allowing Jews to have their own self-governing cities! [13] George Rawlinson noted that the Jews (descendants of the "multitude" mentioned by Josephus in the Persian Empire) were very numerous throughout Parthia's provinces. In fact, Parthian Jews were so numerous and rich that they sent their Holy Day offerings to the Jerusalem Temple with armed escorts of "many ten thousands of men." [14]

The Bible itself records that only a small delegation of Jewish captives returned to Judea under Nehemiah and Ezra while the majority of the tribe of Judah stayed in Asia and Mesopotamia. Even prior to the Parthian empire, the Bible confirms that the Jews had large numbers and influence in Persia's empire. Esther became Queen of Persia (Esther 2:16-22), and Mordechai was the King's "Prime Minister" (Esther 8). Esther 3:12 records that the evil Haman tried to instigate a "holocaust" against the Jews, and tricked the king into issuing a decree of destruction against the Jews which was sent to the rulers of all the Persian provinces. When God arranged for Mordechai to replace Haman, the Jews were rescued by a decree of deliverance which was sent to all 127 provinces stretching "from India unto Ethiopia" (Esther 8:9).

What is noteworthy about Esther's account is that it confirms that the Jews were so numerous and dispersed throughout Asia and Mesopotamia that any decree concerning them had to be sent to all 127 Persian provinces! If the Jews had only a scant number of local populations, a few local decrees would have sufficed. Esther 8:17 records that for a time in Persia's empire, it became quite popular to be Jewish, and that **"many of the people of the land became Jews."** When discussing the Judean Jews, it was noted that many Edomites merged with them to become fully-accepted members of the tribe of Judah, according to God's assimilation decrees in Leviticus 19:33-34 and Ezekiel 47:22-23. The book of Esther records that the Asian Jews also had "many" non-Jews merging with them! God's assimilation decrees would have applied to this merger as well. While the Judean Jews merged with a very closely-related group (the Semitic/Hebrew Edomites), many of the Gentiles who merged with the Asian Jews would have been much less closely related racially. However, since "the people of the land" under Persian rule included many people who were relocated members of the ten tribes of Israel, some of those who "became Jews" may have been Israelites of other tribes who readopted religious practices which were practiced by or known to their forefathers in the old kingdom of Israel. Such actions would have merged

various Israelite tribal bloodlines with those of the Jews.

In the above accounts, we see that the racial make-up of the Judean Jews began to differ over time with that of the Asian Jews, but it is critical to realize that under God's assimilation laws, both groups of Jews were regarded as true members of the tribe of Judah! Esther 8:17 doesn't say that the people who merged with the Jews "became impostor Jews;" it declares that they "**became Jews**" (i.e. members of the tribe of Judah). In this passage, the Bible itself recognizes that the merger of non-Jewish Asians into the tribe of Judah was regarded as completely valid in God's eyes. This precedent will be important when we discuss the Khazars' adoption of Jewish customs.

The numerous Asian Jews prospered for centuries under Parthian rule. When the Parthian Empire was overthrown by the Sassanian Persians in 227 A.D., there was a dramatic change of events which affected the Asian Jews. At this point a digression about Parthian history is essential.

### The Semitic Parthian Empire:

The Parthian Empire had, for a considerable period of time prior to its fall, become openly Semitic in nature. Judaism was already well-established in Parthia, and Christianity became widespread in the Apostolic times. There are records that many of the apostles (Thomas, Andrew, Bartholomew, Philip, and Matthew) evangelized in the various provinces of Parthia. [15] Even the Bible records that the Apostle Peter wrote one of his epistles from Babylon (I Peter 5:13), which was then a major City in Parthia's empire.

Consider again the visit of the Magi (or "Wise Men") to the young Jesus Christ. Few are aware that the Magi were Parthian nobles and priests who elected Parthian emperors, and that "Wise Men" was their formal title as Parthian "Senators." [16] The Bible does not say only three Magi visited Jesus, and this author believes they numbered at least twelve (one for each of the tribes of Israel who then lived in the Parthian Empire). Matthew 2:3 records that King Herod and "all Jerusalem" were "troubled" (The *Phillips New Testament* renders it "deeply perturbed") when the Magi's caravan arrived at the city. Three weary riders on dusty camels would not have alarmed an entire city or caused an urgent warning about their arrival to come to King Herod. However, twelve Parthian priests and nobles from Parthia's king-making Senate would have been urgent news, indeed! Accompanying the Parthian nobility would have been a huge number of armed escorts, bakers, attendants, servants and camp-followers.

Parthia and Rome had fought over Palestine a few decades previous to this time (Parthia had evicted the Romans from Palestine for several years!), and the arrival of a large body of Parthian soldiers in Jerusalem was technically a violation of the Roman-Parthian treaty that neither side would send an army across the Euphrates River (the border between the empires). The full story of this visit is detailed in chapter 9 of my book *The "Lost" Ten Tribes of Israel...Found!*

Moving forward to Apostolic times, there is a record that, during his stay in Parthia, the Apostle Thomas met and baptized some of the Wise Men in Parthia's ruling nobility. [17] Perhaps some of the very Wise Men who visited Jesus Christ were among those baptized later by Thomas. Since Jesus was actually worshipped by a number of Parthian rulers, Parthia offered the Apostles a very friendly environment in which to evangelize. During the time of the early Christian Church, Parthian kings placed Semitic slogans on Parthian coinage, and some Parthian vassal kings openly adopted Christianity for themselves and their subjects. [18] The portraits of the Parthian kings on their coinage have long confirmed the Semitic nature of Parthian rulers. However, this proliferation of Semitic culture and religion deeply alienated one of the Parthians' subject nations.

The Medes and Persians had ruled the same region under the Achaemenid kings (Cyrus, Darius, etc.) prior to the Parthian empire. The culture and religion of the Persians was based on Zoroastrianism, and the Persians resented the dominance of Semitic culture and religion under the later Parthian kings. Around 217 - 218 A.D., the Parthian empire defeated the Roman empire in one of the greatest battles in the long history of the Parthian-Roman rivalry. The battle of Nisibis, provoked by Roman treachery, lasted three days and caused so many casualties that the Greco-Roman historians record that the piles of bodies hindered the movement of the armies. [19] Even though the Parthians had defeated the Roman armies in a climactic war and exacted a huge payment of tribute money from Rome, Parthia had won a "Pyrrhic victory." The war so weakened Parthia that within a decade the Persians successfully revolted and expelled the Semitic people out of the region.

While it is beyond the scope of this report to examine these events in detail, the Parthians, Jews, mingled Semites, and the Parthian royalty fled in great numbers toward Europe and the Black Sea region through the Caucasus Mountains of Armenia. [20] These masses of refugees became known as "Caucasians," and later became the Anglo-Saxons, Goths, Germans, etc. who poured

into Europe from the east and destroyed the Roman empire. It is worth noting, however, that while Greco-Roman historians recognized the battle of Nisibis as one of the major engagements in the history of the Roman empire, modern historical accounts ignore this pivotal event. History texts are full of information about Gentile empires, but omit or downplay the history of the Israelite empires (Phoenicia, Carthage, Parthia, and Scythia) even though the Israelite empires frequently defeated the Gentile empires of Assyria, Persia, Greece, and Rome in wars.

### Impact of Parthia's Fall on Parthian Jews:

When Parthia fell and its Semitic people fled toward eastern Europe, many Jews would have migrated with them. Remember that the population of Asian Jews was very large, and far greater than the population of Judean Jews (who had descended from the contingent of Asian Jews who had returned to Jerusalem under Ezra and Nehemiah). While the Jews of Judea were oppressed under Rome, the Parthian Jews enjoyed great freedom and autonomy. [21] When the Sassanian Persians overthrew the Parthians and began a "jihad" against all things Semitic, the Jews would have had every motivation to flee along with the Parthian (i.e. Israelite) tribes who had been their protectors. Where did these numerous Asian Jews go? Those who maintain that modern Jews are not the tribe of Judah ignore the fact that there was a major Jewish population present with the Parthian-Israelite tribes who migrated toward eastern Europe via the area of the Black Sea. The Asian (i.e. "Parthian") Jews did not migrate to the moon, nor did they disappear into a black hole. Since these Parthian Jews were members of the tribe of Judah, we should expect them to reappear in considerable numbers in eastern Europe and the Black Sea region along with the rest of the migrating Semites. **That is exactly what happened.**

The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* records that in Persian tradition the Arsacids (Parthia's rulers) were called the **Ashkanians**. [22] The *Britannica* further notes that this name was based on the term "**Ashak**." [23] The word "Ashak" is based on the Hebrew name "Isaac" as was a city in the Parthian homeland named "**Asaak**." [24] Genesis 21:12 prophesied that the Israelites would be known by the name of Isaac, and this came true as the Parthians and Scythians were identified by such names as Sacae, Asaak, Ashak, and Sacan (or Saxon). When the Israelites and Jews were expelled from Parthia by the Sassanian Persians, it is noteworthy that the Persian name for the Parthians remained on the Parthian Jews who migrated toward Europe. The Parthian name "**Ashkan-ian**" is easily seen in the

term **Ashken-azi** Jew! The very term "Ashkenazi" proclaims a Parthian (or Israelite) origin, and the term "Ashkenazi Jew" could just as easily be rendered as "Parthian Jew."

#### **A Brief History of the Khazars:**

Some who deny that Ashkenazi Jews are descended from the tribe of Judah assert that the term "Ashkenazi Jew" is based on a branch of the Japhethic race mentioned in Genesis 10:3. However, some who make that connection also assert the Ashkenazi Jews are "Edomite/Khazars." You can't have it both ways! We have already seen that the Edomites have no racial connection to Japheth; they are Semites and fellow-Hebrews with the Israelites. Therefore, the only historical origin for the term "Ashkenazi" that makes any sense is that it indicates a "Parthian" origin for the Ashkenazi Jews.

Let's briefly examine the Khazar Empire to learn more about its connection to the Ashkenazi Jews. The Khazars are first recognizable as a distinct people entering the area of Armenia at the end of the second century A.D. and the beginning of the third century A.D. [25] This is the precise time in history when the Parthian Empire weakened and fell, and the Parthians fled toward Armenia and the Caucasus mountains. The fact that the Khazars entered Armenia in the same historical period as the Parthian refugees argues that they had a Parthian connection themselves.

During the 7th and 8th centuries A.D., the Khazars held back the Moslems who were attempting to advance into Europe through the Caucasus region. The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* states: "the Khazars had protected the plains of Europe from the Mohammedans..." [26] In the 9th century A.D., the attacks of the Pechenegs (a Turkic people) so disrupted the trade routes that the Byzantine Emperor Theophilus dispatched a huge work party to build an impregnable stone city for the Khazars so they could hold off the Pechenegs. This fortified stone city became known as "Sarkel," or "the White Abode." [27] The Parthians had a well-known tradition of racial and religious tolerance, [28] and so did the Khazars. The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* notes that:

"Merchants from every nation found protection and good faith in the Khazar cities. **The Jews, expelled from Constantinople, sought a home amongst them,** developed the Khazar trade, and contended with Mohammedans and Christians for the theological allegiance of the pagan people. **The dynasty [of the Khazars] accepted Judaism (circa 740 A.D.) but there was equal tolerance for all.**" [29]

**Notice that before the Khazar dynasty accepted Judaism as the dominant religion of Khazaria, there were already substantial numbers of racial Jews living there!** Many of these Jews would have been descended from displaced Parthian Jews (members of the tribe of Judah) who had migrated there when Parthia fell. The above quote also reveals that a second wave of racial Jews arrived in Khazaria after they were expelled from the Byzantine capital of Constantinople.

Furthermore, the fact that the Khazar rulers chose Judaism for their kingdom confirms that the Jews already constituted a large and influential portion of their subjects! When Khazarian kings adopted Judaism, a "Jewish kingdom" was established along a major trade route where Jewish practices were welcomed and approved! When this news spread to other scattered Jews from the tribe of Judah, there was, no doubt, a substantial third migration of Jews from the tribe of Judah from other nations to the friendly territory of Khazaria! How could it be otherwise? Jews were often purged, persecuted, or expelled from various nations, so a kingdom favoring Judaism would have been a magnet drawing Jews from many nations! The influx of Jews into Khazaria would have given it the largest concentration of Jews anywhere on earth. Even those Khazars who had not been Jews by birth would have become genuine members of the tribe of Judah in God's eyes from then on if they fulfilled the conditions of God's assimilation laws of Leviticus 23 and Ezekiel 47 (and it seems apparent that they did so).

Did all the Khazars adopt Judaism? No. The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* noted that there was "equal tolerance for all," so there was no official pressure on anyone to become Jewish. It is highly likely that Christians and Mohammedans continued to practice their religion as before while Judaism was practiced by the Jews and the Khazar royalty. Judaism was not a universal religion in Khazaria.

Some might object to the assertion in the above paragraph that scattered Jews would flock to Khazaria when it became known that Khazaria offered a refuge to the Jews. However, all people want a homeland where they can practice their culture, religion, and way of life openly. The Jews are no different. Just as dispossessed Jews flocked to a Jewish enclave under the Babylonians (Jeremiah 40:11), they would have flocked to a "Jewish state" in Khazaria from nations wherein they were persecuted or barely tolerated.

As further evidence that many non-Jewish Khazars did not convert to Judaism, a major Khazar city, Itil, featured 30 mosques in the early 900's A.D. [30] When Khazaria

fell around 1000 A.D., much of its population was non-Jewish. Where did the Jews of Khazaria go? History makes that answer an obvious one. They migrated to the north and west and their descendants eventually numbered in the millions as they lived in eastern and central Europe, the Ukraine, etc. In other words, their descendants became the Ashkenazi Jews, still bearing the root word "Ashkan-ian" which bore record to their Parthian (i.e. Semitic) origin.

In conclusion, we can see that there is abundant evidence to indicate that both the Sephardic and Ashkenazi Jews can lay claim to being the true modern descendants of the tribe of Judah. In both of their histories, non-Israelites who merged with the Jews and adopted Jewish customs and religion became members of the tribe of Judah under God's assimilation laws in Leviticus 19 and Ezekiel 47. **The fact that God himself used both Sephardic and Ashkenazi Jews to fulfill prophecies about latter-day "Judah" in Zephaniah 2 and Genesis 49 gives powerful support to this conclusion.**

In spite of the above, this author is sure that some will still doubt the "Jewishness" of modern Jews. For this reason, several additional proofs will be offered, based on evidence that modern and historic Jews manifest the personality traits of their namesake ancestor, Judah, the son of Jacob. These remarkable similarities will offer further evidence of a genetic (i.e. bloodline) bond between ancient Judah and modern Jews.

**AUTHOR'S NOTE:** Those desiring to order copies of the author's book, *The "Lost" Ten Tribes of Israel...Found!*, which offers extensive details about the entire history of the ten tribes from ancient through modern times, may order single copies from the author by sending \$25 (\$20 + \$5 shipping fees) to: Steven M. Collins, P.O. Box 88735, Sioux Falls, SD 57109-1005, USA

#### **END NOTES:**

*Encyclopedia Americana*, 1988 Ed., Vol. 15, p. 524

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*Jacob's Pillar*, E. Raymond Capt, pages 91 - 94

*Harper's Bible Dictionary*, 1985 Ed., see "Cherethites" and "Pelethites," pages 161, 768

Ibid, see "Eber," pages 233 - 234

Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, XI, III, 10

*Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 1943 Ed., p. 53 Vol. 13, see subhead: "John Hyrcanus," p. 53 Josephus, op cit., XIII, IX, 16

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Rawlinson, *The Sixth Oriental Monarchy*, see "Preface" (dated 1872), p. v

ibid, p. 19  
ibid p. 26  
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McBirnle, *The Search for the Twelve apostles*, pp. 43, 130, 152 - 153, 175 - 177  
Rawlinson, op cit., p. 85  
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\*\*\*THE END\*\*\*\*\*

**("What is "The Law..." continued from page 1)**

*porneia*, being used to translate various words relating to wickedness, including Israel's adoption of the heathen, idolatrous practices of the surrounding nations. They went "a-whoring" after the nations, or "played the harlot" by trusting in strategic political alliances with Gentile nations. For this the word *porneia* is used. *Porneia* also refers to a range of illicit and perverse sexual activities. Hence, this will broaden our application of the conditions necessary to have a reason for *putting away* mentioned in Matt 5:32 and 19:6, ie. "except it be for fornication" (Gr. = *porneia*). A Brother or sister is not bound under such a situation to one who is perpetually backsliding into such *porneia*.

To limit *porneia* to only adultery or fornication would also make the Savior's comments contradict the very plain conditions for divorce listed in Exodus 21:10-11. It is the Torah-the teachings given to Moses by Yahweh which lays the foundation on this subject. This lesser Yahweh later became a man by shedding His glory and divinity (see Phil 2:6-7), and took the Name Yahoshua (or Yeshua). We prove elsewhere that it was the pre-existent Yeshua and *not* the Father who did the speaking and interacting with Adam, Abraham, Jacob, Moses, David, and all the prophets of Old. Therefore, the teachings there bearing on sexual and marital matters are as much the teaching of Yahoshua as that found in the four gospels! [Read Heb 4:2!]

I have been blessed with an understanding that breaks down and removes the seeming contradiction between Old and New Testament teaching, and which does no violence to the marriage law given by Yahweh, the Great Lawgiver. Interpretations which see the New Testament teaching as somehow superseding or canceling the Old, will be shown to be mere artificial contrivances designed to bring men and women back into bondage. Yahoshua Himself said that not one jot or tittle could be erased from the Law until the heavens and the earth pass away (Matt 5:18). Those called 'Great' in the Kingdom of Heaven will be those who have upheld the validity of "the least of these My Commandments." Lev. 26:15 labels the Statutes and Judgments found in the Pentateuch as "commandments".

Many believers have been relieved to learn of the sound wisdom and judgment of Yahweh on divorce and remarriage contained in the Old Covenant scriptures. Countless Sunday-observant Christians, weak in Torah knowledge, have been set free from the spirit of condemnation, fear, and bondage to reprobate, covenant-breaking spouses-ones with whom there was little or no prospect of reconciliation. They learned that Truth sets one free. Not free like the scribes and Pharisees, who used Deut. 24's law as license to put away their wives for any reason; but free rather to pursue their life in Christ anew, with a clean break from the past, with all its abuses, mistakes, and disappointments.

There are two very fundamental scriptures that the no-remarriage people need to get a handle on (due, perhaps, to a lack of compassion and love). The first is Gen. 2:18-"It is not good that the man should be alone." The second is I Cor. 7:2-"To avoid *porneia* (illicit sexual relations), let (allow and permit) every man have his own wife, and every woman to have her own husband." Thirdly, I John 5:3 says that the commandments of Yahweh are not grievous or burden-some. How religious zealots can so casually consign divorcees to an indefinite life of loneliness and a forced, obligatory celibacy, no matter what the circumstances, no matter who the abusive or negligent party was, is ultimately a matter of the heart-a lack of perception of the heart and law of Yahweh, Who Himself is a divorcee (Jer. 3:8). Furthermore, He is planning to remarry; yea, He is already espoused to the Church (II Cor. 11:2).

Having said this, no doubt there are certain adulterers and irresponsible Covenant-breakers among the called-out ones, for whom remarriage would be severely frowned upon by Yahweh until they have

undergone genuine repentance and effort at reconciliation with The Father and with those they have hurt.

**What is the Law of the Husband?**

To get to the nature of the Marriage Covenant, I would like to begin our discussion with Romans 7. This passage is leaned on heavily by the "once married, always-married" proponents. But I will show they are misinterpreting it by ignoring "the Law of the Husband" referred to in verse 2, and by ignoring what the Torah has to say about conditions under which the marital bond is loosed.

The fact that Paul founded his whole argument on the Torah can be known by verse 1, and by the fact that "Paul, being a Hebrew, wrote in Hebrew." (Jerome, the highly respected Church historian and translator of the Latin Vulgate, made this statement in 420 A.D.). This being the case, the "law" he referred to in verse 1 would necessarily have been the Torah. The English translators invariably use the word "law" to translate "Torah" in the Old Testament. Hence, we have:

Know ye not, brethren, [for I speak to them that know the Torah (the 5 books of Moses)], how that the Torah has dominion over a man as long as he lives." [This is a rather distressing statement to most of our theologians and preachers today] (verse 2) For the woman which has an husband is bound by the law (the Torah) to her husband so long as he lives; but if he be dead, she is loosed from *The Law of the Husband*

What a pity those being "overmuch righteous" (Eccles 7:16 warns against being so) on this subject NEVER VENTURE TO EXPLAIN WHAT 'THE LAW OF THE HUSBAND' IS; or, for that matter, tell us the Biblical definition of what a husband *actually* is. The answer to both of these questions may be found in Exodus 21:10-11:

If a man takes himself another wife, her food, her clothing, and her duty of marriage, shall he not diminish. And if he do not these 3 things to her, then she shall go out free, without money.

You will not find a more good, just, or holy law anywhere in the scriptures (these adjectives are used by Paul to describe the entirety of the Torah in Rom 7:12). People who really down deep don't believe what Yahshua said in Matt. 4—"You shall live by every word which proceeds out of the mouth of Elohim"—would have us ignore Exodus 21 and the rest of the lawful and fair judgments of Yahweh. They deem them as irrelevant in today's culture, as not applicable in modern situations.

At best they would relegate Exodus 21:10 to the very narrow case of a master taking to himself a second wife from among his maidservants.

But is that how Yahoshua and Paul used scripture? I don't think so. They always reasoned from the lesser literal case, to the larger spiritual application at hand. For example, in Luke 9 Christ said if the Pharisees allowed a man to loose his ox from a ditch on the Sabbath day, should not a daughter of Abraham (the greater case), bound for 18 years by a spirit of infirmity, be loosed therefrom on the Sabbath day. Using this same method of interpretive reasoning, we can logically assume that if a slave girl taken to become a man's second wife is now entitled to the full marital rights (food, clothing, and love) and privileges as the man's free-born first wife, and would be allowed to go free should her master-now-become-husband ever renege on his responsibilities towards her, then how much more should the original wife be permitted to divorce if she is defrauded of the duties of the husband. [Obviously, if the man becomes disabled, and cannot fulfill his role as provider, then the Torah provided for community responsibility. Such an exception in no way negates the pertinence of this law.]

Make no mistake, brethren, *this is* "The Law of the Husband" to which Paul refers in Rom 7:2. You will search in vain for a more concise, yet comprehensive delineation of the responsibilities that husbands have towards their wives anywhere else in the Torah. And when those responsibilities are not met, we have prima facie evidence of a lack of love, without which no marriage can long endure.

Nor should it endure, because the human spirit and personality is twisted and broken when compelled to endure unreciprocated love year-in and year out. That does not mean we don't exercise unconditional love which bears, endures, hopes, and believes all things over an extended period of time. But eventually, such an effort becomes an exercise in futility, a proverbial casting of one's pearls before swine, if no change is exhibited.

The Law of the Husband is pivotal in any discussion of other verses dealing with divorce and remarriage because it defines what a husband is! It is one who provides food, clothing, love, and sex to his woman. It also makes plain the fact that Marriage is a conditional covenant, based on obligations of service and love. If those conditions are not met, then the vows/agreements are null and void because of broken promises, which is the same as fraud.

Yahweh married ancient Israel on Mt. Sinai, when they agreed to obey Yahweh's commandments, statutes, and judgments. This Marriage Covenant was

ratified with the sprinkling of blood over all the people in Exodus 24. Not here or anywhere else in the Bible do we find marriage presented as an unconditional covenant. To teach it as such is irrational and irresponsible in the extreme, and earns a disdain and disrespect from thinking people outside the Church that is justly deserved. It is bondage and cruelty to tell a woman who has suffered violence, verbal and emotional abuse, and/or financial irresponsibility from her husband year-in and year-out, who will not seek counseling to resolve his vices or his lack of natural concern or affection, that she must "stick it out" indefinitely. Oftentimes, without the leverage of separation and divorce as a possible option, the woman is stripped of the only valid and viable means she has left to bring the man to his senses.

Such a man obviously is not "pleased to dwell" (I Cor 7:13-14) with the woman he had promised to love and cherish. It would seem to be the case (for whatever reason) that "she finds no favor in his eyes" (Deut 24:1), or else he would behave himself like a loving husband is supposed to. The man who violates Exodus 21:11 may be brought, by his wife, before ecclesiastical elders endued with wisdom, and the woman may be granted a bill of divorce, accordingly, if the situation warrants.

### Why the Bill of Divorce Law in Deut. 24?

Let us take a closer look at the much-maligned law in Deut. 24:

When a man has taken a wife, and married her, and it comes to pass that she finds no favor in his eyes, because he has found some uncleanness in her: then let him give her a bill of divorce, and give it into her hand, and send her out of his house. And when she is departed out of his house, she may go and be another man's wife.

Is she committing adultery when she remarries? Absolutely not! So does the law allow remarriage? Of course! Why then, in Heaven's name, did a perfect Lawgiver, full of righteousness and glory, ever allow such a law as this to be put forth? Was it a compromise by Yahweh, to allow for the inevitable hardness of the human heart (Matt 19:7-8)? Is that what Yahshua meant when He said, "Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, permitted you to put away your wives."?

The answer to the above is a surprising "yes". It is evident from both the Exodus 21 and Deut 24 passages, that the woman was inculpable in the matter under discussion. She had done nothing worthy

of divorce. But in order to prevent her from having to live with a "husband" who did not really care about her, he was allowed, yea even "commanded" (Mark 10:3), to give her a bill of divorce. My deliberate opinion, having been a serious student of this subject for almost thirty years, is that Yahweh is saying He would rather see the woman free to pursue another marriage with a man who truly loves her, than to be stuck with an emotionally and psychologically depraved man. However, every avenue of counsel and effort should be exhausted over a long period of time to address the man's hardness of heart, or the woman's, as the case may be. But, in the end, the Deut. 24 law would act as an emotional safety valve, allowing for the lesser of two evils.

The Bill of Divorce proves that the woman was not responsible for the dissolution of the marriage, and was thus eligible for remarriage. If she had done anything sexually amiss, there were very serious consequences (even capital punishment) prescribed for infidelity.

### Mark 10 Exposes the Rabbis Hypocrisy in the Matter of Divorce

A close look at Mark 10:2ff. will give us a hint as to *why* and *how* the Deut. 24 Law was being abused and misused by the Jewish men of Christ's day. The Pharisees came to Him (vs. 2) and asked Him,

2. "Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife?" [rabbinic school of Hillel taught that one could do so for any cause, just as in the Muslim religion.]

3 And He answered them, "What did Moses *command* you?"

4 And they said, "Moses *suffered* (ie. allowed/ permitted) us to write a bill

of divorce (Greek *apostasion*), and to put her away (Greek *apoluo*)."

Yahshua implies strongly in Matt 5:32 and Matt 19:9 that men *were* putting away their wives for reasons other than *porneia*, simply out of the hardness of their own hearts, ie. carnal reasons.

But in order to cover up their being carnal, hardhearted, and hard-to-please in marriage, they were also neglecting to issue the bill of divorce, causing the woman and her new husband to be committing adultery. The woman would be merely "put away" (Gr. = *apoluo*), not legally divorced. [I realize that this also implies that the Jewish religion of the time did not recognize a woman's right to initiate divorce]

Even though Deut 24:1-3 was a commandment, it was not a license or encouragement to put away, because the very fact that the man's, wife now had a bill of divorce permitting her to remarry,

exonerated her of any guilt in the break up, in general. Further, it carried a stigma for the man himself, in that it pointed the finger back at him as being more interested in a mere matter of nakedness or other trivial offense, than in commitment and building up his house and his children. In no way was Yahweh promoting the hardness of heart, but rather sparing the woman from having to live with such hardheartedness.

How many bills of divorce could a man issue before he would be embarrassed to face the community at large, having declared over and over his carnality and that he was hard to please sexually and otherwise? To avoid this social stigma, it is probable that many of the religious hypocrites of Yahshua's day were neglecting to obey Deut 24's directive as evidenced by their calling it a permit or allowance, instead of what Christ called it, a solid demand of the Law.

The bill of divorce was a command because it formalized the break, thus barring the man from leaving his woman in marital/legal limbo the rest of her natural life. And this is the situation we find the Savior addressing---where spouses have been put away, but not legally divorced (Matt 5:32, 19:9, Mark 10:11-12, and Luke 16:18). If He is talking about any other situation other than this, then we make these statements to be false.

Notice, Yahshua says in Mark 10:11-12, "Whosoever shall put away his wife and marry another, commits adultery against her." But Matt 5:32 and 19:9 tell us the husband *can* put away and marry another, *if* she has committed *porneia*. Mark 10 cannot be made to contradict Exodus 21:10-11, because the scripture cannot be broken (John 10:35). Mark is speaking to a spouse who is putting away their mate for no lawful reason, so they can go and marry another. This interpretation fits the context of the passage, in which the doctors of the law wanted to justify putting away for any reason.

Likewise, Matt 5:32 must not be interpreted so as to do away with Deut 24 or Exodus 21, because we are not to think that Yahshua came to do away with any portion of the Law (Matt 5:19), except the sacrificial code that was added because of transgressions of the moral portion (Gal 3:19). It would be easy, if we are not careful, to take the last part of v. 32, where it says "and whoever marries her that has been put away commits adultery," as meaning the wife is unconditionally bound to her hard-hearted man, who has put her away for a reason besides *porneia*.

It must be pointed out that in v. 32 the word "divorced" in the KJV is a deliberate mistranslation of the Greek word *apoluo*, which was just translated "put away" earlier in the

same verse, as well as in the previous verse! *Apoluo* is not the Greek word for divorce. That word is *apostasion*. All three times this word occurs in the New Testament, it refers to the legal document of Deut 24:1.

The only way to harmonize the four gospel passages above with the Torah passages, is to conclude that Yahshua is talking about the man putting a woman away apart from the cause of *porneia*, and /or neglecting to give her a bill of divorce as required by the law, leaving her not free to remarry.

Luke 16:17 says "it is easier for the heavens and the earth to pass away, than for one tittle of the law (Torah) to fail." That included Exodus 21:11 and Deut 24:1-4, which fall under the category of the immutable judgments of Yahweh, which are the undergirding of His very throne (Ps. 97:2). "righteousness and judgment are the foundation of His throne"). They are good, just and holy laws for a holy people, Israel *and* the Church (Lev 19:2, 1 Pet 1:16). These two laws serve there purpose, which is to protect the island of the innocent and lovingly shield and free the unloved.

Paul clearly debunks the "no-remarriage" policy in 1 Cor 7. If, as some people think, the only two categories of people who can marry are widows and virgins, then he would have said that, and could have saved a lot of space and time. Instead, he says the "unmarried and widows" (v. 8) may marry (v. 9). He doesn't address virgins until vs. 25.

Verse 27 is most interesting, because if, as some try to say, the only way to be "loosed from a wife" is via death, then why didn't Paul use the term "widow", instead of "loosed from a wife." The simple fact is that he is not addressing widows in vs. 27, because he has already addressed them fully in verses 8-9. If "loosed from a wife" meant a widow, then verses 27-28 would be redundant, a duplication of what he said in verses 8-9.

Therefore, "loosed from a wife" has to mean "legally divorced". As a matter of fact the word "loosed" is *lelusai*, and is used in Matt 18 by the Savior when speaking of the apostles authority to bind and loose. It means "free from legal obligation to serve." Paul tells those in a binding marriage: "Seek not to be loosed." You are not to try to get a divorce from one who is trying to keep the marriage together, and who is pleased to dwell with you.

When 1 Cor 7:39 and Rom 7:2 declare that a wife is bound by the Law (Torah) to her husband so long as he lives, it is talking about a man who is fulfilling the basic Torah requirements that make him a husband. Why do we insist on calling men husbands who are not fulfilling The Law of the Husband? "Husband" is a sacred office and title shared by Yahshua in His role toward Israel and the Church. [see Eph. 5, Hosea 2:16, Jer.

3:20] One is not entitled to the appellation "husband" simply because one has made a vow to another to love, provide, and cherish. It is the one who loves in deed and in truth (1 John 3:18) who we call "Husband". So likewise, it is only those wise virgins who follow the Lamb wherever He goes, who get to go into the Wedding Supper and become the Bride of Christ.

However, it must be noted in the story of Cain's murder of his brother Abel---where Yahweh Himself directly meted out the punishment---that Yahweh never did strip Cain of his office of father and husband! We should be equally reluctant to deprive a man of these roles, and reluctant to tolerate a woman who abuses the world's court system to get her way, without first letting the elders in the Church judge the situation.

The passage in Matt 5, 19, Mk 10, Lk 16, 1 Cor 7, and Rom 7 which talk about husbands, are not even talking about men who have abandoned the home, or who come home drunk several times a month, who dissipate their income on betting and personal habits and luxuries while children's needs go unmet, who indulge in sports and foul habits while neglecting their own offspring and wife. And I will go so far as to say that a man whose heart is so bound up with covetousness, lovelessness, and/or unconquered, inordinate lusts is in danger of *gehenna* fire, let alone worthy of losing his family. These things undermine the very purpose of the relationship, which is to model love and godly character to a new generation---to bring about a seed of Elohim (Mal. 2:15). This is true no matter how good a provider he is. The obligation of "conjugal dues" is more than just sex. It is the expression of and deeds of love, kindness, affection, thoughtfulness, gentleness, faithfulness, and outgoing concern displayed throughout any given week, and month to month. We have tended to emphasize the rampant lawlessness prophesied for the last generation before Christ returns---men being lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, unholy, unthankful, without natural affection, covenant-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of good people and things, traitors, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God (II Tim 3:1-5). But then we turn right around and insist that spouses "stick it out" with these very kinds of people, no matter how unwilling they are to change or seek help.

I've been in evangelistic ministry on the road for over fifteen years, and I've seen children and wives lose their lives because the pastor hadn't the courage or the discernment to tell the woman the hard decisions she needed to make in order to protect herself and ensure the safety of her children. As Dr. James Dobson has said, there are women who "Love too much." In Springfield, Missouri I once heard of an Adventist woman who lost her life along with her two small children to a deranged church---going father who

should have been recognized as demon-oppressed long before the murder-suicide came about.

I have also seen women who've stuck it out so long with mean, abusive men that their own personalities became depraved because of the perceived need to continuously use false coping mechanisms, such as lying and deceit. Woefully unsatisfied emotional needs lead to grossly distorted perceptions of reality and an inability to trust or believe in anyone, including Yahweh the Father. They themselves wanted spiritual leadership and devotion, but instead they found themselves the victim of the axiom "Evil communications (companionships) corrupt good manners." (I Cor 15:33)

"What fellowship can the righteous (spouse) have with the unrighteous." (II Cor 6:14) The example of the believing spouse is supposed to sanctify and draw the unbelieving spouse toward righteousness (I Cor 7:14). If that does not come about, there is a problem. Either the believer is not exemplifying the love of Christ, or the unbeliever is refusing to be sanctified and affected by that love.

Now at the same time we have had "lawlessness abounding, and the love of many waxing cold," and the wholesale degeneration of character, commitment, and the institution of marriage, we have ignored another trend among the religious folks to set up extra-Biblical, super-righteous standards that make life miserable or cheat believers out of legitimate enjoyment. Many prospective believers have been turned off and away from The Faith by unreasonable, unwarranted claims on their life, all done in the name of the Bible. Prohibition against even the moderate use of wine and alcoholic beverages, prohibitions against dancing and romantic music for even married couples, teaching that our Savior's parents had an "immaculate" marital relationship and that married couples should limit intercourse to once every 3 months [Sister Ellen G. White of 7' Day Adventist fame taught the forgoing.]

But over-strictness was prophesied for the latter days by the Apostle Paul in I Tim 4:1-2:

Now the Spirit speaks expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from The Faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their consciences seared with a hot iron: **FORBIDDING TO MARRY**, and commanding to abstain from meats or foods which Elohim/God has created to be received with thanksgiving by them which believe and know The Truth.

This consignment of divorcees to a perpetual life of living alone, unmated, is part and parcel of what the Spirit had in mind when He used the phrase "forbidding to marry." The Sabbatarian churches have largely taught that this refers to the Catholic Church's teaching forbidding priests and nuns from marrying. But that is hardly unique to the end-times, dating as it does to pre-Christian pagan religions. No doubt this interpretation was a convenient diversion of attention away from the horrifying fruits of Herbert Armstrong's own No-remarriage policy (discontinued in 1974). If you were living happily with a second mate and new children, they regarded it as adultery, no matter what the circumstances were in the first marriage. Therefore, they made you separate with your second mate before you could attend their church!

This teaching caused much emotional devastation in the homes of new converts. What a mountain of misery Herbert Armstrong and the Church of God 7th Day have inflicted on divorcees with this stubborn, fleshly, misguided pursuit of righteousness. The fruits of this diabolical teaching failed to move the church's leadership to relent, until finally Ken Westby (in 1974) led 40 ministers in revolt against dictatorial, oppressive policies such as this. Elder Raymond Cole refused to budge on the old D & R teaching, and left the Worldwide Church of God at that time.

I do not hesitate in stereotyping every person I've ever tried to talk to who holds this doctrine of devils as being extremely stubborn, self-righteous, implacable to reason and scriptural evidence, and difficult to get along with. These same people, who would not think of interpreting the New Testament to do away with Yahweh's Sabbaths, do not hesitate to claim that the Savior did away with Deut 24:1-4 and Exodus 21:10-11.

Their unthinking stubbornness is borne of Pharisaical self-righteousness. For they bind upon divorcees "heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, but they themselves will not move them with one of their little fingers." (Matt 23:4) May Yahweh forgive them, for they know not what they do.

\*\*\*THE END\*\*\*\*\*

**("God and the..." continued from page 1)**

a one-night stand be your fall. But isn't that the main purpose for going out to the bars? And if there's any such thing as gay community centers, they'd have to be THE BARS! They're the familiar haunts, pick-up joints, and popular retreats; everything from your local dive to those pulsating places that are practically cities under a roof - something

for everyone.

The bars - hallowed be their names - are a place to go when you're bored, a welcoming-wagon for the new kids on the meat block, and somewhere to let your hair down and unwind, enjoying the company of your substitute family. The gay lifestyle definitely revolves around these dark dens of iniquity. Such a polluted environment naturally encourages drug and alcohol abuse ("communion"), sexual abuse in a casual way with careless partners ("confirmation"), and verbal abuse (Prov. 4:24) in an overflow of raunchy talk ("fellowship") and gossip - jes' dishin' the dirt....

### "Out" On the Town

Your first experience "out" on the town (with the boys) could be exhilarating - or bizarre! You might see wonderful men dressed to kill, or hunks in tank tops and T shirts; enter a wet jock-strap contest or watch gyrating male strippers, or view the make-believe world of make-up queens trying to steal the show, a different person on stage.... Then there's the games people play, the vicious backbiting and hair-pulling of the young and breastless, or the S & M (stand & modeling) crowd who love themselves and lots of mirrors. Quite a carnival atmosphere.

But it kind of puts a damper on your evening's fun when you go into bars and find yourself greeted by pornographic posters (trying to get across the point about "safe-sex"), or see a fishbowl or platter filled with assorted colors of "life-savers" (condoms); or to order yourself a strong drink and notice AIDS donation jars staring you down: L'Chaim suddenly becomes more personal. And then there's the endless ads in all the gay mags about HIV testing, "understanding doctors" who'll screen you in private, surgically remove your hemorrhoids, laser your anal warts, counsel you about your problems, ad nauseum. Makes you eager to jump in bed, eh? Or run scared! But welcome to the real world - the good, the bad, and the ugly. But jump from bed to bed until we all drop dead? Is that what life's all about?

Isn't it stupid to keep playing this deadly game (of Russian roulette) until someone doesn't shoot blanks? DEATHBED takes on a whole new meaning. The next time you want to get "laid" - hope that it's not in a grave! So what if you can trick with every Tom, Dick, and Harry if you become just another name on the AIDS quilt (a "grave-blanket"). Don't sell yourself short (Jn. 8:36; Heb. 12:16).

Eventually, the wear and tear, the abuse of your mind and body, is going to take its expensive toll. All of the cheap, mechanical, meaningless, exploitation has got to affect you. How could you not become desensitized? If you deviate from the strait

and narrow, how can you not get lost? If you forget or pervert the original purpose of sex, how can you escape confusion? You'll condemn yourself to wander in your sexual bewilderment, experimenting with everything since "anything goes."

Look around you the next time you go out (if you haven't had enough of that tired crowd and empty scene). From drag-queens to muscle men, welfare alcoholics to executives on cocaine; the homosexual world is as diverse and perverse as the "straight" world. Some men acting like women, some women acting like men; worlds in collision, an identity crisis, suicidal tendencies - but have another drink, what are friends for?

Are "gay" people really so happy? Or just putting on a front? Beneath the smiling faces, love and laughter, you'll too often find broken hearts and lost dreams. And although the clubs are usually full, there are too many empty individuals who are lonely and aching inside; but the show must go on, drinking and dancing, until another burnt-out dawn....

### **One-Night Stands**

And what are one-night stands, really? Other than quick sex with "no strings attached," it's a cheap counterfeit of what we're actually looking for: true love, undivided attention, special affection, and sincere compliments. We're starved for love and yet dying from "fast-food." What we're really hungry for is some "good ol' home-cookin'!" But once you've lost your looks (if you ever had any), you won't have to worry about any more "strangers in the night" - unless you're able and willing to pay them for their time and trouble.

The bar-scene brazenly worships at the altar of youth, and devotes itself to the beauty that's only skin-deep. Everyone else is thrown on the human heap, scrapped and abandoned. Of course, there's some "hope" for these discarded lives: they can join the lonely hearts club of dashed hopes and lowered standards. The only requirement is to be desperate and dateless. If I've overstated this case, it's only to emphasize the point that sex sells - and without your youth and/or looks you're flat broke. It's twisted values, but reflective of our troubled times.

### **Happy and in Love?**

Many gays will protest that God is a "God of love," and they think that as long as we're happy and in love - how could something so right be so wrong? They feel God couldn't condemn such relationships and wonder how anyone could think He would. But mortal thoughts and opinions aside (Prov. 14:12; Isa. 55:8), if there is a Creator God, and if the Bible is His Instruction Manual for mankind, we'd better

base our beliefs solely on what's revealed within its pages. Faith must have a foundation (Rom. 10:17).

If the homosexual argument that "as long as we're happy and in love" is valid, couldn't the same defense be made to sanction incestuous relationships? Or premarital experiences or adulterous affairs? Do we always know what's best for us? Couldn't we be like grown-up teenagers who think they know everything, when in reality they don't?

Hasn't it been said, and true at times, that "love is blind?" Is it just a matter of feeling happy? Can't feelings fool us sometimes? Isn't that why family and friends have cautioned us to "keep your head above your heart?" Is all love proper? Are all affections good and healthy? What about being "lovesick?" Shouldn't there be some form of standards to judge by or criteria for character? Isn't there any game plan? Hasn't love too often been confused with lust (2 Sam. 13:15)?

### **Satan is "love!"**

If we look into the Bible (not Freud, the latest sexual survey, or some kinky report), we'll find that it does condemn: the love of vanity (Ps. 4:2), of simplicity (Prov. 1:22), of excessive sleep (Prov. 20:13), of religious lies (2 Thes. 2:10), illicit sex, improper lovers, and "foreign affairs" (Ezek. 23:11, 17, 22; 16:37), of evil (Micah 3:2), drunkenness (Hos. 3:1), self-righteousness (Mat. 6:5; 23:6), of money (1 Tim. 6:10), this present world system and its ways (1 Jn. 2:15), spiritual darkness (Jn. 3:19), the kick-back of wrongdoing (2 Pet. 2:15), of ourselves in an unhealthy way and of cheap thrills (2 Tim. 3:2,4), violence (Ps. 11:5), strife (Prov. 17:19), and even having a greater love for family or friends than for God (Mat. 10:37).

Therefore, the Bible clearly reveals that various forms of love and feelings are wrong, that certain human relationships are forbidden and condemned (Lev. 18), and that true love must be consistent with God's character and commandments (1 Jn. 5:3). Any other "love" isn't from God, but from Satan who is (such) "love!" He's the clever counterfeit; the snake who confuses the issues and twists the truth. It's precisely because God is Love (1 Jn. 4:8) that He wants to protect us from those Canaanite customs, perverted practices, and harmful ways that would ultimately undermine our land and lives (Lev. 18:30).

Still, some would angrily question how anyone could allow some old-fashioned Book to dictate their lives; after all, it's thousands of years old! But who would argue that the time-honored commandments against murder, or prohibition that protects private property or safeguards marriage and minds,

or upholds the honesty and virtue and being content are outdated? They're tried, tested, and true. Naturally, it's easier to accept something as long as it doesn't hit home or step on our toes. It's still typical, "A man (or woman) convinced against his will is of the same opinion still." Don't waste your time confusing them with the facts (Mat. 7:6; 15:14).

This booklet's intention is to make the plain truth about homosexuality known and available. It's to assist those who really want to consider what the Good Book has to say. Obviously, this is a very sensitive subject. If someone does become convinced or converted to the truth - great!

More power to them. But if others choose to continue in their contrary lifestyles, dying for sex rather than living for God and His Kingdom - that's their choice. God gives us all the prerogative to do as we please, but He strongly recommends and encourages us to "choose life" (Deut. 30:10); an even more appropriate message considering the high risk of AIDS. It's so difficult to TRANSCEND HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS - but we must, if and whenever it's necessary (Mk. 10:28-30).

### **Living Responsible Lives**

Are the "Gay 90's" fulfilling prophecy? The "last days" are supposed to be reminiscent of earlier times, "as it was in the days of Noah," and "as it was in the days of Lot." How was it in days of yore? Just like today. Apparently, ignoring the dire need to make drastic changes in their lives, they conducted "business as usual" and fiddled about or got carried away with less important things (Deut. 32:47; Mk. 4:19). It's recorded that they ate and drank, got married, and went to work everyday - until they were consumed by their burning desires and swept away by their sins (Lk. 17:26-30).

What's wrong with eating and drinking or working? We might very well wonder. Didn't God create us with an appetite and a thirst, as well as a need for physical exertion? Yes, but certain tastes, desires and relationships should be nipped in the bud; not allowed to grow or develop or take root (Jas. 1:14-15)! Many things are good of and by themselves, and not wrong, but God has imposed conditions, restraints and guidelines for us to live by.

We're meant to enjoy those foods that God has blessed and offered us (Lev. 20:25; 1 Tim. 4:5), and even have an occasional drink, if we want. The Bible condemns gluttony, not eating; drunkenness, not drinking; greed, not need. It's what we do with what we're given. And we are instructed to work and be productive, but we're also commanded to remember the Sabbath (seventh day) to keep it holy. It's counterproductive to become too busy

earning a living, that we neglect learning how to live (2 Pet. 3:18)!

Although we're at liberty to do almost anything, within reason (Gen. 2:16-17), we're to remember that we're held responsible for how we handle ourselves and manage our new-found freedoms (Ga. 5:13). We're not to abuse our privileges (1 Cor. 8:9), but be careful not to get caught up in things that could too easily get out of control (2 Pet. 2:20). A night of good, clean fun can quickly degenerate into an atmosphere of "just like the old times." We're entitled to time-out with the boys (or girls), just don't let your diversion become an obsession (1 Cor. 6:12) - as my mother once warned me!

### **Keep Your Head Above Your Heart!**

Is it - as some would charge - being cold and cruel, even inhuman, to be in control of your mind and emotions? Isn't it rather mature to exercise proper self-control, sick and tired of giving in to compulsion? Isn't it judicious to carefully cross-examine every thought, thereby destroying the defense of our death sentence, commuting it in Christ (2 Cor. 1:9; 10:4-5; 1 Cor. 11:31)?

Doing what just comes natural or seems normal might excite Nietzsche; but it's not good enough for God. God wants us - mere mortals made out of matter - to come to resemble, think and act like Him. "Like Father, like Son." Why? Is God on some big ego-trip and wants a bunch of clones to come along for the joy-ride? No, but because it's the only way that'll work. He ought to know the secret for living happily ever after.

Mankind, after all, was created in the image of the God kind, and shares the awesome potential to become composed of God's Spirit - after we've developed His characteristics (1 Cor. 15:53). God's eager to award us all the Diploma of Divinity after we've finished the course of conversion (2 Cor. 3:18). Therefore, instead of just doing what comes natural - we're to do the supernatural! We're to turn the other cheek instead of busting their jaw; forgive rather than fume; pray for our enemies rather than swear revenge. We're continually called to be different - in contrast, not conformity, to this world (Rom. 8:29). Get the point?

### **Tough-Love**

There is a time and a place for "tough-love." We're not to show the "mercy of fools" for welfare frauds or lazy bums (2 Thes. 3:10), or have compassion on cold-blooded murderers or hardened criminals, despite their many appeals (1 Sam. 15:32-33; Rom. 13:4).

We shouldn't refuse to use corporal punishment (Prov. 13:24). It might hurt for awhile, but hopefully the lesson (that actions have consequences) will last a lifetime (Prov.

19:18; 23:13; 29:15). It could keep them out of worse trouble later (Ecc. 8:11).

We're also not to allow our emotions for loved ones to lead us to hell (Deut. 7:3-4; 13:6-9), or wrong relationships to get in our way. Despite the grief of saying goodbye, and the pain of tearful separation (2 Sam. 3:14-16; Ezra 10:3), you've got to do what you've got to do. Why make it any more difficult? Don't procrastinate and prolong your misery. Get it over with and get on with your life! We don't have time to waste in no-win situations (Ephes. 5:16).

We shouldn't try and be more understanding and tolerant than God, but refuse to even associate with a Church member who's living in sin without any apology or shame (1 Cor. 5:1-2, 9-13). And we should NEVER entertain any notions about ordaining such people!

Of course, we shouldn't cop a self-righteous attitude (Ga. 6:1), but realize the prayerful purpose is to help restore everyone to their senses (knowing that ongoing sin results in an eternal separation). If and whenever such a person "comes to" (Lk. 15:17, 20), he's to be welcomed back with wide-open arms (2 Cor. 2:6-8). A little love can go a long way, and encourage us to do even better - rather than give up. But sometimes the situation calls for "shock-treatment" (tough-love), as well as private counseling. "Different strokes for different folks," so to speak (Lk. 12:47-48). The moral of this story? Don't get blinded by the light: the glitter of "love," the hot-flash of emotion, and the gleam of relationships (2 Cor. 11:14). The going price for fool's gold is too high to pay. Walk away. It's not worth it.

**(to be continued in Issue #36)**

### ***("The Passion..." continued from page 1)***

not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now My kingdom is not from here." {37} Pilate therefore said to Him, "Are You a king then?" Jesus answered, "You say rightly that I am a king. For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice." {38} Pilate said to Him, "What is truth?" And when he had said this, he went out again to the Jews, and said to them, "I find no fault in Him at all" (John 18:31-38).

### **Pilate Releases Barabbas and Crucifies Jesus**

"Now at the feast he was accustomed to releasing one prisoner to them, whomever they requested." {7} "And there was one named Barabbas (a notorious prisoner), who

was chained with his fellow rebels; they had committed murder in the rebellion. {8} Then the multitude, crying aloud, began to ask him to do just as he had always done for them" (Mark 15:6-8).

"Therefore, when they had gathered together, Pilate said to them, "Whom do you want me to release to you? Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ (the King of the Jews)?" {18} For he knew that they had handed Him over because of envy. {19} While he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent to him, saying, "Have nothing to do with that just Man, for I have suffered many things today in a dream because of Him" (Matthew 27:17-19).

The only mention of Pilate's wife is in verse 19. The movie gave her a larger role and she was even interacting with Mary, the mother of Jesus.

"But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitudes that they should ask for Barabbas and destroy Jesus. {21} The governor answered and said to them, "Which of the two do you want me to release to you?" They said, "Barabbas!" (Matthew 27:20-21).

"And they all cried out at once, saying, "Away with this Man, and release to us Barabbas"; {19} who had been thrown into prison for a certain rebellion made in the city, and for murder" (Luke 23:18-19).

"So then Pilate took Jesus and scourged Him. {2} And the soldiers twisted a crown of thorns and put it on His head, and they put on Him a purple robe. {3} Then they said, "Hail, King of the Jews!" And they struck Him with their hands. {4} Pilate then went out again, and said to them, "Behold, I am bringing Him out to you, that you may know that I find no fault in Him." {5} Then Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. And Pilate said to them, "Behold the Man!" {6} Therefore, when the chief priests and officers saw Him, they cried out, saying, "Crucify Him, crucify Him!" Pilate said to them, "You take Him and crucify Him, for I find no fault in Him." {7} The Jews answered him, "We have a law, and according to our law He ought to die, because He made Himself the Son of God." {8} Therefore, when Pilate heard that saying, he was the more afraid, {9} and went again into the Praetorium, and said to Jesus, "Where are You from?" But Jesus gave him no answer. {10} Then Pilate said to Him, "Are You not speaking to me? Do You not know that I have power to crucify You, and power to release You?" {11} Jesus answered, "You could have no power at all against Me unless it had been given you from above. Therefore the one who delivered Me to you has the greater sin." {12} From then on Pilate sought to release Him, but the Jews cried out, saying, "If you let this Man go, you are not

Caesar's friend. Whoever makes himself a king speaks against Caesar." {13} When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus out and sat down in the judgment seat in a place that is called The Pavement, but in Hebrew, Gabbatha. {14} Now it was the Preparation Day of the Passover, and about the sixth hour. And he said to the Jews, "Behold your King!" {15} But they cried out, "Away with Him, away with Him! Crucify Him!" Pilate said to them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar!" (John 19:1-15).

"When Pilate saw that he could not prevail at all, but rather that a tumult was rising, he took water and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, "I am innocent of the blood of this just Person. You see to it." {25} And all the people answered and said, "His blood be on us and on our children"" (Matthew 27:24-25).

"So Pilate gave sentence that it should be as they requested. {25} And he released to them the one they requested (Barabbas), who for rebellion and murder had been thrown into prison; but he delivered Jesus to their will" (Luke 23:24-25).

".... and when he had scourged Jesus" (Matthew 27:26).

"Then he delivered Him to them to be crucified. So they took Jesus and led Him away" (John 19:16).

### Roman Soldiers Mock Jesus

"Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the Praetorium and gathered the whole garrison around Him. {28} And they stripped Him and put a scarlet robe on Him. {29} When they had twisted a crown of thorns, they put it on His head, and a reed in His right hand. And they bowed the knee before Him and mocked Him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" {30} Then they spat on Him, and took the reed and struck Him on the head" (Matthew 27:27-30) "and bowing the knee, they worshiped Him" (Mark 15:19).

### Jesus on the Way to the Cross

"And when they had mocked Him, they took the robe off Him, put His own clothes on Him, and led Him away to be crucified" (Matthew 27:31).

"And He, bearing His cross .... (John 19:17).

"Then they compelled a certain man, Simon a Cyrenian, the father of Alexander and Rufus, as he was coming out of the country and passing by, to bear His cross" (Mark 15:21) "and on him they laid the cross that he might bear it after Jesus" (Luke 23:26-32).

Notice that this scripture says that Simon carried the cross "after Jesus." The movie really took liberties with Simon. It showed him and Jesus carrying the cross together

and they portrayed Simon arguing with the Roman soldiers.

"And a great multitude of the people followed Him (Jesus), and women who also mourned and lamented Him. {28} But Jesus, turning to them, said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for Me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. {29} "For indeed the days are coming in which they will say, 'Blessed are the barren, wombs that never bore, and breasts which never nursed!' {30} "Then they will begin 'to say to the mountains, "Fall on us!" and to the hills, "Cover us!" {31} "For if they do these things in the green wood, what will be done in the dry?" {32} There were also two others, criminals, led with Him to be put to death" (Luke 23:27-32).

"And they brought Him to the place Golgotha, which is translated, Place of a Skull" (Mark 15:22-23), "they gave Him sour wine mingled with gall (myrrh) to drink. But when He had tasted it, He would not drink" (Matthew 27:34).

### The First Three Hours

"Now it was the third hour (9 a.m.), and they crucified Him" (Mark 15:25) "and the criminals, one on the right hand and the other on the left. {34} Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do." (Luke 23:33-34).

"Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took His garments and made four parts, to each soldier a part, and also the tunic. Now the tunic was without seam, woven from the top in one piece. {24} They said therefore among themselves, "Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be," that the Scripture might be fulfilled which says: "They divided My garments among them, And for My clothing they cast lots." Therefore the soldiers did these things" (John 19:23-24).

### Pilate put a Title on the Cross

"Now Pilate wrote a title and put it on the cross (over His head). And the writing was: JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS. {20} Then many of the Jews read this title, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin. {21} Therefore the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, "Do not write, 'The King of the Jews,' but, 'He said, "I am the King of the Jews.'" {22} Pilate answered, "What I have written, I have written."" (John 19:11-22).

### Jesus is Mocked

"And the people stood looking on. But even the rulers with them sneered, saying, "He saved others; let Him save Himself if He is the Christ, the chosen of God"" (Luke 23:35).

"And those who passed by blasphemed Him, wagging their heads " (Mark 15:29), "and saying, "You who destroy the temple and build it in three days, save Yourself! If You are the Son of God, come down from the cross." {41} Likewise the chief priests also, mocking with the scribes and elders, said, {42} "He saved others; Himself He cannot save. If He is the King of Israel, let Him now come down from the cross, and we will believe Him. {43} "He trusted in God; let Him deliver Him now if He will have Him; for He said, 'I am the Son of God.'" {44} Even the robbers who were crucified with Him reviled Him with the same thing" (Matthew 27:40-44).

"Then one of the criminals who were hanged blasphemed Him, saying, "If You are the Christ, save Yourself and us." {40} But the other, answering, rebuked him, saying, "Do you not even fear God, seeing you are under the same condemnation? {41} "And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this Man has done nothing wrong." {42} Then he said to Jesus, "Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom." {43} And Jesus said to him, "Assuredly, I say to you today you will be with Me in Paradise"" (Luke 23:39-43).

### Jesus Makes John Responsible for His Mother Mary

"Now there stood by the cross of Jesus His mother, and His mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. {26} When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing by, He said to His mother, "Woman, behold your son!" {27} Then He said to the disciple, "Behold your mother!" And from that hour that disciple took her to his own home" (John 19:25-27).

As amazing as this may sound, this is the first time that Mary, the mother of Jesus, is mentioned in the "events of the passion of the Christ." The next and the last mention of her in the Bible is in Acts 1:12-14 which is after the crucifixion and the resurrection of Jesus.

In the movie, Mary, the mother of Jesus, was everywhere. Mel Gibson is a Catholic and Catholics have a strong belief in Mary and her role was strongly portrayed in the movie.

### The Three Hours of Darkness from Noon to 3 p.m.

"Now from the sixth hour (noon) until the ninth hour (3 p.m.) there was darkness over all the land. {46} And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" that is, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" {47} Some of those who stood there, when they heard that, said, "This Man is calling for

Elijah!" {48} Immediately one of them ran and took a sponge, filled it with sour wine and put it on a reed, and offered it to Him to drink. {49} The rest said, "Let Him alone; let us see if Elijah will come to save Him." (Matthew 27:45-49).

"After this, Jesus, knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, said, "I thirst!" {29} "Now a vessel full of sour wine was sitting there; and they filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on hyssop, and put it to His mouth. {30} So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" (John 19:28-30). "And when Jesus had cried out with a loud voice, He said, "Father, 'into Your hands I commit My spirit.'" Having said this, He breathed His last" (Luke 23:46), "And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit" (John 19:30).

At the end of the verse of Matthew 27:49, some translations have an extra phrase. The Moffatt translation says: "(Seizing a lance, another pricked his side, and out came water and blood.)" This is also referred to in John 19:34 but the time sequence in John indicates that Jesus was already dead and the soldier pierced His side to make sure He was dead. If this phrase is correct in Matthew 27:49, then this is why Jesus died so quickly. In some cases people who were crucified could suffer up to three days on the cross. One of the reasons that they broke their legs was to speed up the death process through suffocation.

God had Jesus on a time table. The official time for the Passover lambs to be killed in the Temple was 3 p.m. and since Jesus was our Passover Lamb that was sacrificed for us (John 1:29,36; 1 Corinthians 5:7), then He had to die at 3 p.m. to fulfill this part of God's plan.

### Phenomena Accompanying the Death of Jesus Christ

"Then, behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth quaked, and the rocks were split, {52} and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; {53} and coming out of the graves after His resurrection, they went into the holy city and appeared to many. {54} So when the centurion and those with him, who were guarding Jesus, saw the earthquake and the things that had happened, they feared greatly, saying, "Truly this was the Son of God!" (Matthew 27:51-54), "a righteous Man!" (Luke 23:47).

### The Women Watch to the End

"And many women who followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering to Him, were there looking on from afar, {56} among whom were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Josep, and the mother of Zebedee's

sons" (Matthew 27:55-56).

"But all His acquaintances, and the women who followed Him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching these things" (Luke 23:49).

Did you notice that there is a woman's name that is missing in this list? Mary, the mother of Jesus, is not mentioned.

### The Jews want Jesus' Body Off of the Cross before the Holy Day begins at Sunset

"Therefore, because it was the Preparation Day, that the bodies should not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), the Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. {32} Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who was crucified with Him. {33} But when they came to Jesus and saw that He was already dead, they did not break His legs. {34} But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out. {35} And he who has seen has testified, and his testimony is true; and he knows that he is telling the truth, so that you may believe. {36} For these things were done that the Scripture should be fulfilled, "Not one of His bones shall be broken." {37} And again another Scripture says, "They shall look on Him whom they pierced"" (John 19:31-37).

A very important point to notice in this passage is that "that Sabbath was a high day." Most Protestants and Catholics don't understand God's seven annual Holy Days ordained by God as "the feasts of the Lord" in Leviticus 23:1-2. The "high day" Sabbath being referred to in John 19:31 is the first day of Unleavened Bread and was ordained as a holy convocation in Leviticus 23:6-8. These annual Sabbaths are called "high days" and they can fall on any day of the week. What this means is that there can be two Sabbaths in a week. An example would be that one would be the annual "high day" Sabbath that could fall on a Thursday and then you would also have the normal seventh day weekly Sabbath on a Saturday. Thus having two Sabbaths in one week.

### Joseph of Arimathea Gets the Body of Jesus

"Now when evening had come, because it was the Preparation Day, that is, the day before the Sabbath, {43} Joseph of Arimathea, a prominent council member, who was himself waiting for the kingdom of God" (Mark 15:42-43), "...a rich man...." (Matthew 27:57), "... a good and just man. {51} He had not consented to their decision and deed. He was from Arimathea, a city of the Jews, who himself was also waiting for the kingdom of God" (Luke 23:50-51).

"After this, Joseph of Arimathea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly, for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus; and Pilate gave him permission. So he came and took the body of Jesus. {39} And Nicodemus, who at first came to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds. {40} Then they took the body of Jesus, and bound it in strips of linen with the spices, as the custom of the Jews is to bury. {41} Now in the place where He was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid" (John 19:38-41), "... in his new tomb which he had hewn out of the rock; and he rolled a large stone against the door of the tomb, and departed" (Matthew 27:60). "So there they laid Jesus, because of the Jews' Preparation Day, for the tomb was nearby" (John 19:42).

This passage of scripture says that Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus took the body of Jesus and put it in a new tomb. Again, no mention of Mary, the mother of Jesus, being there.

In the movie after Jesus was taken down from the cross, Mary is shown cradling the bloody crucified and dead body of Jesus in the same position as the Michaelangelo's pietA painting.

### The Women Observed the Tomb where Jesus was buried

"And Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Josep observed where He was laid" (Mark 15:47), "And the women who had come with Him from Galilee followed after, and they observed the tomb and how His body was laid. {56} Then they returned and prepared spices and fragrant oils. And they rested on the Sabbath according to the commandment" (Luke 23:55-56).

Did you notice that Mary, the mother of Jesus, is not mentioned here among this list of women?

Also notice that in verse 56: "they rested on the Sabbath according to the commandment." This is referring to the weekly seventh day Sabbath (Saturday), not the "high day" Sabbath of John 19:31 which was on a Thursday in the year that Jesus was crucified. Regarding the phrase in Luke 23:56: "they returned and prepared spices and fragrant oils" - this kind of work is not to be done on the weekly Sabbath nor on the "high day" Sabbaths. They prepared these spices and oils on Friday the day after the "high day" Sabbath and on the preparation day to the weekly Sabbath.

### Guards are Placed at the Tomb on the High Holy Day

(Matthew 27:62-66) "On the next day, which followed the Day of Preparation, the

chief priests and Pharisees gathered together to Pilate, {63} saying, "Sir, we remember, while He was still alive, how that deceiver said, 'After three days I will rise.' {64} "Therefore command that the tomb be made secure until the third day, lest His disciples come by night and steal Him away, and say to the people, 'He has risen from the dead.' So the last deception will be worse than the first." {65} Pilate said to them, "You have a guard; go your way, make it as secure as you know how." {66} So they went and made the tomb secure, sealing the stone and setting the guard."

## The Resurrection

"The Passion of the Christ" movie ends with a dynamic and powerful scene showing Jesus Christ sitting in the tomb having been resurrected back to life by God Almighty.

Jesus' resurrection fulfilled a prophecy that is recorded in Matthew 12:39-40: "But He (Jesus) answered and said to them, "An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. {40} "For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."

Jesus was resurrected at the exact same time of day that He was buried in the tomb.

## The Movie was a Violent Film

At the beginning of this article we quoted the Chicago Sun-Times Film critic Roger Ebert who made the following comment: "This is the most violent film I have ever seen." The movie has an "R" rating because of the violence. The movie showed the actor, who portrayed Jesus, with welts, cuts and abrasions and was a bloody mess.

Would it surprise you that Bible actually records that Jesus was actually beaten worse than what the movie portrayed?

Let's look at the following Psalm which was a prophecy of Jesus on the cross and let's see what Jesus would have prayed about while having been nailed, crucified and hanging on the cross: Psalm 22 "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? Why are You so far from helping Me, And from the words of My groaning? {2} O My God, I cry in the daytime, but You do not hear; And in the night season, and am not silent. {3} But You are holy, Enthroned in the praises of Israel. {4} Our fathers trusted in You; They trusted, and You delivered them. {5} They cried to You, and were delivered; They trusted in You, and were not ashamed. {6} But I am a worm, and no man; A reproach of men, and despised by the people. {7} All those who see Me ridicule Me; They shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, {8} "He trusted in the LORD, let Him rescue Him; Let Him

deliver Him, since He delights in Him!" {9} But You are He who took Me out of the womb; You made Me trust while on My mother's breasts. {10} I was cast upon You from birth. From My mother's womb You have been My God. {11} Be not far from Me, For trouble is near; For there is none to help. {12} Many bulls have surrounded Me; Strong bulls of Bashan have encircled Me. {13} They gape at Me with their mouths, Like a raging and roaring lion. {14} I am poured out like water, And all My bones are out of joint; My heart is like wax; It has melted within Me. {15} My strength is dried up like a potsherd, And My tongue clings to My jaws; You have brought Me to the dust of death. {16} For dogs have surrounded Me; The congregation of the wicked has enclosed Me. They pierced My hands and My feet; {17} I can count all My bones. They look and stare at Me. {18} They divide My garments among them, And for My clothing they cast lots. {19} But You, O LORD, do not be far from Me; O My Strength, hasten to help Me! {20} Deliver Me from the sword, My precious life from the power of the dog. {21} Save Me from the lion's mouth And from the horns of the wild oxen! You have answered Me. {22} I will declare Your name to My brethren; In the midst of the assembly I will praise You. {23} You who fear the LORD, praise Him! All you descendants of Jacob, glorify Him, And fear Him, all you offspring of Israel! {24} For He has not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted; Nor has He hidden His face from Him; But when He cried to Him, He heard. {25} My praise shall be of You in the great assembly; I will pay My vows before those who fear Him. {26} The poor shall eat and be satisfied; Those who seek Him will praise the LORD. Let your heart live forever! {27} All the ends of the world Shall remember and turn to the LORD, And all the families of the nations Shall worship before You. {28} For the kingdom is the Lord's, And He rules over the nations. {29} All the prosperous of the earth Shall eat and worship; All those who go down to the dust Shall bow before Him, Even he who cannot keep himself alive. {30} A posterity shall serve Him. It will be recounted of the Lord to the next generation, {31} They will come and declare His righteousness to a people who will be born, That He has done this."

Notice in verse 17 that Jesus was beaten so bad and His flesh was ripped off to the point that He could see His bones.

After seeing the movie or reading this article about "the Passion of the Christ" we might ask the question: Why did Jesus Christ have to suffer so much? The answer is in the following passage: Isaiah 53:1-9 "Who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? {2} For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant,

And as a root out of dry ground. He has no form or comeliness; And when we see Him, There is no beauty that we should desire Him. {3} He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. {4} Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted. {5} But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed. {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. {7} He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, And as a sheep before its shearers is silent, So He opened not His mouth. {8} He was taken from prison and from judgment, And who will declare His generation? For He was cut off from the land of the living; For the transgressions of My people He was stricken. {9} And they made His grave with the wicked; But with the rich at His death, Because He had done no violence, Nor was any deceit in His mouth."

Jesus was beaten so that "by His stripes" we can be physically healed. (See also 1 Peter 2:24).

## In Conclusion:

The story of Jesus is the greatest story ever told. The "passion" is about Jesus being our "Passover sacrifice" as the apostle Paul said in 1 Corinthians 5:7-8: "Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us. {8} Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." The events of the "passion" shows how much Jesus loves us and how He was willing to give up His life and shed His blood for us, so that we could have eternal life, and share our lives with Him. His blood justifies us and His life saves us: "Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. {10} For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life" (Romans 5:9-10).

The Passion story is the story of the day that the "Son of God" died and it also shows God's love for us: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

Notes: The order of the scriptures for this

article are from the book: "A Harmony of the Gospels" by: A. T. Robertson. The scriptures quoted are from the New King James Version unless noted otherwise.

\*\*\*THE END\*\*\*

**("Intelligent Design..." continued from page 1)**

from the smallest celled organism to the way the food chain works. Life in this world works in a systematic fashion so that if any parts are removed or damaged the system starts to break down.

For example, the bacterial *flagellum*, an outboard motor that bacteria use to navigate their environment, requires about 50 proteins to build. If any of these proteins are removed, the flagellum either won't be built or won't work. The flagellum thus seems to display not only specified complexity, but irreducible complexity.

Another example comes from an article in the journal "Science" where a team of researchers tinkered with a bacterium called *Mycoplasma genitalium*, which is the simplest known organism. The organism's genetic code is about 580,000 letters long and spells out 480 protein-producing genes. After removing various protein-coding genes, the scientists have estimated that 265 to 350 of this bacterium's genes are "essential" for the organism to live and reproduce under laboratory conditions, which is to say that it would not live well outside the laboratory without these proteins.

These are only a few examples of complex structures in our natural world that appear to have a design. There are many other examples that are very fascinating to study from just the common cell with its many complex parts to the basic laws of the universe such as the rings around a planet.

In **Psalms 14:1**, David states, "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God."

Just by looking at the new concept of science and the general facts of Biology and the other physical sciences, it is foolish to say, "There is no God."

\*\*\*THE END\*\*\*

**("A German..." continued from page 24)**

longer than any of the great military conflicts of the last century - a conflict conducted by an enemy that cannot be tamed by "tolerance" and "accommodation" but is actually spurred on by such gestures, which have proven to be, and will always be taken by the Islamists for signs of weakness. Only two recent American Presidents had the courage needed for Anti-appeasement: Reagan and Bush.

His American critics may quibble over

the details, but we Europeans know the truth. We saw it first hand: Ronald Reagan ended the Cold War, freeing half of the German people from nearly 50 years of terror and virtual slavery. And Bush, supported only by the Social Democrat Blair, acting on moral conviction, recognized the danger in the Islamic War against Democracy. His place in history will have to be evaluated after a number of years have passed.

In the meantime, Europe sits back with charismatic self-confidence in the multicultural corner, instead of defending liberal society's values and being an attractive center of power on the same playing field as the true great powers, America and China.

On the contrary - we Europeans present ourselves, in contrast to those "arrogant Americans", as the World Champions of "tolerance", which even (Germany's Interior Minister) Otto Schily justifiably criticizes.

Why? Because we're so moral? **I fear it's more because we're so materialistic, so devoid of a moral compass.**

For his policies, Bush risks the fall of the dollar, huge amounts of additional national debt, and a massive and persistent burden on the American economy - because unlike almost all of Europe, **Bush realizes what is at stake - literally everything.**

While we criticize the "capitalistic robber barons" of America because they seem too sure of their priorities, we timidly defend our Social Welfare systems. Stay out of it! It could get expensive! We'd rather discuss reducing our 35-hour workweek or our dental coverage, or our 4 weeks of paid vacation ... Or listen to TV pastors preach about the need to "reach out to terrorists. To understand and forgive".

These days, Europe reminds me of an old woman who, with shaking hands, frantically hides her last pieces of jewelry when she notices a robber breaking into a neighbor's house.

Appeasement?  
**Europe, thy name is Cowardice.**  
**---God Bless America---**

**To check the authenticity of this article, go to:**

<http://www.snopes.com/politics/soapbox/dapfner.asp>

\*\*\*THE END\*\*\*

**("Question #59..." continued from page 20)**

remember though, there is not much confusion among the Jewish people what Days they proclaim as Holy, as God's Feasts.

With that point in mind, we come back to

the question, why all this confusion in the Churches of God? The Holy Days were taught by, Elder, Armstrong to be kept. As a highly influential leader, his "authority" held great weight to the timing of the keeping of God's Feasts by most people under his tutorship. He did not adhere to the Hebrew Calendar in it's entirety, mainly that of Passover and Pentecost. Therefore, that was and is to this day, the main cause of the many calendar claims and the resultant mass confusion on this issue. Had, Elder, Armstrong, with his great influence, not "proclaimed" another calendar, one would see very little disagreement on this issue today. Had he recognized the Hebrew Calendar as kept by most Jews through out the world today, most of his followers would surely be keeping the Hebrew Calendar in it's entirety as well, including Passover-Unleavened Bread 15th observance and Sivan six Pentecost.

One may want to argue that point as well, but the record should speak for itself. [Mass confusion eliminated before it ever got started.] And if there still were questions as to the validity of the Hebrew Calendar, in spite of the Scriptures quoted above we are assured all things will be corrected when the King of Kings returns. Acts 3:20 **And he shall send Jesus Christ**, which before was preached unto you: (v. 21) **Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things**, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.

The original question has been answered. Which Pentecost day do you want to observe; Sunday, Monday or Sivan six?

**Answer by: Darwin Lee (Bismarck, North Dakota)**

\*\*\*THE END\*\*\*

**("Letters Section" continued from page 2)**

as stated earlier. We do not go out of our way to harm this unrepentant person in any way, but neither do we have to pretend to be friends with him either in or out of church. Just simply leave him alone and when you meet him on the street or elsewhere, just treat him as you would treat any other stranger you would meet on the street, because without reconciliation that is what you are, two strangers passing. Many times we help people who are strangers and that also applies here. In most cases you will not have to worry about the uncomfortableness of being in the presence of this unrepentant person, because we find that when you rebuke a person and that person does not want to reconcile with you then they are the ones who shun and avoid you, mostly

because you have their number so to speak and they know it, so they don't want to be anywhere near you, lest you remind them of their sin, sometimes just by your very presence.

Arlan tried to tell us that we are not promoting reconciliation by posting our disfellowshipment document from United Church of God on our Web Site. We were disfellowshipped in 2000 for a matter which was not sin. We tried to go through their appeals process according to the principle of Matthew 18:15-17 but that went no where as it has for many of the people who have tried this route. They would not allow us witnesses as stated in Matthew 18:16 and they refused to even set up a second meeting with us as in Matthew 18:16 because we refused to go into that meeting without witnesses. This proved to us that they did not have an intent to reconcile with us and we took the matter to the church. We did this in the only way that was available to us at that time, which was to send out a document of the events which had taken place between them and us up to the point where they would not meet with us according to Matthew 18:16. We do not believe that this method would be any different for anyone else in our position at that time even today. When we sent our **111 page document** out to the church, we were disfellowshipped publicly within one weeks time, and went on to experience the avoidance and shunning that happens many times in these situations.

Some people believe that by posting our **111 page disfellowshipment document** on our web site for anyone to see, that it shows we are angry, bitter people. We do get angry over injustice and so did Christ at times, for example when he publicly blasted the Pharisees in Matthew 23 and when he tipped over the money changers tables. Anger is an emotion like any other emotion and the Bible warns us not to sin when angry. (Eph. 4:26) Why would we get such a warning in our instruction from God if it was wrong to ever be angry? There would be no reason to caution us in regard to something which we are totally off limits to experiencing. Anger to the point of bitterness would be totally wrong since bitterness means "extreme wickedness", Strong's #4088 as used in Hebrews 12:15.

Our instruction from God in Matthew 18:17 is to take the matter to the church (or society). If verses 15 and 16 do not bare any fruits of repentance from the person committing the sin or error in light of cautions given earlier in this disclaimer. In other words, under certain circumstances we are instructed or commanded to do Matthew 18:17 when it is appropriate to warn people of a danger to their physical or spiritual lives. When a church disfellowships people on a

regular basis and for matters which are not sin, people need to be warned. When individuals do not want to repent of sin which is going to harm other people, then people need to be warned. How we put out this warning is between us and God.

We have chosen to keep this **111 page disfellowshipment document** posted on our web site until the United Church of God publicly rescinds their disfellowshipment of us. When they publicly repent (reconcile) of disfellowshipping us for a matter which was not sin, then we will remove the document from our web site and rejoice. Until then it stays. Call us angry bitter people if you want but be sure that you absolutely know what the Biblical definition of bitterness is before you do that. Also, consider the fact that God instructs/commands us to take certain matters to the church. (Matthew 18:17)

In the matter of Arlan Weight, we have been dealing with a certain sin which he has been committing against us for quite some time. To date he refuses to repent (reconcile) with us. We believe that putting a needed disclaimer on this article written by him back in 2001 clearly shows the sin he continues to commit, because there are many discrepancies between what he says and what he actually does in practice. We can see at least 4 different sins which come into play here, but we will leave it up to the reader to find them and hopefully take the Biblical approach of judging righteous judgment. (John 7:24) For those who hear the matter and are able to see that Arlan has these sins, they should be able to encourage this brother to see his fault and error for the purpose of gaining a brother to God's Kingdom. For unrepented sin will lead to destruction. If he decides to repent (reconcile) with us as he is instructed to do in Matthew 5:23-24 then we will add that to the end of this disclaimer and rejoice that we have gained our brother.

This disclaimer will be posted both on the Web Page of **Newsletter Issue #2** and on the **Animated version** of this article. Again, we sincerely apologize for missing some very major flaws in this article back in 2001 when it was originally printed. We are truly sorry.

Contrary to what rumors may be going around in regard to this matter, we have not disfellowshipped Arlan or anyone else from our Sabbath Services or Fellowship, but neither will we allow people to come in here and disrespect others or use cuss words during the course of Sabbath Services or Fellowship. Arlan felt we should allow this type of behavior to continue and thus walked out of Sabbath Services on July 16, 2005 and within one week started his own Saturday Meetings at the local library to the exclusion of us. We would hope that Arlan would at some point reconcile with us, but

has not as of the date of this printing. Please let this be both a warning to the Church of God and a plea to Arlan to repent (reconcile) with his brethren. May prayers be said in regard to this matter through out the Church of God through out the world. If anyone needs more details in regard to this matter please ask and we will accommodate you if we are able to.

**\*\*\*THE END OF THIS LETTER\*\*\*\*\***

*(Next Letter "Works/Grace..." continued from Issue #34)*

**Works/Grace? (01-13-04)**

**Ronald Barlow (Texas) writes:**

Have you considered what Moses has said about faith in God as touching His promises aside from the deeds of the law? Moses was faithful as a servant in all his house (Israel), who were delivered from Egypt and received the Torah at Mt. Sinai. However, they could not enter into the promises to Abraham, even though they were circumcised in the Covenant. They could not enter the promise, by Moses or the works of the law, because they did not have faith in God to deliver them. (Deu. 1:32-38)

But, those who were not circumcised, entered the promises of God to Abraham by their faith in God, without Moses, or the works of the Law. They entered in with Joshua (a figure of Jesus) who circumcised them in their faith (Joshua 5:4-10) after they received the promise -- as Abraham had 430 years before the law of Moses.

**Laura Lee (North Dakota) writes:**

I believe you have been misinformed here. Again there is no law of Moses. The law given to Moses to teach to the Israelites was God's law. God's law was in full force at the time of Abraham: Gen. 26:5 Because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws. The law that Abraham had and the law that Moses had were the same law.

God didn't let those who came out of Egypt enter the promised land for the following reason, they didn't keep God's law: Joshua 5:6 "For the children of Israel walked forty years in the wilderness, till all the people that were men of war, which came out of Egypt, were consumed, **because they obeyed not the voice of the LORD:** unto whom the LORD swore that he would not shew them the land, which the LORD swore unto their fathers that he would give us, a land that floweth with milk and honey."

*(to be continued in Issue #36)*

The Entire Ronald Barlow Letter can be read at: <http://darwinlauralee.com/12006-033-02.htm>

## QUESTIONS SECTION

newsletter-only-darwin-laura@earthlink.net

### QUESTION #59

**I would like to know what day to keep Pentecost, is it Monday as before or Sunday as now?**

This question can not be answered with out some important sub-questions asked first, such as: What calendar does one use? Is there more than one calendar that is authorized by God to set a time for any of the Holy Days, not just Pentecost? Who is authorized to set (proclaim) when God's Holy Days are to be kept on an annual cycle?

To answer your question and all the related sub-questions, one must make some important observations. The fact that there are so many "calendars" in use and therefore so many different dates proclaimed by some one, what one sees is an obvious mass confusion on this issue. A confusion that God never intended. 1 Cor. 14:33 "For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints." Where did this mass confusion arise from? The short and strait answer to that is-from Satan! However, as concerns the Church of God, one must look at as to where it started of relatively recent history, about the last 50 to near 100 years. More about that later.

We must attempt to answer some of the sub-questions asked earlier. Is there more than one God authorized Holy Day calendar for His Church? The short and straight answer to that is-how could there be? That would make God the author of confusion! Next question: Who has the God given authority to Proclaim when the Holy Days are to be kept? Would any baptized member be authorized by God to make such a proclamation? When God set on a course to call a nation of king-priests to minister under Him, He commanded (authorized) Moses to make that proclamation. Lev. 23:1 And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, (v 2) Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, Concerning the feasts of the Lord, which **ye shall proclaim** to be holy convocations, even these are my feasts. (emphases mine through out)

Notice the instruction was to Moses, to give to His nation. Now God knew that Moses would not live to the second coming of Jesus to do the proclaiming on an annual basis, so God set up an order or method if you will, where by this would be done. Exd. 24:1 "And he said unto Moses, Come up unto the Lord, thou, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, **and seventy of the elders** of Israel; and worship ye afar off." Once Moses died, the continuation of the system of seventy elders (known as the Sanhedrin in the time of Jesus Christ) remained until the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem in AD 70 and continued in exile ending in Tiberias several hundred

years later. While Moses was alive he and the seventy elders alone had the authority to proclaim when on an annual basis the Feasts of God were to be kept. Moses was of the tribe of Levi and they were God's priest hood to the other eleven tribes of Israel. Exd. 4:14 And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Moses, and he said, **Is not Aaron the Levite thy brother...?** Exd. 28:1 **And take thou unto thee Aaron thy brother, and his sons with him, from among the children of Israel,** that he may minister unto me in the priest's office, even Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar, Aaron's sons.

It must be noted here that the tribe of Levi had not been given a territory separate of their own as the other twelve tribes, so they dwelt among all the tribes including the tribe of Judah (the law givers) Num. 18:24 But the tithes of the children of Israel, which they offer as an heave offering unto the Lord, I have given to the Levites to inherit: **therefore I have said unto them, Among the children of Israel they shall have no inheritance.** Num. 35:2 **Command the children of Israel, that they give unto the Levites of the inheritance of their possession cities to dwell in; and ye shall give also unto the Levites suburbs for the cities round about them.** Deut. 14:27 And the Levite that is within thy gates; thou shalt not forsake him; **for he hath no part nor inheritance with thee.** Deut. 18:1 The priests the Levites, **and all the tribe of Levi, shall have no part nor inheritance with Israel:** they shall eat the offerings of the Lord made by fire, and his inheritance. (v 2) **Therefore shall they have no inheritance among their brethren: the Lord is their inheritance,** as he hath said unto them. **Josh. 13:14 Only unto the tribe of Levi he gave none inheritance; the sacrifices of the Lord God of Israel made by fire are their inheritance, as he said unto them.**

Next question: Did God give them a calendar where by Moses and the seventy elders could determine what days to make a proclamation for His Feasts to be observed on an annual basis? Had too, or the whole nation would have been in the dark as to what days they were to keep them. Now God would not expect His nation to keep the law of His Feasts with out a calendar, would He? Then who's and what calendar does one use today to be in line with keeping the Law concerning the Feasts of God? Would He have many different calendars or just one, and if just one, which one?

When one looks at the Churches of God recent history, many calendars have sprung

up and new ones almost on a daily basis spring up. This can not be of God, not withstanding, all those who have made their own calendar and proclaim with out authorization from God to do so.

Scripture clearly reveals that the tribe of Judah was given to be the law giver Gen. 49:10 **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." The phrase "until Shiloh come", refers to the Messiah's (Jesus) second coming. This prophecy of the "gathering of the people" has not taken place yet because Jesus has not yet returned the second time. The Levites taught the Law of God to the tribe of Judah as well as the other tribes, but the tribe of Judah as scripture plainly reveals was the tribe chosen to preserve the Law for all succeeding generations.

They alone have the authority to proclaim the Holy Day dates of God's Feasts. All other "Holy Day calendars" are unauthorized man made calendars. Note also: Psalms 60:7 Gilead is mine, and Manasseh is mine; Ephraim also is the strength of mine head; **Judah is my lawgiver;** Rom. 3:1 **What advantage then hath the Jew?** or what profit is there of circumcision? (v 2) Much every way: chiefly, **because that unto them were committed the oracles** (Strong's Ref. #3051: Romanized logion, Pronounced log'-ee-on; neuter of GSN3052; **an utterance (of God): KJV--oracle) of God.**

Next question: Which sect of the Jews are given that authority? The answer is found in Mat. 23:1-3. "Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples, (v 2) Saying, **The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat:** (v 3) **All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do;** but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not." [It should be noted here that scribes were Levites] II Chr. 34:13 Also they were over the bearers of burdens, and were overseers of all that wrought the work in any manner of service: **and of the Levites there were scribes,** and officers, and porters. No where is that said of the sect of the Jews called Sadducees and they kept a Sunday Pentecost as do the Karaite Jews today who trace their origins back to the Sadducees. The Pharisees in Jesus time kept a Sivan six Pentecost, which on the Hebrew Calendar can be on other days of the week besides Sunday or Monday.

Many will argue this point and the objections are long and wide. One thing to

**Continued on page 18**

**THE MESSAGE BOARD (ADS & INFO) --**

[newsletter-only-darwin-laura@earthlink.net](mailto:newsletter-only-darwin-laura@earthlink.net)

**SABBATH SCHEDULE--BISMARCK, NORTH DAKOTA**

- August 19, 2006**----Teaching the Law-- Lesson #136 & Lesson #137
- August 26, 2006**----Open for Hosting--Please Sign Up
- September 2, 2006**----Teaching the Law-- Lesson #138 & Lesson #139
- September 9, 2006**----Open for Hosting--Please Sign Up
- September 16, 2006**----Teaching the Law-- Lesson #140 & Lesson #141
- September 22, 2006**----Bible Study
- September 23, 2006**----Feast of Trumpets (See Ad)
- September 30, 2006**----Teaching the Law-- Lesson #142 & Lesson #143
- October 2, 2006**----Day of Atonement (See Ad)
- October 7, 2006**----Feast of Tabernacles (No Services)
- October 14, 2006**----Feast of Tabernacles (No Services)
- October 21, 2006**----Open for Hosting--Please Sign Up
- October 28, 2006**----Teaching the Law-- Lesson #144 & Lesson #145
- November 3, 2006**----Bible Study
- November 4, 2006**----Open for Hosting--Please Sign Up
- November 11, 2006**----Teaching the Law-- Lesson #146 & Lesson #147

If you want to host Sabbath Services and need 2 Sabbaths in a row for your presentation and/or would like to have your presentation listed on our Sabbath Schedule in our newsletter which is sent out to the public, the next deadline for that would be: October 15, 2006. On those Sabbaths of Open Hosting where no one signs up, we will just play a cassette tape by any of various speakers. All Sabbath Services are Hosted by Darwin & Laura Lee unless otherwise stated.

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**SABBATH SERVICES**

Every Saturday at 2:00 PM at 320 N. Griffin St., Bismarck, North Dakota (701) 258-7172  
Gate Open at 1:00 PM for Fellowship

\*\*\*\*\*  
**BIBLE STUDY**

Every 6 weeks on Friday at 8:00 PM at 320 N. Griffin St., Bismarck, North Dakota (701) 258-7172  
Gate Open at 6:30 PM Fellowship and Pot Luck Meal (Bring Food)

**FEAST OF TRUMPETS--SEPTEMBER 23, 2006**

Come join us at 2:00 PM at 320 N. Griffin St. in Bismarck, North Dakota (Fellowship starts at 1:00 PM)

Join us for a 5:00 PM meal at: Perkins Family Restaurant (Expressway Avenue) in Bismarck, North Dakota

**ATONEMENT--OCTOBER 2, 2006**

Come join us at 2:00 PM at 320 N. Griffin St. in Bismarck, North Dakota (Fellowship starts at 1:00 PM)

Join us for a meal at sunset at: Bonanza Family Restaurant in Mandan, North Dakota

**One Man's Opinion**

by Howard Bruce  
(Glendale, Arizona)

The Bible says we must be like the Bereans and search the scriptures daily, so I Howard F. Bruce, will take that advice and search the articles in the current **Journal** for Jan. 31, 2006. Dorothy, my wife, and I really need **The Journal** and have been subscribers a long time. Way back when John Robinson

was in charge of **The Journal**. We know that Dixon Cartwright is a member of the United Church. Many years ago Lois Chapman told me he is an honest man, he prints all sides, we agree, so this is not an article to bad mouth the editor of **The Journal**. So lets go to page 1, a photo of our friend Ron Dart, a man of God. We purchased his book, "The Lonely God". I have not read it yet as my wife is reading it. We are on Darts mailing list and play his tapes now and then, as we are independent, we play the good tapes, I preview a tape before I play it at a Sabbath

service. Then a photo of Gerald Flurry. I am not a Flurry person. We also read the Feast report, was surprised to read about Harold Cormony and son Jeff. I did not know Jeff was a church member. Then Wayne Cole, our friend from Oregon We met Wayne Cole at PhD. David Antion's Group, where we kept part of the Feast. The music was wonderful and great sermons. How sweet it was! We plan another visit there. On page 3 a photo of Ken Westby, we disagree with him and Buzzard 100% years ago. Tony told me he does not keep the 7th day

Sabbath. Does he like popes who think they can change scripture? He should read Foxes book of martyrs. Next a story by Havir on John Robinson, we read David Robinson's book "The Tangled Web" a book that tells it like it was. By the way we recently reread John Tufts book on the Worldwide Church of God. John you are a saint. Now I must say a word or two for several of our friends, Garner Ted, David Jon Hill, and Albert J. Portune, they are the ones that changed my life. I never heard of the holy days until we became members of the Worldwide Church of God, in the 60's. Also on this page, Brian Knowles, a great writer, he sent me his book you all should read it. On page 8 another deal from a former friend in Oregon, Arlen Berkey. He still calls Herbert W. Armstrong, an apostle, oh well! Then on page 10-I I a too long article by Patriots of the Kingdom from Canada, will read it later. Of course an open letter by Don Billingsley on page 12 again we do not believe Herbert W. Armstrong was an Apostle we read his book "The Mystery of the Ages", a lot written by his son Garner Ted Armstrong. So on page 13 I read "Final Prophecy", this writer did not impress me. Page 15 another long article by Art Mocarow another supporter of Herbert W. Armstrong. On page 16 over and over an article, we must seek outside info on how to have a happy love life, not for me we have been married since 1947, that should answer that! Here we go again, "One God" by Tony Buzzard. How do you help new converts when so many do not believe the Bible. I turn the page, an interesting article by Dr. Sam Bacchiocchi. We met and interviewed him at the Church of God 7th Day when Elder Ray Straub was the leader, a great man, Dr. Sam Bacchiocchi, but not a great speaker, I do not agree with all his ideas. He said he was a friend of Garner Ted. So that covers the high lights of this edition of The Journal. My advise, take these anti God Articles with a grain of salt seek honest true advice from men like Ron Dart and Keith Slough. How sweet it is Amen.

\*\*\*THE END\*\*\*\*\*

# Snowboarding for Jesus

Sent by Jeffrey Caldwell (San Jose, California)

My Pastor sent me this, don't know where he got it...

This is a story about snowboarding, Jesus and a rebel who stood up for what she believed even when her Olympic dream ended in tears.

Kelly Clark won't change your tastes in religion or sports, two devout American passions highly flammable when mixed.

But Clark might make you think again about the definition of a rebel.

Every culture has its protocol, even a culture as radical as snowboarding.

Clark follows her heart, not the rules.

The status quo in boarding is baggy pants, amped athletes and rock music banging so loud at the stadium that eardrums bleed. It's totally awesome.

Hannah Teter, an American who rides in beautiful defiance of gravity and talks like Jeff Spicoli from "Fast Times at Ridgemont High," won gold Monday at the Winter Games, then gave her home state a hippy-dippy shout out: "I just wanted to totally represent. It's the syrup. Vermont maple syrup."

So imagine the double-takes when, after finishing a disappointing fourth place in the finals, Clark said: "I love Jesus. It's more joyful knowing him than all that snowboarding stuff. And so being able to snowboard for him is amazing."

Sports sermons make a lot of people more squeamish than all the nose rings and tattoos sliding down the mountain on a board. Do Jesus, Buddha or any of the great religious prophets really care which competitor lands a backside 540 in the pipe?

We've all seen a major-league hitter point to heaven after smacking a home run, and I confess it makes me a little uncomfortable about whom the slugger thinks is keeping score.

Expressing something as personal as faith on a world stage as big as the Winter Games can be risky business. But I admire Clark for having the guts to do it.

Especially when the new Olympic motto is: citius, altius, sponsorship. The Games are all about the money. The marketplace of ideas can be limited to ridiculous extremes.

For example: Deals with corporate partners have grown so sacred that I watched as an Olympic watchdog at the snowboard venue chastised a journalist for drinking Italian bottled water and demanded the offending label be removed out of respect

for the official beverage supplier.

At the recent X Games in Colorado, where Clark was a champion, her board was adorned with "Jesus" in large script letters captured by ESPN cameras. Such ostentatious displays of personal agendas are not seen during Olympic competition, where the names held holy include Coca-Cola, Kodak and Visa.

While the happy story will be told of how these wild-and-crazy shredders have dragged the Games kicking and screaming into the 21st century, silver medalist Gretchen Bleiler spoke the whole truth when suggesting her sport had gone as mainstream as Google since she watched grandmothers in a beauty parlor back home beam with red, white and blue pride over a medal sweep by the American guys at Salt Lake City four years ago.

The tricks female athletes can stick are as hot and caffeinated as a double espresso, but as she dropped in the pipe with the bubble punk beats of Green Day thumping from the stadium speakers, Bleiler played the role of typical snowboarding diva to the hilt, performing to the uniform code of extreme sports. Big air. Big noise.

Needing the best ride of her 22-year-old life to duplicate the gold-medal run at the 2002 Winter Games, however, Clark did something that shredded every stereotype of snowboarding. She rode accompanied by music so peaceful as to be disquieting for a sport whose musical god is Nirvana.

"It was 'O Praise Him' by David Crowder," said Clark, determined to spread the gospel in a sporting venue known more for getting your ya-yas out.

The definition of rebel is going where nobody else in the crowd dares.

And Clark put herself way out there during the finals, flying higher than any other female boarder in the world. Her last move was a risky, jaw-dropping, 900-degree spin. It was the big ending she had been planning for months.

"Hit it, and she wins gold. No doubt," said Rick Bower, coach of a group of elite boarders known as The Collection.

In any leap of faith, the landing is the tricky part. Clark wobbled badly at touchdown. That single, crucial mistake bounced her to fourth place. No medal. Tears poured down her face. With tenderness, U.S. teammate Bleiler wiped them away.

"No regrets," Clark said. "I put it all on the line. It's just who I am."

Even if you're not drinking what Clark is selling, you've got to admit, it's stronger stuff than bottled water.

\*\*\*THE END\*\*\*\*\*

HAVE A REALLY GREAT FEAST!

## PRAYER REQUESTS & UPDATES

PrayerRequestsAndUpdates @darwinlauralee.com

### July 2006

- Carl---Blood in Urine
Collins, Steven---His Dad has Cancer
Laun, Eileen---Stroke
Lazor, PF---Dehydrated
Lopez, Josue--Health
Swinney, Carolyn--Many Health Problems
Wells, Eliana--Seizure

### August 2006

- Croyle, Alan--Son had an accident

# Church of God Memorial: Remembering Family and Friends

Sent by Dixon Cartwright  
(Big Sandy, Texas)

The Journal: News of the Churches of God

Web site update - July 2006

NEW SECTION!

COG Memorial: Remembering Family and Friends

<http://www.thejournal.org/memorial/main.html>

We've added a NEW section dedicated to the memory of brethren that have passed away.

Listing more than 830 names, this special part of the site also contains dedicated Web pages on: Dean Blackwell, Buck and Pearl Hammer, David John Hill, Jack Hines, Herman Hoeh, Lon Lacey, Ernest Martin, Stanley Rader, Jim Rector, E.B. Vance, Gerald Waterhouse, Linda Hardy White and many others.

\*\*\*THE END\*\*\*\*\*

## "Watch Sabbath Sentinel for Place of Safety Camp Ad"

by Alan Croyle  
(Emporia, Virginia)

Or Write: Morning Star, PO Box 7, Emporia, VA, 23847, for Details. Also "Mark of Beast" Information.

\*\*\*THE END\*\*\*\*\*

## True Words

Sent by Rich Daniels  
(Shawano, Wisconsin)

As we grow up, we learn that even the one person that wasn't supposed to ever let you down probably will. You will have your heart broken probably more than once and

it's harder every time. You'll break hearts too, so remember how it felt when yours was broken. You'll fight with your best friend. You'll blame a new love for things an old one did. You'll cry because time is passing too fast, and you'll eventually lose someone you love. So take too many pictures, laugh too much, and love like you've never been hurt because every sixty seconds you spend upset is a minute of happiness you'll never get back.

Don't be afraid that your life will end, be afraid that it will never begin.

~anonymous~

\*\*\*THE END\*\*\*\*\*

## "It's All About Freedom"

by Jacques Gauvin  
(Canada)

Is the title of my latest article and it can be found at [www.jacquesgauvin.com](http://www.jacquesgauvin.com). I have been hosting a religious based website for about eight years producing about an article a month. I try to keep my articles Biblically sound and for a whole family audience. Please take the time to check it out.

\*\*\*THE END\*\*\*\*\*

### *A personal prayer to God from an American who is deeply concerned for the country.*

## My Prayer For America

by Richard Markland  
(Covington, Ohio)  
(c) 2006 By Richard Markland

God, I am really bothered today. I have a lot on my mind and feel deeply about what is happening around me. It's hard to express my thoughts out loud, so I've decided to write a letter to You. I know I don't have to use fancy words when I speak to You. Sometimes, I am just tired of what I see and so I've decided to share my personal feelings with You today.

What has happened to this country? You have given America to us without asking for anything in return, except obedience. How many people are thankful for what You have done, let alone acknowledge Your existence? How many people really understand how fortunate they are to have so much?

I feel like a round peg in a square hole. I

see so many things wrong with how we are living. To speak out is not popular. People scoff and jeer at anyone who doesn't accept the way things are. To be realistic, is viewed as being negative. The more I see people sneer in disbelief at what I say, the more I want to scream at the top of my lungs for the madness to stop. I know there are others who feel the same way I do, but I can only speak for myself at this time.

Everyone is in a hurry and caught up in a rat race that doesn't allow time for You. There aren't enough hours in a day. Stress is a killer, but people never take the time to see how much it is killing them.

I have learned to appreciate personal freedoms because I now enjoy fewer of them. I am constantly reminded of how this government must protect me from my enemies. It has become the false god so many people worship. We are told that our leaders must protect us from those who hate us, but what about looking to You? To even mention this to people is the last thing anyone wants to hear, but You promise You will, if we will only ask.

I look at this country's leaders and they are completely out of touch. They simply don't care how I feel because they love power. They live in a world of make believe and don't have a clue how I am affected by what they are doing. The political system is a stench in Your nostrils. Bribes and favoritism are the games played without consequences for those who are willing to lie in order to achieve what they want. Truth no longer exists.

True justice is a matter of interpretation. The judicial system turns a blind eye away from the innocent and favors those who are guilty. There is so much corruption because of a moral cancer embedded within those who love power.

You are given the spiritual finger everyday by how we live. There is so much confusion within this country's churches. You have become a symbolic rabbit's foot for good luck by those who say they believe in You. You are only needed when we are facing a crisis such as 9-11, but we turn around and tell you to take a vacation and we will call You when needed.

People wonder where You are, but why would you interfere if the answers You provide are not what people want to hear?

God, I want to thank You for taking the time to listen to what I have to say today. I know that someday people will see You are the only answer. But, until then, I'll be writing more letters to You. Thanks for not turning a deaf ear. I just wish other people knew You like I do.

Your friend, Richard

\*\*\*THE END\*\*\*\*\*

## **Paint Israel Black: Jews to Lose Jerusalem**

**by David Ben-Ariel  
(Toledo, Ohio)**

Israel's rejection of their 1967 miracle will result in their loss of Jerusalem. Let Israel lower its flag and mourn and paint the country BLACK since Orange was crushed under "just following orders" soldiers doing their sworn enemies' dirty work....

The official Israeli rejection of their God-given victory, Six Day War victory will result in greater loss of life and the end of Jewish Jerusalem. With the abuse and perversion of Jewish troops (sworn to defend Jews and Israelis), engaged in the ethnic cleansing of Jews from biblical territories Providence once empowered them to liberate, their punishment will be a loss of miracles and the loss of Jerusalem and Israeli sovereignty! THE EU JACKBOOT WILL SOON STOMP JERUSALEM AND TRAMPLE ISRAEL!

General Sharon's illegitimate deployment of the Israeli Defense Forces to illegally force productive Jews from their loving homes and prosperous businesses (having turned that former desert region into a rose now shamefully abandoned to pricks - Numbers 33:55), not to secure Israel's future (having gambled it away to foreign investors and aliens with their eye on Jerusalem), but to bow before his German-Jesuit masters, has sold out Israel and invited the disaster of international troops to soon flood the Middle East as "peacekeepers."

more... <http://www.goarticles.com/cgi-bin/showa.cgi?C=63029>

\*\*\*THE END\*\*\*\*\*

## **About Communication**

**Sent by Jeffrey Caldwell  
(San Jose, California)**

In the possibility of being honest and faithful overcoming the default setting that says "I can't -- it's too much" -- to my friends, family and acquaintances, that you may accept and understand my conventions of letter writing: Conventions of form of letters I admire lend clarity to both senders and recipients. They begin with the sender's name and relationship to the recipient.

Paul's letters begin with his name [and that of co-authors, if any] and a statement of

relationship. Next comes the recipient designation, expressing relationship. James, Peter, John and Jude also follow this convention.

Then comes a theme statement. A theme statement helps everyone keep in mind the intention of the composition. The theme of Paul's letters is "grace and peace to you from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ".

Messages I admire end with a statement confirming they be received in the spirit in which they were sent. Paul's letters conclude on the note of "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you."

The same conventions of form were followed in the letter from King Artaxerxes given to Ezra, and in the letter from King Nebuchadnezzar to all people.

All are examples of effective communication.

May you be at peace if I choose to employ their time-honored conventions! And please feel quite free to employ their conventions with me!

\*\*\*THE END\*\*\*\*\*

## **A German Thought**

**Sent by Rich Daniels  
(Shawano, Wisconsin)**

If any of you still feel that this war on terror is a mistake, here is an opinion from an unexpected source. This is not a problem that is going to be easy to solve. It is the struggle to maintain our Western way of life and the very culture that has made it possible. Lose this one, and our grandchildren may be speaking Arabic, those of them that survive the "conversion". Look at what has been happening in Europe the last couple of weeks. For all practical purposes, they won Spain, Paris and are hitting on Holland and Belgium.

Better get serious, very, very serious!

It's fascinating that this should come out of Europe. Mathias Dapfner, Chief Executive of the huge German publisher Axel Springer AG, has written a blistering attack in DIE WELT, Germany's largest daily paper, against the timid reaction of Europe in the face of the Islamic threat. This is a must-read by all Americans. History will certify its correctness.

### **EUROPE - THY NAME IS COWARDICE**

(Commentary by Mathias Dapfner CEO, Axel Springer, AG)

A few days ago Henry Broder wrote in Welt am Sonntag, "**Europe - your family name is appeasement.**" It's a phrase you can't get out of your head because it's so

terribly true. Appeasement cost millions of Jews and non-Jews their lives, as England and France, allies at the time, negotiated and hesitated too long before they noticed that Hitler had to be fought, not bound to toothless agreements.

Appeasement legitimized and stabilized Communism in the Soviet Union, then East Germany, then all the rest of Eastern Europe, where for decades, inhuman suppressive, murderous governments were glorified as the ideologically correct alternative to all other possibilities.

Appeasement crippled Europe when genocide ran rampant in Kosovo, and even though we had absolute proof of ongoing mass-murder, we Europeans debated and debated, and were still debating when finally the Americans had to come from halfway around the world, into Europe yet again, and do our work for us.

Rather than protecting democracy in the Middle East, European Appeasement, camouflaged behind the fuzzy word "equidistance," now countenances suicide bombings in Israel by fundamentalist Palestinians.

Appeasement generates a mentality that allows Europe to ignore nearly 500,000 victims of Saddam's torture and murder machinery and, motivated by the self-righteousness of the peace movement, has the gall to issue bad grades to George Bush. Even as it is uncovered that the loudest critics of the American action in Iraq made illicit billions, no, TENS of billions, in the corrupt U.N. Oil-for-Food program.

And now we are faced with a particularly grotesque form of appeasement. How is Germany reacting to the escalating violence by Islamic Fundamentalists in Holland and elsewhere? **By suggesting that we really should have a "Muslim Holiday" in Germany?**

I wish I were joking, but I am not. A substantial fraction of our (German) Government, and if the polls are to be believed, the German people, actually believe that creating an Official State "Muslim Holiday" will somehow spare us from the wrath of the fanatical Islamists. One cannot help but recall Britain's Neville Chamberlain waving the laughable treaty signed by Adolph Hitler and declaring European "Peace in our time".

What else has to happen before the European public and its political leadership get it? There is a sort of crusade underway, an especially perfidious crusade consisting of systematic attacks by fanatic Muslims, focused on civilians, directed against our free, open Western societies, and intent upon Western Civilization's utter destruction.

It is a conflict that will most likely last

**Continued on page 18**