

The PLAIN TRUTH

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What Are the TIMES of the GENTILES?

Here is an amazing prophecy, which few understand, yet which explains the real meaning behind Russia's struggle for world dominion. It explains what's going to happen to our nation IN THE NEXT TWENTY YEARS!

by Herman L. Hoeh

ONE THIRD of the world is in slavery under Communist tyranny. Abject poverty engulfs a large portion of the rest of the world. There is something terribly wrong with the Gentile nations!

Why?

The answer to this chaotic condition is revealed in an amazing prophecy for our time. It is the "Times of the Gentiles."

Jesus' Amazing Prophecy

Let's notice Jesus' prophecy in Luke 21:24.

When speaking of the Jews, Jesus told his disciples that "they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations, and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until the *Times of the Gentiles* be fulfilled."

Notice that this prophecy is not speaking of a period of peace, but of *war*. It is a time when the Gentiles are conquering and destroying, when they are ruling themselves contrary to the way of God who is Creator and RULER.

Remember that one of the keys to understanding this prophecy and all prophecy is DUALITY. There is always a fore-runner which is a type of ANOTHER

FINAL GREAT FULFILLMENT. Jesus was speaking of the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. by the Roman legions as a type of *terrible world war* soon to surge through our United States. Even Palestine and Jerusalem will again be trodden down by Gentile armies until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.

Exactly what did Jesus mean by the times of the Gentiles?

When did they begin? How long will they last? When do they end?

Common Teachings in Error

It is the common assumption that the times of the Gentiles are a period of blessing on the nations. It is argued that since God took away *the blessing* of being great and dominant nations from Israel and Judah and since the Gentiles for centuries have been dominant nations, that human rule is a *blessing* bestowed upon the Gentiles.

Nothing could be further from the truth!

Then again, many claim that the times of the Gentiles are synonymous with the times of Judah's punishment, that the Gentile times have already ended—some say in 1914, others say in 1917 or 1936. Some even think that it might end this year. But all these *supposed* dates for the

ending of the times of the Gentiles are mere guesses!

The truth is that almost no one really knows what the times of the Gentiles are. And yet without an understanding of the meaning of this prophetic period, you *can not* grasp the real significance of present day world-shaking events or understand what's going to happen in the next twenty-five years. Let's not assume, let's *study the Bible itself* to see what these times really are.

Times of Israel's Punishment a Key to Understanding

Israel was promised great national blessings, including national greatness *if* they would obey God. But God also promised that if they obstinately refused to obey Him, if they refused to follow His laws and let Him rule their lives, then He would punish them for a period called *seven times* (Lev. 26).

The Bible itself defines this period of seven times for us. If you turn to Revelation the twelfth chapter, and compare verses 6 and 14 you will see that the word *time* in prophecy simply means a *year*, hence seven times would be seven years or 2520 days.

Now let's notice another key. In Numbers 14:34, God said Israel would bear

their inquiries in the wilderness after the number of days they searched the land of Canaan, forty days, *each day for a year.*

Then seven times or 2520 prophetic days would equal 2520 literal years! This period of seven times or 2520 years punishment did come upon Israel because they went their own ways and would not submit to the *rule of God*. Israel went into captivity about 721 B.C. and did not become a great people again until their times of punishment ceased about 1800 A.D. At that time the descendants of the ancient House of Israel—America and Britain and the democratic peoples of the world—began to rise to such wealth and power as the world has never enjoyed before—all because of the promises made to Abraham.

Also Palestine, after a punishment against the House of Judah, that began about 604 B.C., was brought back from the Gentile Turks in 1917—exactly 2520 years later, when it came under the control of Great Britain, and finally the Jews.

The seven times of Israel's *punishment* was a period of great privation and suffering, of slavery and war because they would not submit their wills and their ways to God, because they would not allow Him to rule their lives by His perfect laws, which could have brought them peace and prosperity and dominion.

The Original Prophecy Found in Daniel

Now that we understand the seven times punishment on Israel, let's understand the meaning of the times of the Gentiles.

The original prophecy to which Jesus had reference is found in the fourth chapter of Daniel. Jesus understood that this prophetic vision of the great tree had reference to the times of the Gentiles as well as to Nebuchadnezzar's literal punishment.

Notice Daniel 4:17. This striking vision was not only to teach Nebuchadnezzar that God rules, but it is also "to the intent that THE LIVING may know that the most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whom he will and sets over it the basest of men."

So the Bible itself interprets this prophecy to have reference not only to the king of Babylon in that day, but also to teach the living—*yes, all of the nations today—that God is Supreme Ruler.*

Now notice verses 20 and 22 of Daniel 4. The great tree represented the king. And what was to happen to him?

"Let his heart be changed from man's, and let a beast's heart be given him; and let seven times pass over him" (verse 16).

The king was to lose his understanding—to be cursed with insanity—he was

to act and think like a wild ravenous beast, *until* he learned that the Creator rules over the affairs of men, till he learned that the only way to peace and security is through *submission to the rule and laws* of God instead of yielding to lust and human pride.

But the world and its leaders have not yet learned this needed lesson. The nations today still devour one another in war like wild beasts as they struggle to gain world conquest.

The King Only a Type

Most of the misunderstanding about this important prophecy results from not realizing that the seven literal times or years that passed over King Nebuchadnezzar were a *type* of the seven prophetic times of punishment upon the Gentiles.

Now turn to Daniel 2, verses 38 and 39 where this is clearly explained. The king saw a great image composed of different metals and clay. The head of this image represented *the kingdom of Babylon*. Daniel tells King Nebuchadnezzar, "*Thou art this head of gold. And after thee shall arise another kingdom.*"

The divisions of the great image represented various kingdoms of the Babylonish system. Yet Daniel designated the first kingdom by its supreme dictatorial king Nebuchadnezzar. The king, then, was a type of the kingdom of Babylon, because he had absolute power. Also by comparing Daniel 7:17, 23 you will see that *king and kingdom are used synonymously.*

Remember that one of the punishments on the king was that his heart should be changed "from man's, and let a wild animal's heart be given him."

Have you ever noticed that Babylon, after it ceased conquering and when God began to deal with its leaders, *was also given the heart of a man?*

Read Daniel 7:4. It stood "upon the feet as a man, and a man's heart was given to it."

Now let's notice what happened. King Nebuchadnezzar had the *heart of a man* but because of his sins he was afterward punished seven literal years. The ancient Chaldean kingdom had the *heart of a man*—it ceased to attack, conquer and destroy other nations—but because Babylon continued to sin and live contrary to God's ways *it was punished for seven prophetic years or 2520 literal years.*

Notice how the type is being fulfilled in the antitype. King Nebuchadnezzar because of his stubborn refusal to submit to the rule of God—the only way that would have brought him peace of mind and satisfaction—was punished seven years by having his mind changed to that of a wild animal—*until* he learned that God ruled. He was *de-throned* and lived among the wild beasts.

In like manner, the Chaldean Empire,

of which he was a type, was defeated and *its dominion was taken from it*. But just as Nebuchadnezzar continued to live like a wild beast, so the *Babylonish system* has continued with leaders having the minds of wild beasts. The Persians, Greeks, Romans—Europeans even to the days of Hitler and Mussolini—have all been cursed with leaders who think and act like wild animals, *leaders who glory in war and conquest.*

Not one of the beasts, which followed the Chaldean Empire as described in Daniel 7, was given a man's heart. They all were like ferocious wild animals—conquering, pillaging, destroying one another by intrigue, alliances and war.

Nebuchadnezzar was forced to live among the wild beasts *just as the successor nations of the Babylonish system have had to fight and struggle constantly against other Gentile nations WHO ARE ALSO CURSED WITH THE SAME MIND—THE SAME DESIRES TO CONQUER AND RULE THE WORLD.* That is why the Babylonish system under Hitler and Mussolini struggled against Russia. And that is why Russia today is plotting to rule the world by intrigue and stealth and lying and deception. *The leaders of Russia think and act like cunning wild beasts.*

The ancient Chaldean Empire would not submit to God's rule and ways but wanted to rule its own way—the *greatest curse* that could happen to any nation. *As a punishment* God has allowed even to this very day the Gentile nations *to rule themselves* until they learn that only His ways are right and that He rules in the kingdoms of men. Just as Nebuchadnezzar finally regained his right mind and acknowledged God's authority, so the Gentile nations when their punishment is over, will come up to the kingdom of God and ask to learn of his ways (Micah 4:1-3) so that they also may become begotten and finally born into His kingdom as members of the ruling family of God.

What GOOD NEWS there is ahead!

Amazing Prophecy for Today!

Notice how present day events are explained by this prophecy.

All nations have been made drunk with the false teachings of the Babylonish system that has gripped this world for thousands of years until this world has become *so confused and divided* that people don't know which way to turn (Rev. 18:3).

Russia is seeking to conquer and rule the world. Millions in Asia are turning to communism as their last desperate hope. In our own land more people than ever before are becoming interested in religion—but they don't know which is the true church in this Babylon of reli-

(Please continue on page 10)

SPIRITISM

Fraud . . . or Fact?

**Can men actually communicate with departed spirits?
What about the witch of Endor? What does the Bible
say of Spiritism?**

by Herbert W. Armstrong

IS THERE anything to *Spiritism*?

Granted there is trickery and deception. Houdini, one of the greatest trick-artists of modern times, exposed numerous frauds. So also have Thurston, Walsh, Gearson and many another. Some leading Spiritists have been convicted of "plain dishonesty" or "common fraud" and imprisoned.

Yet not all Spiritism is fraud or slight of hand!

When all the fraudulent phenomena, the tricks, the deceptions are carefully and scientifically sifted out, there remains something to be accounted for—some *real* SUPERNATURAL EVENTS that cannot be explained away!

Wicked Spirits in Control

Whether or not human beings like to admit it, the Bible plainly teaches that *supernatural powers control and operate this world*. The apostle Paul was inspired to write that human beings must struggle "against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against *wicked spirits* in high places" (Ephesians 6:12, marg. reading).

Jesus Christ never contested Satan's claim that all the nations of the world were his. Said Satan: "All this *power*"—the control of the nations—"will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it. If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine" (Luke 4:6-7).

Little wonder, then, that Spiritism should be manifest in a world controlled and operated by wicked spirits in high places!

Modern Spiritism had its birth at Hydesville, New York, in 1848. It began with the famous Rochester knockings heard by the Fox sisters. Within less than a century Spiritism has obtained millions of followers. It is a RELIGION masquerading under the name of Christianity.

Spiritism is based on the devil's first recorded lie! The devil has continued to deceive millions into believing that the dead can *talk* with the living!

The Dead Cannot Talk with the Living!

Notice what Jesus said about the dead, "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are *in the graves* SHALL HEAR his voice, and shall come forth . . . unto the resurrection" (John 5:28-29).

The dead *cannot* communicate with the living!

But the DEVIL must perpetuate his lie! He must make it *appear* that the dead can communicate with the living. That is why the manifestations of Spiritism exist—to perpetuate a lie!

Spiritism is a work of DARKNESS! Paul warns us: "Have NO FELLOWSHIP with the unfruitful works of DARKNESS, but rather reprove them" (Eph. 5:11). Millions of dollars have been filched from unthinking people who have lost loved ones and who have sought to contact them in the DARKNESS of Spiritist seances. GOD's blessings come "without money and without price." But it *costs money* to fellowship Spiritism's DARKNESS!

Extorting money from innocent victims on behalf of the *dead* is a RACKET ALMOST SIX THOUSAND YEARS OLD! The racket is controlled by Satan the devil. Spiritism, however, is not its only form. This racket even manifests itself in powerful denominations. Sorrowing relatives are asked to *pay* to relieve their loved ones from suffering supposedly occurring on the other side of death!

Two Kinds of Angels

Since not all Spiritism is trickery—and since the dead CANNOT communicate with the living, then what power *causes* the phenomena of Spiritism?

Remember that this world is controlled by SUPERNATURAL SPIRIT POWERS. Satan is called the *prince of this world* in three distinct Scriptures—John 12:31, 14:30 and 16:11. He is the *god of this age* whom the world worships in ignorance! Paul said, ". . . the *god of this world* (or "age") hath blinded

the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them" (II Cor. 4:4).

The Bible reveals that there are only *two* classes of spirit beings created by God. Man is NOT spirit. He is mortal flesh. Paul wrote of man: "For this corruptible must *put on* incorruption, and this *mortal* must put on immortality" (I Cor. 15:53).

Here are the two classes of spirits:

1) *Obedient angels* of God. Paul wrote: "But to which of the angels did He say at any time: Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool? Are they not all ministering *spirits*, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" (Heb. 1:13-14). Obedient angels are *spirits* sent to minister to mortal, fleshly human beings who are heirs to salvation—*heirs* to immortality!

2) Demons or fallen angels, subject to the princely authority of Satan the devil. Satan is the "prince of demons" (Mark 3:22). We read of Satan and his angels in Revelation 12:9: "And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and *his angels* were cast out with him." The apostle Peter wrote of them: "For if God spared not the *angels* that *sinned*, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment" (II Peter 2:4).

The two classes of created spirit beings are both angels. The only difference is that one class is obedient, the other class DISOBEDIENT.

The spirits manifesting themselves through Spiritism are of the second class—WICKED spirits.

Cause of Demon-Possession

The demons manifest their powers in various ways—sometimes in the *darkness* of Spiritist seances, sometimes through possessing the mental and physical attributes of human beings. This lat-

ter form is often termed "demon possession." There are several interesting cases recorded in the Bible. Turn to Acts 16:16-18 and notice one example:

"And it came to pass, as we went to prayer, a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by sooth-saying: The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which show unto us the way of salvation. And this did she many days. But Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the *spirit*, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the same hour."

Notice that evil spirits can possess the mental and vocal faculties of human beings. They *impersonate* or *pretend* that they are human beings. They often manifest their powers in connection with religion to deceive innocent victims—or to bring reproach upon the name of God by their misconduct, as in the example in Acts 16.

In other instances they utilize human faculties in a violent manner. Institutions for the insane are filled with helpless human beings possessed with spirits of violence. Notice the example found in Matthew 8:28-33:

"And when he [Jesus] was come to the other side into the country of the Gergesenes, there met him two possessed with *demons*"—the King James Version incorrectly uses the word "devils"—"coming out of the tombs, *exceeding fierce*, so that no man might pass by that way. And, behold, they cried out, saying, What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? art thou come hither to torment us before the time? And there was a good way off from them an herd of many swine feeding. So the demons besought him, saying, If thou cast us out, suffer us to go away into the herd of swine. And he said unto them, Go. And when they were come out, they went into the herd of swine: and, behold—the whole herd of swine ran violently down a steep place into the sea, and perished in the waters."

Here is an example of the power of evil spirits—the very evil spirits *impersonating* lost loved ones in Spiritist seances!

Spiritism Condemned in Bible

God condemned Spiritism centuries ago. Here are His words: "Regard not them that have familiar spirits, neither seek after wizards, to be defiled by them: I am the Lord your God" (Lev. 19:31).

A *familiar spirit* is a particular spirit who associates itself with a Spiritist medium who is usually a woman. A familiar spirit is often called a "guide" because it guides or controls the seance for the medium. A *wizard* is a male human

being who acts as an instrument of wicked spirits. In this verse in Leviticus, God warns His people not to *attribute divine power* to women or men who act as slaves of evil spirits nor to regard what they say. We are to regard what God says and to attribute power to HIM! He is the Eternal your God!

Again, notice, God's condemnation of Spiritism in Deut. 18:9-12:

"When thou art come into the land which the Eternal thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not learn to do after the abominations of those nations. There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth *divination*, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a *witch*, or a charmer, or a *consulter of familiar spirits*, or a *wizard*, or a *necromancer*. For all that do these things are an ABOMINATION unto the Eternal: and because of these ABOMINATIONS the Eternal thy God doth drive them [the Gentiles] out from before thee."

Spiritism is an ABOMINATION to God. He drove out the Gentiles in the days of Joshua for permitting Spiritism. And the same punishment is coming upon our nations for permitting Spiritism and its kindred arts to flourish!

Notice that God condemns the witch—a woman who pretends to contact the "spirit" of a beloved one who has recently died—and a *consulter of familiar spirits*—usually a woman who contacts a particular spirit for information—and a *wizard* and a *necromancer*—one who professes to predict the future by the art of communicating with the dead.

These are all forms of Spiritism. All these forms are *condemned* by God Almighty. Spiritism is *evil*. It is a direct instrumentality of the DEVIL. Because it is so evil, God condemns those who practice Spiritism and those who seek to contact the dead in its seances! God means business. It is a question of following Spiritism and rejecting eternal life or of rejecting Spiritism and obeying God in order to receive eternal life. Spiritism perpetuates the devil's lie that the dead are not really dead. God says we must come to HIM to OBTAIN eternal life: "For the wages of sin is DEATH; but the *gift* of God is *eternal life* through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 6:23).

Spiritism is condemned as one of the products of *human carnality*—as a fruit of the flesh. Paul wrote: "Now the works of the flesh are *manifest*, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, WITCHCRAFT, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: OF THE WHICH I TELL YOU BEFORE, AS I HAVE ALSO TOLD YOU IN TIME PAST, THAT THEY WHICH DO SUCH THINGS

SHALL NOT INHERIT THE KINGDOM OF GOD" (Galatians 5:19-21).

Saul's Experience with a Witch

One of the most noted portions of scripture—yet one of the *least* understood—is the case of Saul and the witch at Endor. This story is found in I Samuel 28. Notice verse 3 of this chapter: "Now *Samuel was dead*, and all Israel had lamented him, and BURIED HIM IN RAMAH, even in his own city."

Notice that Samuel was dead and buried. He was *not* alive.

Continuing, "And Saul had put away those that had familiar spirits, and the wizards, out of the land. And the Philistines gathered themselves together . . . and when Saul saw the host of the Philistines, he was afraid, and his heart greatly trembled. And when Saul inquired of the Eternal, the Eternal ANSWERED HIM NOT, neither by dreams, nor by Urim [through the high priest], nor by prophets" (Verse 6).

God would *not* listen to Saul. Saul had been disobedient. Samuel had been inspired to tell Saul: "For rebellion is as the *sin of witchcraft*" (I Sam. 15:23).

What did Saul do? "Then said Saul unto his servants, Seek me a *woman* that hath a *familiar spirit*, that I may go to her, and inquire of her. And his servants said to him, Behold, there is a woman that hath a familiar spirit at Endor" (Verse 7).

Remember that Samuel was buried in Ramah, located in the territory belonging to the tribe of Ephraim (I Sam. 1:1, 19). But the Philistines and Saul were now near Lake Galilee, in Mount Gilboa, near Endor—about 50 miles from the place in which Samuel was buried. The night before the battle "Saul disguised himself, and put on other raiment, and he went, and two men with him, and they came to the woman by night: and he said, I pray thee, divine unto me by the familiar spirit, and bring me him up, whom I shall name unto thee" (Verse 8).

Saul sinned by seeking a witch. If God would not answer Saul by a prophet because of Saul's disobedience in government administration, how much more would God *refuse to answer Saul by a prophet* when Saul seeks to a witch! Remember that Samuel was a *prophet* (Acts 13:20) and a *judge* (I Sam. 7:6, 15-17). And God would *not* use a prophet to answer Saul! In other words, God would *not* use Samuel the prophet to answer Saul; neither would God use any other means, for that matter. God absolutely refused to listen to Saul because of his rebellious attitude.

The Spirit Masquerades as Samuel

But notice what happened: "Then said (Please continue on page 11)

WHY So Many Religious Denominations?

Is Christ divided? There are more than 250 main denominations in America—and other hundreds of little groups and sects. WHY? When did this confusion originate?

by Herman L. Hoeh

IT'S HARD to believe, but it's TRUE! The actual *facts* of history—both Biblical and secular—are astonishing!

It's time we looked behind this curtain! It's time you *knew* how, when, and where all this religious babylon started. The truth will come as a shock!

Every thinking person—every denomination—realizes that, at some time in history, there has been a great apostasy or falling away from original TRUTH. Protestants and Catholics may dispute the *time* of its occurrence, but they know that it happened!

Only One Church

Jesus Christ did not found *many denominations*! Christ said, "I will build my Church." *He did build it!* ONE Church, commissioned to preach and to publish His Gospel—the very Message He brought from God—to all the world!

But what do we find today? Hundreds of different and disagreeing churches, all founded by MEN, each *professing* to teach the truth, yet contradicting and disagreeing with all the others—a modern religious babylon!

The Church in Prophecy

Surprise number one, for most people today, is this:

While most people today suppose that the true CHURCH was rapidly to grow BIG, to become a powerful organization, exerting powerful influence on the world, making this a better world, becoming the stabilizing influence of the world's civilization, actually *Christ founded His Church for no such purpose!*

Christ's instruction to His Church, thru the New Testament, was NOT to participate in this world's politics and affairs in an effort to make *this world* a better world. Instead, His command to His Church is, "*Come out from among them, and be ye separate.*"

In His final prayer for His ONE Church, Jesus prayed: "I pray for *them*: I pray *not* for the world . . . Holy Father, keep *through thine own name* those whom thou hast given me, *that they may be ONE*, as we are. I have given them thy

word, and *the world hateth them*, because *they are not OF the world*, even as I am not OF the world. I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. *They are not OF the world*, even as I am not OF the world" (John 17:9-16).

Jesus did command HIS BODY—the collective Body thru which the Spirit of God does the WORK of God—to go *into* all the world and preach and publish His Gospel. But those of His Church are described as being strangers and foreigners in this world—AMBASSADORS for Christ—ambassadors representing HIS Kingdom which is *foreign* to this world—yet never being OF the world!

To Be Scattered

This true Church of God was to be PERSECUTED—SCATTERED! "If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you," said Jesus to His disciples (John 15:20). "ALL that will live godly in Christ Jesus *shall suffer persecution*" (II Tim. 3:12).

On the night Jesus was siezed to be crucified, He said: "It is written, 'I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered'" (Mark 14:27). After HE, the Shepherd, was crucified, the "sheep,"—His CHURCH—were to become *scattered*! Previously, that same evening, Jesus had said to His disciples: "Ye shall be *scattered*" (John 16:32).

This persecution and scattering began early. Notice Acts 8:1: "And at that time there was a *great persecution against the Church* which was at Jerusalem; and *they were all scattered abroad* throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles."

The prophet Ezekiel foretold this scattering—chapter 34. Daniel foretold it: "When he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the *holy people* (Church), all these things shall be finished." That is, the end of the age! (Dan. 12:7).

Nowhere is there any prophecy that the One True Church should become great and powerful, exerting influence in this world. Rather, Jesus called it the "Little Flock." Despised, persecuted,

scattered BY the world—separate FROM the world! Scattered, but NEVER DIVIDED! Always ONE Church, speaking the SAME thing—*never* many differing sects!

You haven't read much of the history of THAT Church! Even the historians never knew where to look for the TRUE Church—for they didn't even know WHAT the True Church *is*!

WORLD'S Churches Deceived

On the other hand, in the WORLD, all the prophecies foretold apostasy, deception, counterfeit "Christianity," and division.

Jesus foretold the very *first* event to come on the world—GREAT DECEPTION—climaxing, in *our* day now just ahead, in GREAT TRIBULATION!

"Take heed," He said, "that no man deceive you. For MANY shall come *in my name*, saying I am Christ; and shall *deceive MANY*!" (Mat. 24:4, 5).

Notice carefully! It was not the *few* who were to be DECEIVED—but the MANY. It was the FEW who were to become true Christians!

Jesus had pictured this same condition, when He said: "Wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and MANY there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto LIFE, and FEW there be that find it" (Mat. 7:13-14).

That isn't what the world believes, is it? Probably that isn't what *you* have always heard, and come to assume. But it's what CHRIST SAID! How deceived this world has become!

Satan is pictured in the Bible as the god of this world. He appears, *not* as a devil, but as a GOD—as an angel of LIGHT. And in Rev. 12:9, you read of "Satan, which *deceiveth* the WHOLE WORLD."

Yes, the MANY would come *in Jesus' name*, proclaiming that Jesus is the Christ—yes, preaching CHRIST to the world!—and yet, actually DECEIVING the world!

Clever Counterfeit

ASTOUNDING? Of course it is! Hard to believe? Yes, but it's TRUE! How?

The PLAIN TRUTH

A magazine of understanding.

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Simply by preaching about the PERSON of Christ—extolling His virtues, worshipping Him, yet denying His MESSAGE—His GOSPEL—by substituting pagan beliefs while preaching ABOUT Christ!

What a clever counterfeit! And many—perhaps most—of those so preaching in Christ's name are sincere—*themselves* deceived! It is SATAN who has deceived even *them*! It is SATAN who has made himself the GOD OF THIS WORLD—and thus is worshipped AS God. This world *doesn't* know the true God, strange as that may seem! This world believes that if one "accepts Christ"—"makes his decision for Christ"—"WORSHIPS Christ"—he is saved!

That's what many preach today! But what did JESUS preach? Did He say it was impossible to WORSHIP Him, and still be unsaved?

Listen! "In VAIN do they worship ME," said Christ, "teaching for doctrines the commandments of men . . . making the word of God of none effect through your tradition" (Mark 7:7, 13).

That's pretty hard to believe, isn't it? You've been so drugged, so poisoned, so deceived, by this world's deceptions—Satan's COUNTERFEITS—that even the words of CHRIST are pretty hard to believe! Well, GOD HELP YOU TO BELIEVE CHRIST! It's one thing to believe ON Christ—that is, in His Person—and something altogether different to BELIEVE CHRIST—to believe what He SAYS.

Yes, shocking tho it is, the overwhelming majority *have been deceived* by ministers who come in the name of Jesus Christ, proclaiming that Jesus is the Christ, but who teach a different Gospel and a different faith! They are those who, themselves being deceived from childhood, brought up in these deceptive beliefs, enter the ministry to earn a living, who choose it as their vocation or job, who decide to appoint *themselves*

as Christ's representatives, yet who were *not* called by Christ to be His ministers! They have hired themselves out to the people, and therefore must preach what the PEOPLE want to hear! They do *not* correct or reprove their congregations of the things JESUS taught and the BIBLE defines as SIN!

A Lesson to be Learned

The apostles, instructed directly by Jesus Christ, constantly warned the Church about the great departure from the FAITH that would *begin to occur at the close of their ministry*—not 1500 years later during the Protestant Reformation!

Scarcely twenty years after the crucifixion of Jesus, the apostle Paul, in one of his first inspired letters, cautioned Christians not to be deceived by false preaching, or by false letters purporting to be from the apostles. "Let no man deceive you by any means; for that day"—the time of God's intervention in human affairs when Jesus Christ will return to rule the nations—"shall not come except there come a *falling away* FIRST" (II Thess. 2:3).

The wholesale departure of Christians from the truth was the FIRST event prophesied to befall the true Church. Yes, today's hundreds of denominations were prophesied. *God is allowing human beings to form their own churches, to learn by hard cruel experience, that every teaching contrary to the way of life revealed in Scripture will end in sorrow and death.* The world has not yet learned this lesson fully. The world doesn't want to receive the truth, but would rather be

lulled to sleep by false ministers who preach what the people want to hear.

Apostles Knew What Would Happen

In Acts 20:29-39, the teacher of the Gentiles explains *how* the apostacy would begin. He gathered the elders (ministers) of the church at Ephesus to deliver them a final message concerning their responsibility over the local congregations. "For," said Paul, "I *know this*,
(Please continue on page 14)

RADIO LOG

"The WORLD TOMORROW"

Herbert W. Armstrong analyzes today's news, with the prophecies of The WORLD TOMORROW!

TO THE U.S. & CANADA

WLS — Chicago — 890 on dial — 10:00 P.M., Mon. thru Fri., 8:30 Sunday night.

WWVA — Wheeling, W. Va.—1170 on dial—Sundays, 11:05 P.M. Eastern time. 10:15 P.M., Mon. thru Fri.

WRVA — Richmond, Va.—1140 on dial—Sundays, 11:05 P.M. Eastern time.

XELO — 800 on dial, every night, 9:00 P.M. Central Standard time. (8:00 P.M. Mountain Standard time.)

XEG — 1050 on dial, every night, 8:30 P.M. Central Standard time.

WKBB — Buffalo, N.Y. — 1520 on dial—Sundays, 8:00 P.M.

WXYZ — Detroit, Mich.—1270 on dial—Sundays, 12:30 P.M.

WCAE — Pittsburgh, Pa.—1250 on dial—4:00 P.M. Sundays.

KXOK — St. Louis—630 on dial—6:25 P.M. Sundays.

HEARD ON PACIFIC COAST

KGER — Los Angeles—1390 k.c.—12:30 P.M., Mon. thru Fri., 12 noon Saturday, 2 P.M. Sun.

KBLA — Burbank—1490 k.c.—7:30 A.M. daily. 9:30 A.M. Sunday.

KPDQ — Portland—800 on dial—8:30 A.M. daily.

KVI — Seattle-Tacoma—570, first on dial—10:30 P.M. every night.

TO ALL OF EUROPE

RADIO LUXEMBOURG—23:30 Mondays, Greenwich time

TO ASIA & AFRICA

RADIO CEYLON

Tuesday: 10:15-10:45 P.M. India-Pakistan Beam and Ceylon Beam.
Wednesday: 11:30-12:00 noon African Beam. 5:15-5:45 P.M. S.E. Asia Beam.

RADIO LOURENCO MARQUES
Saturday 10:00-10:30 P.M.

TV LOG

Herbert W. Armstrong reveals the startling significance behind today's world troubles with the prophecies of The WORLD TOMORROW!

EVERY SUNDAY:

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

WBKB, Channel 7—9:00 A.M.

LOS ANGELES, CALIF.

KTLA, Channel 5—10:30 P.M.

PORTLAND, OREGON

KLOR, Channel 12—9:30 P.M.

DENVER, COLORADO

KLZ, Channel 7—10:30 P.M.

TYLER, TEXAS

KLTV, Channel 7—10:45 P.M.

SAN FRANCISCO-STOCKTON, CALIF.

KOVR, Channel 13—10:30 P.M.

TEXARKANA, TEXAS

KCMC, Channel 6—10:30 P.M.

SEATTLE-TACOMA, WASH.

KTNT, Channel 11—10:30 P.M.

HUTCHINSON, KANSAS

KTVH, Channel 12—2:30 P.M.

KANSAS CITY

KMBC, Channel 9—10:30 P.M.

HOUSTON, TEXAS

KPRC, Channel 2—11:30 A.M.

Don't Let Television Become a Curse!

America is becoming addicted to a powerful habit-forming DRUG—putting Television to a wrong use! Perhaps YOU are being ensnared. Check up, and SEE!

by Garner Ted Armstrong

YOU LIVE in a society gone mad! Statesmen are worried. Scientists are frankly frightened!

They know monstrous technological developments are making it possible to *blow all human-kind to oblivion!* They know there are MAD-men in seats of absolute power, responsible to nobody—in the Kremlin, in China and other foreign aggressor nations—and it is in their power to lay waste *our* entire continent overnight, without warning!

And yet—in the face of the awesome possibilities of TOTAL WAR—our nation has gone to sleep! The lethargic, drowsy spirit of SLUMBER that is drugging the minds of *hundreds of thousands* makes them utterly OBLIVIOUS to the stark, terrifying DANGER they face!

Society's Dizzying Pace

In the modern world of such breath-taking scientific inventions—capable of imagination-defying destruction, the development of the society, and of its very foundation, *the family*, has not kept pace.

Increasingly more terrible weapons of hate and war have served to build a caloused resistance against *shock* in the minds of most "civilized" peoples. Our great grandparents would have been AWE-STRICKEN to see jet airplanes whipping across the skies at speeds faster than sound. But in this modern society, guided missiles, atom and hydrogen bombs, poisonous gases and *rumors of even more* POTENT weapons fail to disturb the self-satisfied complacency settling down like a blanket over a nation bent on PLEASURE-SEEKING!

Our people have found an avenue of escape. By *not thinking about it*, the average person somehow manages to convince himself that the reality *does not exist!*

Methods of Escape

The urgent demand of the senses seeking *satisfaction* has led society through a maze of amusements, so the aching *thirst* for diversion can be *temporarily* assuaged. Man has invented dozens of effective *blindfolds* against realism. First

came the novels of illicit love, hate and killing with their soothing visions of pseudo-situations designed to *entrance* the reader.

Then, in more modern times, came the motion pictures. The development of talking films swept the nation with a new era of entertainment like a rampaging prairie fire! The hundreds of *minor* diversions kept growing, too! The *individual* began inventing his *own* types of amusements. And the new home, the new automobile, the sports world, and the gambling, gaming and gay world of thousands of *night* clubs added their voices to the already deafening shout of "*enjoy yourself!*"

Idolatry from Afar

On the heels of the tremendous popularity of motion pictures came hundreds of fan clubs and movie magazines, as eager Americans devoured hungrily the false exterior details of their newfound idols—the movie stars. Thousands of Americans who couldn't have told you which end of the Bible contained the book of Revelation *could answer readily any question* about their movie favorites—with the height, weight, color of hair and eyes, personal habits, likes and dislikes and latest divorce and remarriage data.

Yes—Hollywood had captured the imagination of the nation.

Quick to catch the vision, the big commercial interests began cashing in by telling the public which kind of cigarette their personal idol smoked, or which type of hand cream, deodorant, hair set or soap lay handily in the house of their idol.

Idolatry from Closer Up

Then suddenly, a new craze began sweeping the nation. The invention of television had lowered the level of class entertainment. The factory workers, common laborers, farmers and pensioners could be co-owners, together with the appliance store, of a television set!

Hollywood was suddenly a lot closer! Now it was possible to bring America's

most popular form of entertainment *right into the living room!*

There were no cover charges, no nice suits and neckties required, no tipping of waiters, no standing in lines, and no tickets to buy. The truck driver and the millionaire sat in their respective homes and watched with fascinated interest the *same shows*.

No longer was it a matter of *week-end* pleasure-seeking! The glitter of self-satisfaction and sensual enjoyment could be had EVERY SINGLE DAY AND NIGHT for a small monthly payment.

Television began changing America's habits! The motion picture industry began fighting for survival. Hundreds of theatres closed—hundreds frantically lowered prices, cried for better movies, while hundreds more were seriously threatened. The movies fought back. They invented cinemascope, cinerama. They had technicolor.

In the midst of it all, the blank-minded citizen watched the giant industries combat each other in a duel for *his personal favor*. The horror of a world in turbulent revolution, about to plunge itself into one last gigantic eruption of war, could be *forgotten* for a while, as the pleasure-mad public continued to poke at itself whatever medium of temporary diversion and sensual thrill was available.

Millions of Americans are being LULLED TO DREAMLAND! Perhaps YOU are SOUND ASLEEP to the awful *reality* of world-shaking events around you! One of the major national listener-surveying organizations reported that during the month of February, the *average* television viewer sat hunched in front of the blazing parade of entertainment for almost SIX SOLID HOURS EVERY DAY.

THINK OF IT!

Addiction to a Drug

The *misuse* of television has blended itself into a diabolical DRUG! MILLIONS of people filled with the LUST of the flesh sit complacently before their glittering parades of nonsense as the big commercial interests shove dozens of products

at them—designed to further SATISFY THE SENSES!

The major TV sponsors represent the big tobacco, liquor and cosmetic companies, with every TV "commercial" aimed at PLEASING THE SELF!

Scientists have revealed that thousands of children—allowed to sit in ghoulishly deformed positions for HOURS and HOURS EVERY SINGLE DAY are actually becoming DEFORMED in their bodies from watching television! Many parents regard television as an excellent "automatic baby sitter!"

ANYTHING to ESCAPE their God-given responsibility of teaching, chastising and training their children! Yes—children who *should* be out in the fresh air and sunshine, building *up* their bodies, are allowed—even ENCOURAGED by their parents to sit for HOURS before a series of programs featuring ROBBERING, FIGHTING, ILLICIT LOVE, HATE, VIOLENCE AND MURDER—STUFFING their minds with absolute nonsense!

Scientists have warned the irresponsible parents of this nation of future generations acquiring pitiful *deformities* due to the abject STUPIDITY of *parents who allow their children to slump into bent-backed positions for hours watching television!*

Wrong Use

Television of itself is not a sin! It is the wrong *use* of television that is a sin!

Television could be one of the greatest BLESSINGS we have ever experienced. Used *rightly* in extreme MODERATION and depicting the *true values* of life, showing methods to IMPROVE our habits, our way of life—yes, used to impart the *knowledge of God* to a nation that has TOTALLY FORGOTTEN God—television could truly be a wonderful blessing.

But *think* for a moment. IS TV USED IN THIS WAY? DO children receive admonition, constructive and upbuilding EDUCATIONAL benefits from their hours of television watching? NO!

Instead they are swept through varying degrees of violence, hate and murder in make-believe situations—*filling* their innocent, undeveloped minds with a HAZE OF LETHARGY AND DROWSY UNREALITY!

The programs presented for the older viewers are concerned with useless panel shows, crazy, slapstick comedy and variety shows, murder mysteries and divorce, adultery, violence, and all kinds of vice. *There are very few programs on television devoted to upbuilding—to constructive thought!*

The few news programs and useful shows presented on TV are usually sponsored by the big tobacco, liquor and cosmetic interests—offering the same degrading products, *designed to please*

self and to satisfy the physical senses!

Does Television Have a Right Use?

Educators know the most effective single method of teaching is through the medium of both sound and sight *at the same time*. Television answers these requirements.

And now—God has opened the way for the RIGHT use of television to His work! You will be able to actually SEE and hear *simultaneously* Mr. Armstrong as he gives you FROM THE BIBLE the Plain TRUTH of God, and you can be taken into Mr. Armstrong's study *with* him—you can actually GO to Palestine, to Tyre and Sidon, to the far-flung corners of this earth—as the *World Tomorrow* program goes on television!

First, you'll see a picture of the magnificently landscaped Ambassador College campus, with a great, kingly LION lying peacefully on our campus by a lamb and a little girl! You'll SEE Mr. Armstrong as he opens the astounding PROPHECIES of the Bible to you. You'll see television being put to a use that is destined to CHANGE lives! Used RIGHTLY, this powerful medium of expression could be such a real BLESSING that mankind cannot grasp the tremendous *benefit* it could become.

But—the fact remains that television, in the main, is being used exactly CONTRARY to the way it should be! Instead of *building up*, enlightening, educating—television programs on the whole are designed to DESTROY, to DARKEN MINDS, giving MIS-EDUCATION to the innocently unaware viewers.

What Does God Say About Television?

God commands every Christian to COME OUT—to have NOTHING to DO WITH THIS WORLD! (James 4:4). Instead, thousands of professing Christians have found a new method of *bringing the ways of this world right into their living rooms!*

The protection offered by the CREATOR-RULER of this universe to those who really SEEK HIM comes from having DRAWN APART—having *separated* themselves from this present Babylonish world! (Rev. 18:4). Many people put their television sets ahead of the Almighty God! THIS WRONG USE OF TELEVISION IS AN ABOMINABLE IDOLATRY!

The real *hungering* and *thirsting* Christian who is eagerly trying to learn more of God's way of life will not have TIME to spend SIX HOURS A DAY—OR EVEN ONE HOUR A DAY—hunched in the gloomy darkness of his living room in avid admiration before his television set—soaking up the knowledge of THIS WORLD with its totally FALSE values—its WARPED and TWISTED WAYS OF

LIFE that are contrary to the commands of God!

God says, "If you then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above. . . . Set your affection on things above, NOT ON THINGS ON THE EARTH!" (Col. 3:1-2). Are you thinking of *spiritual* things—getting closer to God while you view a crime-thriller or a panel show?

NO—you're allowing yourself to think with a CARNAL MIND! You're plunging yourself into the CARNAL, PHYSICAL WAYS OF THIS WORLD! "For to be carnally minded is DEATH; but to be *spiritually* minded is life and peace" (Rom. 8:6).

Is DEATH the result you're looking for? Do you really *hunger* and *thirst* for ultimate, everlasting DEATH? Or ought you to be seeking to become more spiritually minded—*more like GOD?*

You are told in Philippians 2:12 to WORK out your own salvation with FEAR and TREMBLING! Are you glorifying Christ—WORKING out your salvation—as you sit in front of MURDER STORIES, ENVY, HATE, JEALOUSY, DIVORCE TRIANGLES, WORLDLY SITUATIONS?

Television in Prophecy

The Apostle Paul, in writing to Timothy, foretold of these exact times! "For know also, that in the last days *perilous times* shall come. For MEN SHALL BE LOVERS OF THEIR OWN SELVES . . ." Yes, a pleasure-mad nation bent on utter depravity is engrossed in the love of SELF as they seek satisfaction of the sensual lusts!

"*Traitors*, heady, high-minded, *lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God* . . ." PUTTING TELEVISION AND SATISFACTION OF THE SENSES IN THE PLACE OF GOD—which God labels IDOLATRY and the committing of spiritual ADULTERY with this present world—this Babylonish *system* of confusion in which you live!

"Having a *form* of Godliness, but DENYING THE POWER thereof!" (II Timothy 3:1-5). Yes, people profess Christianity—they attend Church—they have a FORM of Godliness, but that mere outward FORM and CEREMONY is *not enough!* "How shall we escape, if we NEGLECT so GREAT SALVATION?" asks God, in Hebrews 2:3.

"Love NOT the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the *lust of the flesh*, and the LUST of the EYES, and the pride of life, is NOT OF THE FATHER, but is OF THE WORLD. And the world passes away, and the *lust* thereof; but he that DOETH the WILL OF GOD abideth FOREVER!" (I John 2:15-17).

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How NOT to Study the Bible

Millions seem unable to understand God's Word. Other millions disagree upon what they THINK the Bible says. Here's WHY!

by Roderick C. Meredith

THE PITIFUL spectacle of over *four hundred* disagreeing "Christian" denominations and sects ought to sicken the heart of any sincere believer in Christ. *Why* do men seem unable to agree upon what God is like and what His Word says?

Yes, **WHY?**

Men seem to agree pretty well on what books about physics, mathematics, history and philosophy say. But apparently they cannot—or **WILL NOT**—agree on what the *Bible* says.

Somebody has to be **WRONG!**

Jesus warned: "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth *not* my words, hath one that *judgeth* him: the *word* that I have spoken, the same *shall* JUDGE him in the last day" (John 12:48).

Paul instructed Timothy: "Preach the **WORD**" (II Tim. 4:2). Then he was inspired to give this prophetic warning: "For the time will come when *they will not endure sound doctrine*; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth and *shall be turned unto fables*" (Verses 3, 4). Notice that Paul warned men would "heap to themselves teachers"—false ministers who would teach whatever the *people* wanted. And therefore they would **TURN AWAY from the TRUTH**.

Since Jesus said the Word of God would **JUDGE you** in the last day, it is vital that you check up and make sure whether or not *you* or *your preacher* could be among those who have been "turned unto fables."

Cause of Confusion

There is one basic reason why most people—and most preachers—are in such disagreement and confusion about the Bible. They do not fully comprehend and *apply* the **PURPOSE** of God's Word.

This all-important *purpose* is given in II Timothy 3:16. *Study* it. "*All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, correction, for instruction in righteousness.*"

Now notice these points: (A) **ALL** scripture is inspired by God. Paul had just got through telling Timothy: "From

a child thou hast known the *holy scriptures*, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation" (verse 15). We know that the *only* "scriptures" in existence when Timothy was a child were the *Old Testament* scriptures. So here is a *New Testament* proof that the *Old Testament* as well as the new is for our modern day *Christian* instruction and was *inspired by God*. The Old Testament has **NOT** been "done away."

(B) The inspired scriptures are profitable for certain things: (1) For **DOCTRINE**—we are not to just *assume* any point of our belief to be true unless it can be *proved* in the scripture. We are not to try to read our doctrine *into* the Bible, but rather study with an open mind and accept the *Bible* doctrine.

(2) For **REPROOF**—God's Word is "quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword" (Heb. 4:12). We must be *willing* to let it cut us and point out our sins.

(3) For **CORRECTION**—the Bible was not written to substantiate what men believe, but to *correct* them where they are *wrong*.

(4) For **INSTRUCTION in righteousness**—in His Word, God gives us far more than just the doctrines and principles of true spirituality. He gives us living *examples* of how those principles are to be applied in every phase of life. Through the Bible, we have a continuing wealth of instruction on how to constantly *grow to spiritual perfection*. We need not seek this instruction in the *ideas of men*, but in the Word of God.

So we find from these points, given in scripture, that the Word of God as contained in the Old and New Testaments is the *direct revelation* from our Creator to teach us spiritual truth. And we see that its primary **PURPOSE** is to show us *where we are WRONG*—and then to teach us the *right* instruction so we may grow to spiritual maturity.

The shocking truth is that most people—and most preachers—**REJECT** and make *null and void* this very **PURPOSE** of scripture in the way they study and handle the Word of God.

Probably **YOU** have been *guilty* of this very thing! Maybe you don't *mean* to—

but the chances are that you have had an entirely *wrong attitude* and *wrong approach* to the study of the Bible.

This very attitude may be the very thing that is leading you to **REJECT** Bible truth—and to thereby *sin against God* and bring on yourself the penalty of **DEATH!**

It will **PAY** you to *honestly—without prejudice*—look into this matter.

Wrong Approach to Bible

You have undoubtedly met so-called "students" of the Bible who like nothing better than to argue and debate about scriptural points. The members of certain denominations and sects are noted for this.

One of their outstanding characteristics is the fact that they will seldom—and often *never*—admit *any* error on their part in the course of the discussion. You can go down the line and show them point by point what the *Bible* says *clearly* and *constantly* on some subject they are mixed up about, and they will twist clear-cut scriptures out of their setting, or they will try to change the subject, or resort to any one of a dozen methods of self-deception in order to hide their face from the facts.

It makes no difference whether or not *you* will admit error on some point when talking to such "Christians." They will literally *run away* from the truth rather than admit that *they* might be *wrong* on some subject.

Let's not "kid" ourselves. Such people are **DISHONEST**—intellectually, spiritually, however you may wish to describe it.

In addition to twisting and perverting scripture, changing the subject, or just "running away" from the subject, some "Christians" even **REJECT** certain portions of God's Holy Word in order to avoid *repenting* and *admitting error*.

I recently received a letter from such a person who was attempting to refute an article I had written. In doing so, this man was compelled to admit that the epistles of Paul as preserved in *your Bible* did back up what I wrote. But in order to "kid himself" and refuse to admit his mistake, this man decided to *reject* all the scriptures inspired through Paul.

With that kind of attitude, I frankly doubt whether this man—or *any such person*—has a Godly fear and a respect for *any* of God's Word. But for those who do, listen to what Peter was inspired to write: "Paul also according to the *wisdom* given unto him hath written unto you; as also in *ALL his epistles*, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable *wrest* (or twist), *as they do also the OTHER SCRIPTURES*, unto their own *destruction*" (II Pet. 3:15-16).

Notice that Peter asserts that *ALL* of Paul's epistles are *inspired* SCRIPTURE. They are given by our Creator and are to be *obeyed* just as any other part of the Word of God.

When this man, or YOU, or anyone rejects any *part* of the Bible, you are rejecting part of the very Word which will JUDGE you on judgment day. You are on very DANGEROUS ground!

Contradiction of Scriptures

Another device very familiar to some "students" of the Bible is the habit of trying to use one Bible test to contradict another.

Usually, when confronted with some point of truth which they *cannot* honestly deny but stubbornly *will not* accept, they attempt to find some vague scripture and use it—by careful "twisting"—to contradict the clear, logical chain of scriptures which abundantly prove the TRUTH they refuse to accept.

God says: "*I change not*" (Mal. 3:6). And again: "Jesus Christ, (who is the *Word*) the same yesterday, today, and forever" (Heb. 13:8). God does NOT say one thing one time and then reverse His Word later!

Jesus said: "*The scripture CANNOT be broken*" (John 10:35). You *cannot* prove *any* scripture to be untrue, and you *cannot* find one scripture that *really* contradicts another.

God does NOT contradict himself! That seems to be the self-assumed prerogative of men who are trying to find a way to *reject* God's truth.

And therein lies the *crux* of the whole matter.

Attitude Is Key Factor

The really important thing in studying the Bible is that you have the right *attitude* of heart and mind.

God says: "To this man will I look, even to him that is of a *contrite spirit*, and TREMBLETH at my word" (Is. 66:2).

What about YOU?

Do you tremble at God's Word? Do you respect the *authority* and *power* behind that word so much that you are *afraid* to reject or disobey it?

Do you grasp the great *difference* between this attitude and the type of car-

nal, argumentative attitude so many "Bible students" have?

The very first prerequisite to real conversion and becoming a Christian is to *repent—to change your ways*. Jesus said, "REPENT ye, and believe the gospel" (Mark 1:15).

Peter said, "REPENT, and *be baptized* . . . and ye shall receive the gift of the *Holy Spirit*" (Acts 2:38).

As shown in Romans 6:3-6, baptism pictures the *death* and *burial* of the old self. It is an outward sign that you realize that you are worthy of death—you are symbolically *buried* with Christ: "Not my will, *but thine*, be done" (Luke 22:42).

Then, after receiving God's Holy Spirit, a real Christian will be willing to *change*—to "grow in grace and knowledge" (II Pet. 3:18). He will "*hunger and thirst* after righteousness" (Mat. 5:6).

Such a real Christian will WANT to find *God's way*—*whatever* it is. He won't *argue* and *debate* over the precious Word of God!

He is not seeking his *own* way. He is *honestly, sincerely, zealously* seeking GOD'S way.

The Word of God then becomes *profitable* to that person, because it can *correct*, and *reprove* him where he is wrong—and *instruct* him in righteousness. Thus he can be *taught by God*, and fashioned into the perfect spiritual character God intends—finally to inherit *eternal* life in God's kingdom.

Your Most Important Decision

These are things for YOU to think

about—*honestly* and *without prejudice*.

Are you really willing to be shown *new truth*? Will you permit God's Word to *correct* you—to show you where you are wrong? Or are you bound and determined to *close* your mind to anything new—to blindly *defend* what you already believe without really looking into the matter?

Perhaps you are one of the thousands who are beginning to realize that Mr. Armstrong is the *only* voice on radio or television who really *understands* the great PURPOSE being worked out here below—and who can go through the Bible chapter by chapter, verse by verse, and make it *clear* and *meaningful*.

But if God is opening your mind and calling you to real understanding through this or any other means, you are soon coming to a crossroads. You will be shown some point of truth in the Bible that *corrects* and *reproves* you.

You will have the temptation to *argue*, to *twist* the scripture, to "run away." This is what the Bible describes as a *carnal* mind. And it is written: "To be carnally minded is DEATH" (Rom. 8:6).

But if you ask Him to and want Him to, God will give you the *spiritual* "backbone" to *acknowledge* your error and *surrender your will* to Him. If you keep this up, you will eventually give your *life* to Him. And in return, He will give you LIFE *eternal*.

It all depends on your *attitude* as you study and hear God's Word.

Do you really TREMBLE at the Word of the God who made you?

What Are the TIMES of the GENTILES?

(Continued from page 2)

gious sects, denominations and divisions.

This terrible predicament that confronts the nations today, *as well as what is SOON going to happen*, is made clear in this prophecy of the times of the Gentiles.

When Did the Times of the Gentiles Begin?

The seven times of the Gentiles are a *curse* upon them just as the seven times of Israel's punishments were a curse. This curse upon the Gentiles did *not begin with the fall of Judah but years later*. It was *after* the fall of Judah that God *first* began to deal with the Chaldean Empire. He allowed them ample time to prove they would not submit to his will.

Ancient Babylon was weighed in the

balances and found wanting. *The destruction of the Chaldean Empire began the 2520 years of terrible punishment* that has continued to this very day.

Since we can determine the time of the fall of Babylon, we can determine the beginning of the seven times of punishment upon the Gentiles.

According to the latest and most accurate knowledge, Babylon fell in the autumn of 539 B.C. In a book on archaeology by J. Finegan, entitled *Light from the Ancient Past*, pp. 190-191, you can read this: "On October 13, 539 B.C. Babylon fell to Cyrus the Persian. The date is given by the Nabunaid chronicle which also tells that . . . Cyrus first entered the city of Babylon in person on October 29. The fall of Babylon is nar-

rated not only in the Nabunaid chronicle but also in the inscription on the famous cylinder of Cyrus."

So Babylon fell in October, 539 B.C., and 2520 years later is October 1982. That's when the seven times of punishment would be fulfilled!

That is less than thirty years from now! But remember, we cannot be sure of the accuracy of this date. We publish it as the most accurate calculation we are able to arrive at now. It may come sooner than this!

Yes, these times are very close to completion, very close to the second coming of Jesus Christ to rule the nations and to teach them the ways of peace.

But many catastrophic world events are going to happen *between* now and the time that this punishment upon the Gentiles is finished!

These terrifying world-shaking events will take place *in less than thirty years*—in your life time, this very last generation that is destined to live in two worlds!

Remember what Jesus said in Luke 21:24? That Jerusalem would be trodden down of the Gentiles until the very completion of the times of the Gentiles!

Since Zechariah 14:1-3 shows that Jesus Christ will return in order to deliver Jerusalem from the Gentiles, it is plain that **THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST WILL OCCUR SHORTLY BEFORE THE TIMES OF THE GENTILES ARE FILLED!** (Isaiah 27:13; I Cor. 15:52).

As Christ said, of the second coming, "But of *that* day and hour, *knoweth no man!*" But *today's* world-occurrences warn us that even now, it is *near!* Yes, it's **LATER THAN YOU THINK!**

SPIRITISM

Fraud . . . or Fact?

(Continued from page 4)

the woman, Whom shall I *bring up* unto thee?" Notice that the woman spirit medium claimed to contact the dead by supernaturally bringing them up from the grave through the familiar spirit. This form was practised when the people believed that the dead were in their graves. *Today* spirit mediums have the familiar spirit produce a voice from the air—because it is commonly believed *today* that the dead are *not* in their graves but somewhere else!

Saul replied to the woman: "Bring me up Samuel."

Instead of the familiar spirit appearing *first*, and then the visionary form of a dead person, the woman saw *first* a form that looked exactly like Samuel! "And when the woman saw Samuel, she cried with a loud voice: and the woman spake to Saul, saying, Why hast thou deceived me? for thou art Saul. And the king said unto her, Be not afraid: for what sawest thou?"

Notice that the familiar spirit did not manifest itself first at Saul's seance. Instead, the familiar spirit produced the form of Samuel which **ONLY THE WOMAN SAW!** Saul did not see it! He asked the woman what *she* saw!

"And the woman said unto Saul, I saw *gods* ascending out of the earth" (Verse 13, last part). This is an *incorrect* translation. The word translated "gods" is *elohim* in the Hebrew. It can mean either the true God, pagan gods or *judges*. In Exodus 22:8, 9, the Hebrew word *elohim* is translated *judges*. In I Samuel 28:13, the verse should have been translated: "I saw a *judge* ascending out of

the earth." This is *proved* by what follows:

"And he said unto her, What form is *he* of? And she said, An old *man* cometh up; and *he* is covered with a mantle. And Saul *perceived* that it was Samuel, and he stooped with his face to the ground, and bowed himself" (Verse 14).

A Deception

Notice that Saul still did NOT see anyone! He only *perceived* by reasoning that the form which the woman saw was that of Samuel! Here we have a perfect illustration of the impersonation of human beings by evil spirits. The familiar spirit produced an illusion which only the woman saw. To her the illusion was that of a judge rising out of the earth. Remember that Samuel was actually buried about 50 miles away, not at Endor where the seance was occurring! Samuel was *not* resurrected. The whole thing was a SUPERNATURAL FRAUD!

While *impersonating* Samuel, the spirit spoke to king Saul thus: "And Samuel said to Saul, Why hast thou disquieted me, to bring me up?"—notice the *lying* spirit. Satan lied to Eve in a similar manner! "And Saul answered, I am sore distressed; for the Philistines make war against me, and GOD IS DEPARTED FROM ME, AND ANSWERETH ME NO MORE, NEITHER BY PROPHETS, NOR BY DREAMS: therefore I have called thee, that thou mayest make known unto me what I shall do."

The spirit continues to impersonate Samuel by reprimanding Saul for all his evil deeds. Finally the spirit concluded

by saying: "Tomorrow shalt thou and thy sons be with me: and the Lord also shall deliver the host of Israel into the hands of the Philistines" (Verse 19).

How did the spirit know what was to happen? Because God often makes His plans known to evil spirits! Notice I Kings 22:22-23 and II Chronicles 18:21-22. God permitted "lying spirits" to know His plans. God rules over all. But He has allowed Satan and his demons to control and influence this entire world. The familiar spirit of the witch at Endor must have known that God would deliver Saul that next day. So it told Saul what would happen in order that its impersonation of Saul might *seem* real!

Saul's Punishment

Now read what happened to Saul for inquiring about the future from a spirit medium: "So Saul *died* for his transgression which he committed against the Eternal, even against the word of the Eternal, which he kept not, and *also* for asking counsel of one that had a familiar spirit, to inquire of it; and inquired NOT of the Eternal: therefore He slew him, and turned the kingdom unto David the son of Jesse" (I Chronicles 10:13-14).

That is exactly how serious God regards Spiritism! He took the life of Saul for seeking information at a seance!

In His Revelation to the apostle John, Jesus warns us of the *growing* influence of wicked spirits. They will become so *influential* in world affairs that the rulers of nations will act upon their deceptive, lying words. The control of these wicked spirits, described in Revelation 16:13-16, will lead to ARMAGEDDON!

TODAY we are warned: "Believe *not* every spirit, but TRY THE SPIRITS *whether they are of God*" (I John 4:1). We need to *prove* whether spirits are good or evil.

Notice what Isaiah wrote: "And *when* they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep, and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God? for the living to the dead? *To the law and to the testimony:* if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" (Isa. 8:19-20).

Evil Spirits Pretend to Bring Light

The spirits who masquerade as human beings at Spiritist seances *pretend* to bring LIGHT and knowledge. Here is what Paul wrote of them: "For such [ministers who pretend to serve Jesus Christ] are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; FOR SATAN HIMSELF IS TRANSFORMED INTO AN ANGEL OF LIGHT. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be

transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works" (II Cor. 11:13-14).

James tells us what to do when the influence of wicked spirits is present: "Submit yourselves therefore to God. RESIST THE DEVIL, and he will flee from you" (James 4:7). You must not obey the devil by yielding to his temptations. Instead, ask God for help. Refuse to yield to satanic influence. Submit to God's correction. Let Him guide you.

The most important chapter in all the Bible relating to our combat with evil spirits is found in Ephesians 6, beginning with verse 10. Here is what we read:

"Finally, my brethren, be *strong* in the Lord, and in the *power of His might*. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, *against wicked spirits in high places*. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand. . . . Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with TRUTH"—Jesus said the *truth* shall make us free (John 8:32). God's Word—the Bible—is *truth*. We need to *understand it*.

Continuing, "And having on the breastplate of righteousness"—righteousness is defined as keeping all God's commandments (Psa. 119:172). "And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace"—we must all work, that the good news of the kingdom of God may reach the whole world.

"*Above all*, taking the shield of FAITH, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked"—*absolute trust* in God for deliverance despite all obstacles—and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the WORD of God"—use the Bible to know what to do and to know what to resist. It is the only sword which can vanquish evil spirits, and which can overcome sin and produce self-mastery!

"*Praying* always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto *with all perseverance* and supplication for all the saints"—don't slack off in praying, don't become negligent. PRAY with perseverance, not only for yourself, but for all those whom God has called.

We are all in this battle together! It is a titanic struggle.

Our eternal life depends upon whether we overcome the temptations of the devil and submit to the rule, the AUTHORITY of God over our lives.

It is high time we recognized the evil powers which manifest themselves through Spiritism!

Don't Let Television Become a Curse!

(Continued from page 8)

Are you NEGLECTING your salvation—*throwing away* with *impunity* your opportunity for ETERNAL LIFE—for the shoddy, corrupt, *temporary* lusts of the flesh?

What to Do About It

The biggest question in *your life* could be—what are you going to DO about it? "Be ye DOERS of the word, and not *bearers* only" (James 1:22).

Is your mind attuned to the things of God? "Let this *mind* be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 2:5). If you have the mind of Christ, will you sit and soak up the ways of *this world* for hour after hour when you *should* be studying your Bible—training your children—spending your time in real earnest PRAYER, helping others, being busy and *productive*?

NO, of *course* you won't! But is the LUST inherent within you *too strong* for your will power to overcome? "For of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage" (II Peter 2:19). Are you a SLAVE—a WHIPPED SERVANT of YOUR TV SET? God warns you, "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make *not* provision for the flesh, to fulfill the LUSTS thereof!" (Rom. 13:14). The *real test* is, WHAT ARE YOU—yes, YOU, GOING TO DO ABOUT IT?

Jesus Christ explained the condition of many MILLIONS of Americans when He gave the parable of the sower. Read it in your own Bible! In Matthew the 13th chapter, beginning with the 18th verse. And in verse 22, "He also that received seed among the thorns is he that HEARETH the word; *and the care of this world*, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful." God asked, through Elijah, "HOW LONG HALT YE BETWEEN TWO OPINIONS? if the LORD be God, FOLLOW HIM!" (I Kings 18:21).

How to Overcome Your Problem

If you are *honest* with yourself, and with God, you will be able to see very clearly the great PRINCIPLE of *character* behind this television craze that is sweeping the nation.

But—simply agreeing in PRINCIPLE will gain you *nothing*. Putting a decision, once the right decision has been reached, into ACTION is where the real *character* is necessary.

If you can MASTER yourself and CONQUER the TV habit—beginning to watch *only* the constructive, thought-provoking

programs—asking yourself, "Would Jesus watch this?" at all times; if you can keep your TV viewing in extreme MODERATION according to the word of God, then you will have learned a valuable lesson—one that will strengthen you and add to your character.

But if, like many people, you are UNABLE to master yourself—to FORCE yourself to control this HABIT, then read what Christ said in Matthew 18:7-9. YES, SELL YOUR TV SET. GIVE IT AWAY! Do whatever is necessary—but GET RID OF IT! Then you'll have *rooted out* the source of temptation. But *first* ask God to give you the strength you lack to help you CONQUER yourself!

The way to replace bad habits is to exchange them for the *right* habits. To get the air out of a bottle, you must put a liquid *into* the bottle. Are you making the *most* of your time? (Eph. 5:15). Are you *studying* to improve your mind? (II Tim. 2:15). Are you going FORWARD—GROWING in grace and knowledge? (II Pet. 3:18). God has provided the WAY to keep you engrossed in HIS TRUTH—to keep you SO FILLED with *interest*, and *zeal* that you'll remain STEADFAST until the end (Matt. 10:22).

If you do *not* have a TV set, we DO NOT advise you to buy one. Not even to see "The WORLD TOMORROW" program.

You may *hear* the "World Tomorrow" program at least once daily ON RADIO. You can read "The PLAIN TRUTH" magazine every month, and now, you may take the Ambassador College BIBLE CORRESPONDENCE COURSE. This unique course will *open up* the Bible to you—make it a clear, sparkling with interest, LIVING book; so interesting you'll be *eager* to search its pages for the living TRUTH of God!

If you really *want* to put your spare time to a PROFITABLE use—then write in immediately for the *Correspondence Course*. There's NO CHARGE! Not ONE CENT of tuition! But you've got to really MEAN it! You must be willing to spend *at least ONE HOUR OR MORE EVERY DAY* to really *study* your Bible! Write in NOW—while you're thinking about it, and request this *amazingly different* STUDY course of the Bible.

God says, "See, I have set before you this day LIFE and GOOD, and DEATH and EVIL . . . CHOOSE LIFE, that both you and your seed may live!" (Deut. 30:15-19).

WHAT IS YOUR CHOICE GOING TO BE?

Thou Shalt *Not!*

**Are the Ten Commandments "NEGATIVE" and therefore
a WRONG form of law?**

by Herbert W. Armstrong

OFTEN we hear the basic Law of God impugned as negative, and therefore not good. God is often conceived as a stern, wrathful God, who angrily says to us: "THOU SHALT NOT!" God's truth is sometimes looked upon as "a religion of FEAR," and therefore not desirable for modern, advanced, enlightened man. It ought to be POSITIVE, they say, not negative.

Thus God, the Truth of God, the purpose and plan of God, the method of God, and the Law of God are relegated to the primitive, the imperfect—something enlightened man has now outgrown. Modern man thereupon looks upon himself as elevated to a plane of rational thinking, and knowledge higher than God, or Christianity, or God's Law. Of course, when we UNDERSTAND, God's TRUTH is the most *positive* religion or philosophy there is—it *eradicates* fear! It is the way of FAITH!

But *is* the negative form, "Thou shalt not," then, wrong? Is it outmoded? Should a PERFECT law contain only "DO's" and no "DON'Ts"?

Just what is TRUE CHARACTER? Just what is the perfect life?

I have defined character—that is, true, righteous, holy character—as 1) coming to the KNOWLEDGE of the true, as opposed to the false values—the right, instead of the wrong way; 2) making, of one's own free will and volition, the choice to *do* the right instead of the wrong; 3) the exercise of the will in actually *doing* the right instead of the wrong.

Character, then, once the true knowledge is acquired and the right decision made, involves SELF-DISCIPLINE. The truly educated person is a self-disciplined person.

What, then, does this SELF-DISCIPLINE involve?

Two things: 1) self-restraint to resist the lower impulses and pulls in human nature—to restrain the self from desires, impulses, habits, or customs which are contrary to the RIGHT WAY; and 2) self-propulsion or determined initiative to drive the self to *do* those things which ought to be done. In other words, in true character in action there is the POSITIVE and the NEGATIVE.

Suppose one rejects the negative as

faulty and something to be discarded altogether. Suppose one applies the positive only. He impels the self to DO those positive things to be done, but he exercises no restraint to resist those things which, by habit, impulse, desire, or custom of others ought not to be done. Because human nature is what it is, the very nature in such a man will pull him constantly in the wrong direction. Thus CHARACTER is destroyed. He is out of balance.

We find present in NATURE both the positive and the negative. Electricity functions and performs its work by use of both the positive and the negative. All elements are either alkaline or acid. All living things and beings in this world of matter are male and female. There are SINS both of OMISSION and COMMISSION.

Frequently we read the pitiful, feeble efforts of a man who fancies in his ignorant egotism he is wiser than God, setting forth his idea of TEN POSITIVE COMMANDMENTS. Ten "do's," and no "don't's." And what do we find? How much character would such a list of "commandments" produce? Just about as much character as an electric light bulb would produce light with merely the one *positive* wire leading into it. Just about as much character as the male alone, without the female, could reproduce his kind. He might DO a few good things, but all his good things would be nullified and cancelled out by the unrestrained evil he would commit.

No basic LAW OF LIFE, forming the basis of perfect CHARACTER, could be a perfect law unless it contains, in perfect balance, both positive and negative.

Examine now again God's basic code, upon which all His laws, social, economic, civil, and religious, hang:

1. "THOU SHALT have no other gods before Me." This is actually stated in the *positive* form, implying we SHALL worship and obey the true God. In a sense, this commandment contains both the positive and negative, directing us positively, "Thou SHALT," to the true God, and restraining us from false gods.

2. "THOU SHALT NOT make unto thee any graven image, or . . . bow down thyself to them, nor serve them." This is negative, restraining from either making

or worshipping any THING as a god; also from either worship, or obedience to, such false god. To the true God we owe both worship and obedience. Notice the principle of GOVERNMENT in this, as in all the commands. THE WHOLE ISSUE IS ONE OF GOVERNMENT. Adam and Eve rejected God's *government*, refused His rule over their lives, disobeyed four of the Laws of His government. Christ came preaching the "KINGDOM of God," which is the *government* of God—commanding men to repent of their rejection of that government and the transgression of its laws (sin is the transgression of the law—I John 3:4)—providing the way of atonement for that transgression, and reconciliation to the worship and government of GOD.

3. "THOU SHALT NOT take the NAME of the Eternal thy God in vain." This is a restraint—negative—to prevent cutting man off from the POWER and BENEFITS of the right use of GOD'S NAME. If we repent of sin, and come to God by Jesus Christ, He puts within us the impregnating gift of His Holy Spirit, and thus we become His actual begotten children—begotten into HIS FAMILY—bearing HIS NAME (the true name of His Church is Church of GOD)—and having access to all the BENEFITS, BLESSINGS, and POWER of that name. This command is a negative, making possible the POSITIVE and vitally needed blessings thru that NAME!

4. "REMEMBER the Sabbath Day, to KEEP IT HOLY . . . the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Eternal thy GOD." Here is another POSITIVE command—the only one God specifically commanded us to "REMEMBER," and the very one mankind insists above all upon forgetting. Is it not an indicting commentary on the unrestrained human nature, and irrational thinking of the self-professed RATIONALS who imagine themselves superior to God, and who insist His Commandments ought to be all POSITIVE and not negative, that this most positive of all the Commandments they flout and disobey with greatest impunity. Again, notice the perfection—here again is a command including both positive and negative, for while it is primarily positive, yet it includes negative restraints to make possible that positive—"in it thou SHALT NOT

do any work, thou, nor thy son," etc.

5. "HONOR thy father and thy mother." Do you see any negative statement in this command? Here is a POSITIVE command, with a definite promise of blessing. This heads the six commands regulating man's relationship with neighbor. However, the negative opposite is implied, tho not stated.

6 thru 10. "THOU SHALT NOT kill, commit adultery, steal, bear false witness against, or covet." Here are the famous negatives, yet each implies the opposite POSITIVE: as, THOU SHALT love and have charitable tolerant patience toward your neighbor; BE TRUE to your wife and RESPECT your neighbor's property.

Here is a PERFECT LAW (Psalm 19: 7). It outlines, in broad detail, man's right relationship with the true GOD that he may have all the needed guidance, help, and blessings from God; and also man's right relationship toward human neighbors—including parents, children, husband and wife, and all neighbors. This Law provides for both WORSHIP of God, religiously, and OBEDIENCE TO God, and BLESSINGS FROM God—every need of man for his own good in living, active, continuous relationship with the all-wise, all-powerful, all-loving God.

This perfect Law forms the basis of ALL human relationships, as well as man's God-relationship. It provides the wide, basic general rules affecting every phase of his life—

a) Religious, in his relationship to GOD;

b) Family, in his relationship to parents, children, wife and husband, and is designed to preserve the blessed sanctity and dignity of the HOME;

c) Next-door and personal neighbors and friends;

d) Civil relationships — here are found the very BASIC civil laws respecting murder, larceny (theft), adultery, perjury;

e) Economic life—honesty, not coveting other's money, goods, or property or possessions, which coveting is the very root source of today's economic principle of competition;

f) Social life—such commands as those respecting adultery, false witness against, coveting, stealing, form the foundation principle of right social attitude and relationship with neighbors.

This Law, in its basic principles, defines THE WHOLE DUTY OF MAN (Eccl. 12:13). It is the basis, in principle, for ALL THE BIBLE. The entire Bible is, so far as its TEACHING is concerned, a magnification in specific detail of these basic principles.

This Law is COMPLETE. It contains, in brief summation-principle, all the positive and negative obligations of the PERFECT, rightly-balanced life. It expresses

and reflects the very character of God.

The whole Law is summed in one word, LOVE. It is like God, for God is LOVE, just as His Law is LOVE. It was

given in love for us, and LOVE is the fulfilling of the law—LOVE IN ACTION.

It is love to GOD, and love to NEIGHBOR. It is PERFECT. It is COMPLETE.

WHY So Many Religious Denominations?

(Continued from page 6)

that after my departure shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things," why?—"to draw away disciples after them." To gain a personal following for themselves! To start a new denomination!

Do you catch the full significance of these two verses? The elders or ministers were especially assembled because, immediately after Paul would leave Ephesus—not at the time of the Protestant Revolt, but IMMEDIATELY—there would come within the local church congregations false ministers, wolves in sheep's clothing, to make a prey of Christians; and even from those elders already in the church congregations some would pervert the doctrine of Jesus to secure a following of "Christians" themselves.

HOW It Happened

The city of Ephesus was located in the Roman province of Asia, which embraced the western part of Asia Minor or Turkey today. After preaching in the province of Asia at Ephesus, Paul had to separate the disciples from Jews who would not follow the teachings of Jesus Christ (Acts 19:9). Those Jews especially hated Paul because he brought Gentile converts, uncircumcised in the flesh, into fellowship with converted Jewish brethren. This so incensed them that they were everywhere spreading lies about the teachings (Acts 21:21).

The apostle warned Titus about the "many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision" who were spreading "Jewish fables, and commandments of men that turn from the truth" (Titus 1:10, 14).

It was from the stubborn Jews that the original trouble arose in the Christian community. They followed Paul to Jerusalem to accuse him falsely (Acts 21:27; 24:18). Not long after this, they had so poisoned the minds of the Christians at Ephesus that Paul had to write Timothy: "This thou knowest, that ALL they which are in Asia be turned away from me" (II Timothy 1:15).

Notice, in a few short years, ALL in

the province of Asia were deceived into turning from the truth which Paul preached. It was not the few, but the many—ALL—who were deceived; yet they thought they were still Christians.

The apostle John later wrote to the Ephesians: "Remember, therefore, from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works" (Rev. 2:5). Here is PROOF that heresy overtook many Christians while the apostles yet lived!

Although much of the opposition developed originally from Jews who tried to impose their human traditions and fables which were contrary to the law of God (Mat. 15:3), as the number of Gentile converts increased, there arose a feeling of antagonism between Jewish and Gentile converts, especially about the time of the destruction of Jerusalem. Such a contention naturally would lead to CHANGING the days celebrated by professing Christians. Dislike of Jews, who celebrated almost the same days as the early true church, caused unconverted carnally minded Gentiles in the church to substitute the pagan holidays.

Gentile Deception Prophesied

Not only Paul, but also Peter warned the churches that MANY would be misled. There were false teachers among Christians who would bring in heresies, "and MANY shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of" (II Peter 2:2).

When Paul wrote his second letter to the Gentile-born Thessalonians, he instructed them against the "mystery of iniquity" which "doth already work" (II Thess. 2:7).

Notice, the cleverly disguised teachings of iniquity or LAWLESSNESS were at work in Paul's day. The Roman world was being filled with numerous mystery religions which stemmed from the old sun-worshipping mysteries. It was Paul himself who was restraining lawlessness until he should be "taken out of the way."

False teachers secretly professed to giving a hidden, yet easy way to evade the consequences of breaking God's law.

Jude had to include in his letter the admonition that every Christian "should earnestly contend for the faith which was *once* delivered unto the saints. FOR THERE ARE CERTAIN MEN CREPT IN UN-AWARES, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, TURNING THE GRACE OF GOD INTO LASCIVIOUSNESS, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ . . . These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit" (Jude 3 and 19).

These false teachers *crept in unawares*—professing to come in the name of Jesus Christ. Yet they *deny* that Jesus is the Christ *by rejecting the only sign* that proves that He is the Messiah (Mat. 12: 39, 40) and substituting for it the "Good Friday-Sunday Resurrection" tradition.

They also turned the grace or unmerited pardon of God into a *license* to disobey the commandments, claiming that grace makes you free to commit sin!

Jude says *these preachers separated their followers from the body of believers*. By the time John wrote his epistle, he had this sad note to include about those preachers who at first crept in unawares: "*They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us; but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us*" (I John 2:19).

Those who departed were no longer Christians. They separated themselves from the *true* church and organized themselves into *their own* church.

True Christians Forced Out

Although numerous deceivers, called Gnostics, left the church, drawing away disciples after them, there was an even more dangerous apostacy which has deceived this whole world.

In instructing the evangelist Timothy, the apostle to the Gentiles instructed him to "reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine. For the time will come that they will not endure sound doctrine; but *after their own lusts*"—the congregations wanting to do what they please—"shall they heap to themselves teachers"—elect ministers who will preach what they want to hear—"and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto *fables*" (II Timothy 4:3, 4).

This was in the days of the apostles and evangelists, not at the Protestant Revolt! MANY who fellowshipped in the local congregations of the early church, after about two generations, did not endure sound doctrine because they had not repented and received the Holy Spirit. They elected teachers who, for the sake of money, pleased their wishes by preaching fables—doctrines *assumed* to

be *Christian*, today!—the enticing fables of mysticism and sun-worship that were engulfing the Roman Empire. The letters of Paul were twisted by them to give another meaning than intended (II Peter 3:15-16).

But instead of leaving the local congregations and forming their own sects, as some Gentiles did at first, the false preachers remained within the congregations and *soon began to expell the true Christians*.

In the letter of the apostle John to Gaius, we read: "I wrote unto the church, but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the pre-eminence among them, receiveth us not. Wherefore, if I come, I will remember his deeds which he doeth, prating against us with malicious words: and

"What Denomination Do We Represent?"

Daily we receive letters asking, "Who are you? What denomination do you represent?" No one seems able to guess. And no wonder.

For we are *not denominational*! The "WORLD TOMORROW" radio and television programs and The PLAIN TRUTH magazine are NON-sectarian (I Cor. 1:12-13).

What denomination did JESUS join? Few ever stopped to think of it in that way. The religious sects of His day were the Pharisees, the Sadducees, the Essenes, the Samaritans, etc. Jesus joined none of them. On the contrary. He called His disciples *out of them*—out of all organizations of men. The Greek word "ecclesia" translated "Church" in English has the meaning of "called-out ones."

The Eternal God called me from the field of business to a life of separation for the mission being carried out in His work. Consequently, in complete surrender to Him, without preconceived notions, doctrines, and convictions, and with the guidance of His Spirit, I prayerfully approached the study of the Bible as a business man would approach a business problem. God started this work through us as small as a work could start, and on and with nothing but FAITH.

We are utterly independent of denominations, sects, or organizations of any kind—wholly DE-pendent upon our heavenly Father for guidance, for funds—for EVERYTHING.

I speak and write, not in the name of any denomination, but solely in the name of JESUS CHRIST!

HERBERT W. ARMSTRONG

not content therewith, neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and forbiddeth them that would, AND CASTETH THEM OUT OF THE CHURCH" (III John 9 and 10).

The true Christians, who alone, comprised the true Church, *were being put out of the visible, organized congregations*. They were the SCATTERED ones of whom John said: "Therefore the world knoweth us not" (I John 3:1). In the Western Roman Empire, where Paul died, the state of Christianity was even more advanced along the paths of error. The name *Christian* was being borne away by leaders who crept into the fellowship of the Church of God and who, in the name of Christ, *deceived the MANY into following their false teachings and into organizing with human government a universal or catholic church over the whole Roman Empire*.

The Age of Shadows

Following the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. and the deaths of the apostles, a strange phenomenon is witnessed. The true church almost disappears from history, and false churches arise! Of this period, the famous historian Gibbon says: "The scanty and suspicious ecclesiastical history seldom enables us to dispel the dark cloud that hangs over the first age of the church" (*Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, ch. XV).

The truth was obscured by error!

Jesse Lyman Hurlbut gives us even more details in his book *The Story of the Christian Church*, page 41: "We would like to read of the later work of such helpers of St. Paul as Timothy, Apollos and Titus, but all these . . . drop out of the record at his death. For fifty years after St. Paul's life *a curtain hangs over the church through which we strive vainly to look*; and when at last it rises, about 120 A.D., with the writings of the earliest church-fathers, WE FIND A CHURCH IN MANY ASPECTS VERY DIFFERENT FROM THAT IN THE DAYS OF" Peter and Paul.

Those inspired young men who outlived the apostles left almost no mark in the record of Church history for *one* particular reason. They were the last vanguard of the true apostolic church which fought against the rising tide of prophesied apostacy immediately after the days of the apostles. *The false ministers* in church offices, against whom the evangelists preached, are *the very ones recorded in the history of the universal or catholic apostacy at the close of the first century*.

Some of those ministers may have been honestly deceived, but many, many others were deceivers who had "men's persons in admiration because of advantage"—financial advantage (Jude 16). They taught a mixture of truth and error;

but with each succeeding generation they departed further from the truth and added more and more pagan superstition.

The writings of those early Catholics prove that they corrupted the faith once delivered by developing false doctrines which have passed into the churches today from the sun-worshipping pagans.

Heathenism in Apostolic Days

Inspired Christianity under the apostles converted many men and women who had been spiritually blighted by pagan practices and festivals of the Roman State religion. Together with the rapid growth of true Christianity, dozens of religions were also propagated in the Empire and coming to the capital, Rome. Most of these religions were attempts to fill the spiritual emptiness of the state religion by "saviors" and sunworship. The Roman Emperors, seeing the need of revivifying their degenerate system, allowed admittance to many of these sects, the most important of which was Mithraism.

"Towards the close of the first century A.D. Mithraism began to make its influence felt in Rome and the western provinces" (*A History of Rome to 565 A.D.*, by Roak, p. 392).

As the false ministers were seeking prestige and converts for themselves,

their natural tendency was to alter Christianity to meet the prevailing desires of the spiritually sick multitudes of the Roman Empire. Hence, apostatizing Christians developed, very early, doctrines that were parallel to the mystery religions which were pagan counterfeits of the way of the true Savior of the world. There were now pagan and "Christian" mysteries to deceive every class of people.

Notice how many features of paganism were adopted by Catholics in order to gain members for their church. Mythraism "had so much acceptance that it was able to impose on the Christian world its own Sun-Day in place of the Sabbath, its Sun's birthday, 25th of December, as the birthday of Jesus . . . and various of its Easter celebrations." This revealing extract is from page 74 of *The History of Christianity in the Light of Modern Knowledge*.

Deception Continues Today

It took those original false teachers centuries to weed out all the inspired practices of the early church. They gradually rejected the Holy Days of God and substituted the centuries-old festivals of paganism, calling them by Christian names. They rejected the government of God and slowly organized a dictatorial form of human government. They twist-

ed the commandments of God, and perverted the gospel of the Kingdom.

Instead of the churches coming nearer to the FAITH of the Bible, each new "reformation" has brought more error into the world under the guise of "restored" truth. Today the Christian world is in hopeless confusion, not a single one of the churches being able to agree on exactly what constitutes the gospel of Jesus Christ. Each has a slight portion of truth in its doctrine, but a great deal more error that is deceiving the MANY.

WHY THE PLAIN TRUTH HAS NO SUBSCRIPTION PRICE

So many ask: "How can you publish a magazine, without subscription price, and without advertising?"

The answer is simple. The GOSPEL must go to the whole world, and it must go FREE. It must not be sold like merchandise. "Freely ye have received," Jesus said to His disciples whom He was sending to proclaim the Gospel, "Freely GIVE." Without money and without price, is God's way. We proclaim a FREE salvation. Therefore, we cannot put a PRICE upon the PLAIN TRUTH.

We have been called of God to conduct this work. It is not our work, but God's. We have set out to conduct God's work God's way. We rely, in FAITH, upon God's promises to supply every need.

God's way is the way of LOVE—and that is the way of giving, not getting. God expects every true child of His to GIVE of tithes and offerings that His work may go FREE—that His true ministers may GIVE the precious Gospel to others. We simply TRUST GOD to lay it on the minds and hearts of His people to give of their tithes and offerings that we may be enabled to GIVE the good things of God's Word to the hundreds of thousands who hear the Message over the air, and the scores of thousands who read The PLAIN TRUTH.

Many times our faith has been severely tried, but God has never failed us. We must not fail HIM!

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