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# BIBLE NEWS PROPHECY

Is it a Sin  
for Christians  
to Gamble?

The Eighth  
Commandment  
Do not steal.

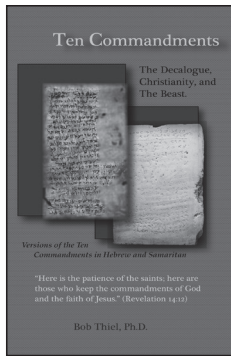
*Bering Strait*

Might

End  
Up  
With  
and  
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of

# RUSSIA ALASKA CANADA!

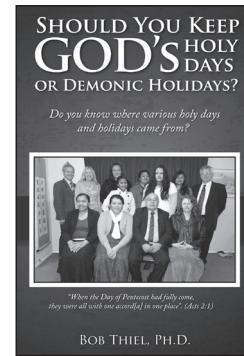
# BIBLE NEWS PROPHECY



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- About the Front Cover:** Could Russia actually end up with Alaska and/or parts of Canada? Could that be consistent with biblical prophecy? The Bering strait shows the closeness between Russia and Alaska. Artwork developed for the *Continuing Church of God*.

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Editor in Chief: Bob Thiel

Copy/Proofing Editor: Joyce Thiel

Proofreader: John Hickey; SBC Course Assister: Shirley Gestro.

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# Might RUSSIA End Up with ALASKA and Parts of CANADA?

On February 3, 2020, Democratic Congressman Adam Schiff voiced concerns that Russia could end up with Alaska:

Adam Schiff of California claimed during closing arguments in the Senate impeachment trial Monday that President Donald Trump will sell a U.S. state to the Russian government if not removed from office.

If “abuse of power” was not impeachable, Schiff argued, “then a whole range of utterly unacceptable conduct in a president would now be beyond reach.”

“Trump could offer Alaska to the Russians in exchange for support in the next election, or decide to move to Mar-A-Lago permanently and leave Jared Kushner to run the country, delegating to him the decision whether they go to war.” (Justice T. Schiff: Trump Will Sell Alaska To Russia If We Don’t Impeach Him. The Federalist, February 3, 2020)

On February 5, 2020, the Senate acquitted Donald Trump on the impeachment charges.

So is Donald Trump about to give Alaska to Russia?

No.

However, is it possible that Russia could end up with Alaska and/or parts of Canada?

Yes.

Before pointing to a scripture that supports this idea, the reality is that Russia would like Alaska and parts of Canada back. The USA bought Alaska from Russia in the 1800s.

Notice the following:

Nearly 60 years ago, Alexander Vitebsky was a young Soviet officer stationed in Siberia, part of

a massive force assembled to try to fulfill Joseph Stalin’s dream of invading Alaska.

“It was very secretive,” said Vitebsky, who, for decades afterward, also carried a secret — he dreamed of coming to America. “We didn’t buy what we were told about America.” (Torpy B. Atlanta’s public housing is home to a dwindling Soviet immigrant community. Atlanta Journal Constitution, August 10, 2010)

Notice the following prophecy:

39 Thus he shall act against the strongest fortresses with a foreign god, which he shall acknowledge, and advance its glory; and he shall cause them to rule over many, and divide the land for gain (Daniel 11:39).

The “he” is the European King of the North (cf. Daniel 11:40). The power with the strongest military in the 21st century is the USA.

Other verses of the Bible also show the land being divided:

16 The anger of the LORD hath divided them; he will no more regard them (Lamentations 4:16, KJV).

2 And I will enter into judgment with them there On account of My people, My heritage Israel, Whom they have scattered among the nations; They have also divided up My land. They have also cast lots for my people ... (Joel 3:2-3, NKJV).

17... Your land shall be divided by survey line; You shall die in a defiled land; And Israel shall surely be led away captive From his own land (Amos 7:17, NKJV)

I used the KJV for Lamentations 4:16 as it correctly translated the Hebrew word as divided. The term



translated as “scattered them” by the NKJV in Lamentations, but it is the same Hebrew word (Strong’s 2505) used in Daniel 11:39 translated as “divide.”

It is also the same Hebrew word used in Ezekiel 5:1 where the hair (apparently representing the U.S.A., etc.) is divided and then will “scatter to the wind”--hence indicating that the people that survive will end up in many lands (and not in a good way):

1 “And you, son of man, take a sharp sword, take it as a barber’s razor, and pass it over your head and your beard; then take scales to weigh and divide the hair. 2 You shall burn with fire one-third in the midst of the city, when the days of the siege are finished; then you shall take one-third and strike around it with the sword, and one-third you shall scatter in the wind: I will draw out a sword after them ... 12 One-third of you shall die of the pestilence, and be consumed with famine in your midst; and one-third shall fall by the sword all around you; and I will scatter another third to all the winds, and I will draw out a sword after them...8 Yet I will leave a remnant, so that you may have some who escape the sword among the nations, when you are scattered through the countries. (Ezekiel 5:1-2,12; 6:8).

13 “Behold, therefore, I beat My fists at the dishonest profit which you have made, and at the bloodshed which has been in your midst. 14 Can your heart endure, or can your hands remain strong, in the days when I shall deal with you? I, the Lord, have spoken, and will do it. 15 I will scatter you among the nations, disperse you throughout the countries, and remove your filthiness completely from you. (Ezekiel 22:13-15)

By having massive debt that they will not pay back, the peoples of the USA and UK make a “dishonest profit” and they will be scattered among nations and countries--via “all the winds.” Following “all the winds” means that not all will end up in the same place.

Over a decade ago, a Russian Professor predicted that



*The Bering Strait*

Russia would end up with Alaska:

MOSCOW -- For a decade, Russian academic Igor Panarin has been predicting the U.S. will fall apart...Prof. Panarin, 50 years old, is not a fringe figure. A former KGB analyst, he is dean of the Russian Foreign Ministry’s academy for future diplomats...

When the going gets tough, he says, wealthier states will withhold funds from the federal government and effectively secede from the union. Social unrest up to and including a civil war will follow. The U.S. will then split along ethnic lines, and foreign powers will move in...

“It would be reasonable for Russia to lay claim to Alaska; it was part of the Russian Empire for a long time.” A framed satellite image of the Bering Strait that separates Alaska from Russia like a thread hangs from his office wall. “It’s not there for no reason,” he says with a sly grin. (Osborn A. As if Things Weren’t Bad Enough, Russian Professor Predicts End of U.S. Wall Street Journal, Dec 29, 2008)

Russia also used to claim parts of Canada.

Furthermore, Russia has taken some steps to try to connect with Alaska.

Notice the following:

The TKM-World Link (Russian: Трансконтинентальная магистраль, English: Transcontinental Railway) also called ICL-



World Link (Intercontinental link) is a planned 6,000-kilometer link between Siberia and Alaska providing oil, natural gas, electricity, and railroad passengers to the United States from Russia. Proposed in 2007, the plan includes provisions to build a 103-kilometre (64 mi) tunnel under the Bering Strait which, if completed, would become the longest tunnel in the world. The tunnel would be part of a railway joining Yakutsk, the capital of the Russian Yakutia republic, and Komsomolsk-on-Amur, in the Russian Far East, with the western coast of Alaska. The Bering Strait tunnel was estimated to cost between \$10 billion to \$12 billion, while the entire project was estimated to cost \$65 billion.

In 2008, Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin approved the plan to build a railroad to the Bering Strait area, as a part of the development plan to run until 2030. The more than 100-kilometre (60 mi) tunnel would run under the Bering Strait between Chukotka, in the Russian far east, and Alaska. The cost estimate was US\$66 billion.

In late August 2011, at a conference in Yakutsk in eastern Russia, the plan was backed by some of President Dmitry Medvedev's top officials, including Aleksandr Levinthal, the deputy federal representative for the Russian Far East. It would be a faster, safer, and cheaper way to move freight around the world than container ships, supporters of the idea believed. They estimated it could carry about 3% of global freight and make about US\$7 billion a year. Shortly after, the Russian government approved the construction of the US\$65 billion Siberia-Alaska rail and tunnel across the Bering Strait.

Other observers doubt that this will be cheaper than container ships, bearing in mind that the cost for transport from China to Europe by railroad is higher than by container ship (except for expensive cargo where lead time is important).

In 2013 the railway Amur Yakutsk Mainline connecting Yakutsk (2,800 km or 1,700 mi from the strait) with the main rail network was completed. However, this railway is meant

for freight and is too curvy for high-speed passenger trains. Future projects include the Lena–Kamchatka Mainline (ru) and Kolyma–Anadyr highway (ru). The Kolyma–Anadyr highway has started construction, but will be a narrow gravel road. (Bering Strait crossing. Wikipedia, accessed 02/12/20)

Notice also:

On the American side, probably about 1,200 kilometers (750 mi) of highways or railroads would have to be built around Norton Sound, through a pass along the Unalakleet River, and along the Yukon River to connect to Manley Hot Springs Road – in other words, a route similar to that of the Iditarod Trail Race. A project to connect Nome, 100 miles (160 km) from the strait, to the rest of the continent by a paved highway (part of Alaska Route 2) has been proposed by the Alaskan state government, although the very high cost (\$2.3 to \$2.7 billion, about \$5 million per mile, or \$3 million per kilometer) has so far prevented construction.

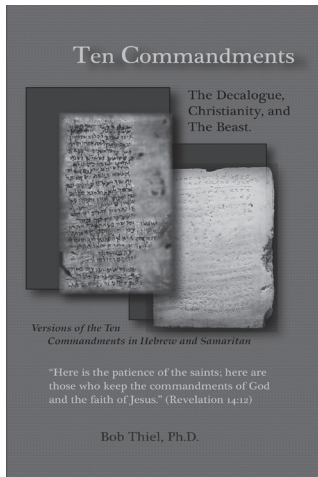
In 2016, the Alaskan road network was extended by 50 miles (80 km) to Tanana, by building a fairly simple road. The Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities project was supported by local indigenous groups such as the Tanana Tribal Council. (Bering Strait crossing. Wikipedia, accessed 02/12/20)

The part of above project to connect to Alaska has also been called the Interamerican Railroad Line and claimed to be a Russian project. It has not happened, but it does show that Russia maintains interest in Alaska.

Ultimately, I expect that Russia will end up with parts of Alaska and likely Canada as the result of a deal it will make with the coming European King of the North Beast power.

While Adam Schiff's observation was likely for shock value and political purposes, the idea that Russia may end up with Alaska and parts of Canada is not farfetched and would align with various biblical prophecies.

# The EIGHTH Commandment



## By Bob Thiel

Can you imagine a world in which you never have to worry about anyone stealing anything from you, your family, your business, etc.? A world where no one tries to cheat you? A world where people are not 'phishing' for you on the internet to take your identity or con you out of money.

That is how the world should be.

The eighth commandment, from the Book of Exodus, states:

15 "You shall not steal. (Exodus 20:15)

The Bible not only teaches against stealing, notice the following:

28 Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with his hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need. (Ephesians 4:28)

Yes, you are to GIVE to others, not just avoiding stealing!

If everyone stole and no one produced, there would be nothing to eat, nothing to wear, etc. Stealing hurts society.

It may be of interest to note that the biblical penalty for stealing was to pay the stolen from 4-5 times as

much as the value of what was stolen (cf. Exodus 22:1). And for stealing food, 7 times as much (Proverbs 6:31).

Among other things, this taught people that they would not get rich from stealing and needed to produce their own food.

From a societal perspective, we would almost never need locks or carry keys if people did not steal. Also, if people do not steal, they tend to realize that they need to work to produce what they and their families need.

But there are other ways to steal. Improper representations when buying or selling (false advertising) is wrong (Proverbs 20:10, 14). Not working as one should (cf. Ecclesiastes 9:10; Ephesians 6:5-8; Colossians 3:22-24), is stealing from one's employer and/or society. Employers are also to properly pay their employees (cf. James 5:4-6). The Bible also teaches that one who is too lazy to work is covetous (Proverbs 21:25-26). Covetousness leads to stealing.

Committing adultery is stealing from one's spouse and put's one's spouse at risk of disease. Not praising God as we are told to do (e.g. Psalm 22:23; 113:1; Romans 13:7) would be another form of stealing.

Those truly living as Christians are not scheming to try to figure out how much they can take from others.

## Not Tithing is Stealing

Many people do not believe that they steal, yet they do not realize that the Bible teaches that not giving tithes and proper offerings is stealing.

Notice what the prophet Malachi was inspired to write:

8 "Will a man rob God? Yet you have robbed Me! But you say, 'In what way have we robbed You?'

In tithes and offerings.

9 You are cursed with a curse, For you have robbed Me, Even this whole nation. 10 Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, That there may be food in My house, And try Me now in this," Says the Lord of hosts,

“If I will not open for you the windows of heaven  
And pour out for you such blessing That there  
will not be room enough to receive it. (Malachi  
3:8-10)

Many people will not heed God’s admonitions. Most do NOT have the faith to tithe and trust God to bless them (for more on faith, read our free online booklet, Faith for Those God has Called and Chosen, which is available at [www.cccog.org](http://www.cccog.org)).

Jesus taught that tithing was still to be done (Matthew 23:23; Luke 11:42). And the Book of Hebrews shows that tithing was changed from the Levites to ministry of the church (Hebrews 7:1-2,8-12).

Yes, many reason around this, but those that do are violating the 8th commandment. It takes faith to tithe, not faith to claim it is unnecessary (cf. James 2:14-26).

## What About Taxes?

Some people consider that taxes are ‘legalized’ stealing and should not be paid.

Whether or not they are ‘constitutional’ in places like the USA can be debated, but taxes are the enforced law of the land of most nations.

Jesus taught that people were to pay taxes:

14 When they had come, they said to Him, “Teacher, we know that You are true, and care about no one; for You do not regard the person of men, but teach the way of God in truth. Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not? 15 Shall we pay, or shall we not pay?”

But He, knowing their hypocrisy, said to them, “Why do you test Me? Bring Me a denarius that I may see it.” 16 So they brought it.

And He said to them, “Whose image and inscription is this?” They said to Him, “Caesar’s.”

17 And Jesus answered and said to them, “Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.” (Mark 12:14-17)

Thus, not paying legitimately due taxes would be stealing.

While some may argue that Jesus was talking to the Jews, the Apostle Paul also wrote that Christians should pay taxes:

1 Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. 2 Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves. 3 For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Do you want to be unafraid of the authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same. 4 For he is God’s minister to you for good. But if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the sword in vain; for he is God’s minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil. 5 Therefore you must be subject, not only because of wrath but also for conscience’ sake. 6 For because of this you also pay taxes, for they are God’s ministers attending continually to this very thing. 7 Render therefore to all their due: taxes to whom taxes are due, customs to whom customs, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor. (Romans 13:1-7)

Paul was writing to Christians. Christians should pay taxes.

## Eighth Commandment Before Sinai, from Jesus, and After Jesus’ Death

The Bible shows the eighth commandment was in place before Mt. Sinai:

“So my righteousness will answer for me ... everyone that is not speckled and spotted among the goats, and brown among the lambs, will be considered stolen, if it is with me” (Genesis 30:33). ““With whomever you find your gods, do not let him live. In the presence of our brethren identify what I have of yours and take it with you.’ For Jacob did not know that Rachel had stolen them” (Genesis 31:32). “How then could we steal silver or gold from your lord’s house. With whomever of your servants it is found, let him die” (Genesis 44:8-9). “He kills



the poor and needy; And in the night he is like a thief" (Job 24:14).

Jesus taught and expanded the eighth commandment:

"For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts... thefts... These are the things which defile a man" (Matthew 15:19-20). "You shall not steal" (Mat 19:18). "It is written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer', but you have made it a den of thieves" (Matthew 21:13). "...thefts... All these evil things come from within and defile a man" (Mark 7:22-23). "Do not steal" (Mark 10:19). "You know the commandments:... Do not steal" (Luke 18:20).

After Jesus was resurrected, the New Testament taught the eighth commandment:

"You shall not steal" (Romans 13:9). "nor thieves... will inherit the kingdom of God" (1

Corinthians 6:10). "I have been... in perils of robbers" (2 Corinthians 11:25-26). "Let him who stole, steal no longer" (Ephesians 4:28). "But let none of you suffer as... a thief" (1 Peter 4:15). John seems to have expanded on the theme of this commandment when he wrote, "whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him" (1 John 3:17). "And they did not repent of ... their thefts" (Revelation 9:21).

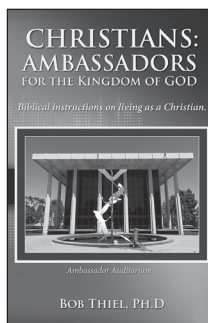
Be productive. Do not steal.

All Christians should look forward to the time when thievery issues are basically gone.

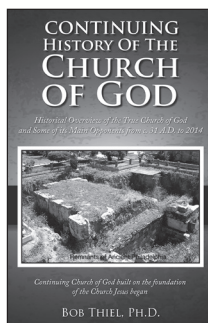
*More on the Ten Commandments can be found in our free online book, available at [www.ccog.org](http://www.ccog.org), titled: 'The Ten Commandments: The Decalogue, Christianity, and the Beast.'*

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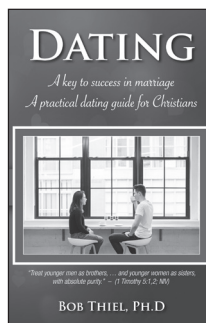
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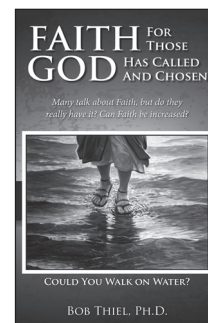
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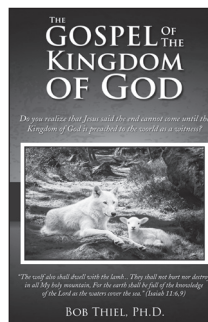
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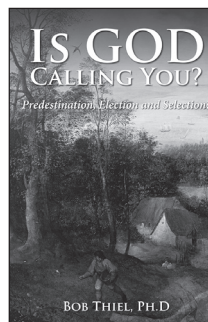
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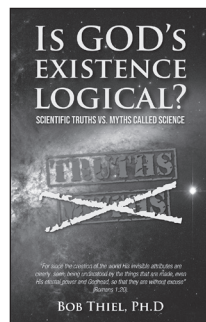
Faith for Those God has Called and Chosen



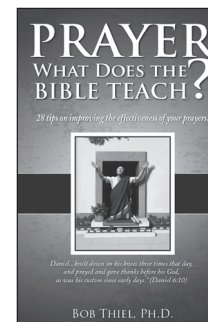
The Gospel of the Kingdom of God



Is God Calling You?



Is God's Existence Logical?



Prayer: What Does the Bible Teach?

# Gambling and Sin: Is it a Sin for Christians to Gamble?



By Bob Thiel

Gambling is a big industry. Millions, if not billions, of people gamble.

Is gambling just harmless fun? Is gambling a sin? What is sin? Is it always a sin to gamble? Do the big 'winners' actually win?

This article will address those questions.

## The Gambling Industry

The gambling industry calls itself the gaming industry. Basically, they like to indicate that they are in the entertainment industry. And while that is slightly true, many people who gamble are not just playing games, but focused on winning money and hoping not to lose it.

And sometimes gambling is simply gaming.

Once, when my wife and I were waiting for our lunch in a small restaurant in the Netherlands, we saw something that we thought looked like a Dutch pinball game. We thought it might be fun to try it as it did not look like anything we ever had seen in the USA. It cost about 25 cents (\$0.25) US to play. Well, apparently we were doing fairly well and a man right next to us (who did not speak English) somehow conveyed that we were winning money. This was a surprise as we did not know it was a gambling device and we were not sure how to play it. We ended up winning about the

price of the inexpensive lunch. So, yes, gaming can be okay and harmless fun.

But frequently it is not.

Many deceive themselves about what they would do with large gambling winnings. Some gamblers seem to try to make some type of deal in their heads with God, hoping that He will decide that they should win.

Back in 2003, there was a scene from a movie called Bruce Almighty regarding the lottery. The premise of the movie was someone named Bruce (played by Jim Carry) complained about God and how he did not feel that God was doing His job right. So, in the movie, God allowed Bruce to be able to hear and answer prayers for a region.

It did not take long for Bruce to get overwhelmed by the process. So, for a time he decides to give everyone whatever they asked for. So, with the next lottery ticket drawing, all those in the area Bruce was responsible for were allowed to win. The winners all acted very pleased when they won, until they realized that each would only get a few dollars as the prize was split among all who asked 'God' to win in that area. They were not pleased that they had to share the winnings with so many others.

The Apostle Paul wrote:

4 Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.  
(Philippians 2:4)

Although Bruce Almighty was just a movie, I suspect that huge numbers of people have prayed that God would allow them to win the lottery or other forms of gambling. Few, if any, have prayed that someone they are not close to, will win.

While some may tell themselves that they want to win to help their family or others, mainly people have a lust for themselves to win.

Furthermore, there is something called the "gambler's fallacy" which creates deceptive biases that lead people to anticipate patterns that don't really exist. So, yes, gamblers are often lying to themselves.

## What is Sin?

What is sin?

The Bible teaches:

4 Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness. (1 John 3:4, NKJV)

4 Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law. (1 John 3:4, KJV)

What laws are not to be transgressed?

The Ten Commandments.

The tenth of which has to do with covetousness.

17 “You shall not covet your neighbor’s house; you shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, nor his male servant, nor his female servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is your neighbor’s.” (Exodus 20:17)

Some will say that they are not directly coveting something of their neighbor’s when the gamble. But Jesus broadened that a bit, as somewhat did the Apostle Paul. Notice:

15 And He said to them, “Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses.” (Luke 12:15)

7 What shall we say then? Is the law sin? Certainly not! On the contrary, I would not have known sin except through the law. For I would not have known covetousness unless the law had said, “You shall not covet.” (Romans 7:7)

Covetousness can be a problem that most do not realize:

### **The Last — But Not the Least by Richard H Wilkinson**

Not too long ago a prominent clergyman wrote that in all his years of listening to confessions, he had not once heard the sin of coveting confessed.

Interesting. Could it be because, humanly, it

is easy to think of the Ten Commandments as descending in order of importance, and to not take the Tenth Commandment as seriously as the nine before it?

The last of God’s Ten Commandments, “You shall not covet” (Ex. 20:17), is just as encompassing and significant as any of the others.

The English word covet in the Bible is translated from seven different words that illustrate the different forms coveting may take. Let’s look at the meanings of these words.

1) That which is not ours. The word usually translated “covet” means to desire in a negative way, to want what is not rightfully ours. This is the Hebrew word used in Exodus 20:17; the verse speaks of our neighbor’s property.

An interesting example of the use of this word is in Exodus 34:24, where God promises ancient Israel: “I will cast out the nations before you and enlarge your borders; neither will any man covet your land when you go up to appear before the Lord your God three times in the year.”

God promised to protect His people’s property from the greed of their neighbors if Israel would obey Him and keep His festivals. When Israel didn’t keep God’s Holy Days, God did not protect them from this basic form of human covetousness (Judg. 2:11 -23).

2) Dishonest gain. Another word often translated “covet” has the connotation of wanting something but not being willing to pay the price for it. It is not necessarily that the object of desire could not rightfully be ours, but we want it dishonestly. Ezekiel speaks of princes of Israel who were “like wolves tearing the prey, to shed blood, to destroy people, and to get dishonest gain” (Ezek. 22:27). The phrase dishonest gain is translated from this second word.

Gambling, in its various forms, reflects this kind of coveting when it is based on the human desire to get and yet avoid paying the price.

3) Wanting for the wrong reasons. A third Old Testament word for “covet” means wanting something for the wrong reasons. It is in this



sense that the prophet Amos wrote, “Woe to you who desire the day of the Lord” (Amos 5:18). We can desire a good thing for wrong reasons.

4) Overvaluing the physical. In the New Testament we find instruction regarding another kind of coveting: setting too high a value on some physical thing. Paul wrote, “I have coveted no one’s silver or gold or apparel” (Acts 20:33).

In Genesis 25:29-34 we see this attitude displayed in Esau’s desire for Jacob’s pottage. Hebrews 12:16 warns us against being a “profane person like Esau, who for one morsel of food sold his birthright.” The word profane here means not putting enough value on the proper things, and especially the things of God.

5) Wanting more and more. Ever heard the expression, “Some people are never satisfied”? One of the words translated “covet” in the New Testament comes from a root meaning “to get more,” “to overreach,” “to be moved by greed.”

It is not wrong to exercise diligence and the principles of success, but God’s Word clearly says that a dissatisfied attitude — one of always desiring more — is only another form of covetousness. Paul used this word when he wrote of “covetousness, which is idolatry” (Col. 3:5).

6) Obsessive desire. Another word used in the New Testament refers to a deep desire. A desire is not wrong of itself (see I Timothy 3:1), but this word can also reflect an inordinate or obsessive desire. (Good News, May 1983)

Covetousness is wrong and is sin. Gambling is often driven by covetousness, and even when not, often leads to covetousness.

## Encounters with Gamblers

The late Herbert Armstrong related some of his encounters with gambling, beginning with a story about someone else’s mother:

All mom cared about was card games. She played cards and bingo five and six nights a

week. She even use the money that Len and me made working after school. Then, Leonard added, when she got mad, she’d curse at us and tell us that we were just in the way, that if it weren’t for us that she could be free and have a good time. The boys describe the professional card games, to which their mother was addicted. She would pay fifty-cents or a dollar for a seat at the table, and then play cards until she was either broke or intoxicated with winnings, which she would take back and lose the next night. You know, that’s one thing about gambling, incidentally I’m going to break in here since that’s been mentioned.

I don’t know whether you read the article by the owner of one of the biggest, I guess the biggest gambling house up in Reno, one of the biggest gambling houses in the whole United States, of the whole world. And of course, gambling is legal up there. But anyway, this gambling house owner said, he wanted to answer the question, ‘do we cheat or is it straight or is it crooked in our gambling house’? No, he said, we don’t have to cheat. It’s absolutely straight. And that’s the truth in these gambling houses. They don’t have to cheat. Not at all. It’s fixed in a certain way. For instance, the roulette tables and things of that sort. By the law of average it’s fixed that the house is going to get a certain slight break on it and a profit provided it breaks even as it does of course over thousands of plays or thousands of dollars, or however you want to rate it. But here’s the way he explained it. They don’t have to cheat and they don’t have to keep anything hid or crooked or anything of the sort. They’re piling up money and they’re making themselves millionaires running these gambling houses without it. And here’s why, it’s a matter of human nature.

A man comes in to gamble. It gets into his blood. If he begins to win a little bit, he wants to win more. And he can’t stop. He can’t stop when he’s ahead; he hasn’t got sense enough to stop because he all intoxicated with the whole thing by that time. He’s got to win more. Just a little more and then I’ll quit. But before he gets that little more, where he willing to quit, at least

before he comes to the time where he's willing to quit, he begins to lose. Well, if he loses a little bit, now he got to keep on long enough to get that back. But probably he goes on losing more and more. Now he's got to get that back. Well, if he gets a little of it back, he has got up where he wanted, so he keeps on. Pretty soon he gets down even and now he's got to get back again up on top. Well, then he begins to lose and go under. Now, he has less than he came in with. Well, now he got to continue to play until he gets at least even with the game. He can't quit behind that game. So he keeps on and it goes up and down; up and down and of course it goes back and forth and then there's a good many games that's an even 50-50 break between him and the house but, you know first he's winning and then they are winning. But the thing is when he's winning he never can stop until he gets just a little more. He hasn't won quite enough to stop. And when he's behind he can't quit until he gets back up ahead again. And so what does he do? Well, he continues until he's broke. Now, the thing is, the house never goes broke. The house has enough money, they don't have to stop. They have more money than the customer and the customer continues to gamble until he's broke. Now, one of them has got to go broke because they won't quit. And it is always the customer who goes broke and so the house gets their money.

Now, actually, as this man said, and they have cards all over as you're driving anywhere in the western whole third of the United States you'll see the cards of this house or their billboards up all over the highways in every place. And, it was an article in one of our largest popular national magazines, I think, where this was written. I think it was some years ago now but not too long it comes back to me, I remember. Now, he says, supposing a man does win 10,000 dollars or something at gambling at his house? Do they hate to give it him? Why no, they're perfectly glad to give it to him. Not only that, they want to publicize that, they want everybody to know how much this man won because that makes everybody else want to come and win. Of course, the others aren't going to win most

of them are going to lose. Now, in the law of averages, once in a while a man wins and has enough sense to quit when he's ahead.

As a matter of fact, I had business over in Las Vegas one time, and I was over there to see a man, who I had been informed wanted to make a donation to Ambassador College. And, we were staying in a certain hotel, and we were to see the man as we drove over and got there in the evening or late at night and we were to see him the next morning. Well next morning, the man who was, well our agent and taking care of this matter for us, came to see me and he said, well, he said, you know something that you maybe didn't know, this man has a part interest in one of our casinos here and he said there were two or three men from Hollywood that were over here last night and took the thing for I think for was over a hundred thousand dollars, I believe it was something like a hundred and ten thousand dollars. And they quit when they were ahead. Now, that was such a lost; that really hit the gambling casino, that hit the owners and the management and they said that he had such a headache, that he wasn't going to feel like donating anything today and so we didn't see him. Well, of course I didn't know that he was in the gambling business or anything of that sort because this man had a very high reputation. And, one of the best thought of men in the state, as far as that is concerned.

Now, what actually happened to those gamblers, did they quit a hundred and ten thousands dollars ahead? I think that was the amount. Maybe it was more. It might have been over two-hundred thousand; I did,.. it was a terrific amount, I don't just remember. I believe it was! Come to think about it, I believe it was over two-hundred thousands dollars. And I believe it is in what they call a 'crap' game; that's shooting dice, you know. I don't know much about it, cause I've never done it. Never in my life have I ever gotten into such a game and I don't understand it. I'd seen it, when I'd been over there, you have to walk past those places to get to the dining room. But, I never stopped long enough to have it explained and I

don't understand the game and I don't care to understand it.

But nevertheless, here's what happened to those fellows. They went over to another gambling casino from there, where they lost a big share of their money. And then they went to another one where they got cleaned out and lost all the money they'd come with and in addition to that hundred or two hundred thousands dollars they'd won. And so, this one gambling casino lost but the others made it up, and that's the way it goes. You know, you might just as well realize, my friends, you just can't beat it. There's no use of trying. Too many people in America are just trying to get something for nothing. They're trying to get money without earning it.

Now, I've heard of a lot of people who will go to Reno or to Las Vegas to gamble. And, will make a trip once or twice a year. And, they set aside a certain amount of money. And they say its their pleasure and they enjoy it. They go there with a certain allowance, a certain amount of money. They know they're going to lose it. But they feel that's their way of spending that much money for pleasure. So they gamble, and it may last two, three or four days, they take enough money to let it. They win, then they get behind then they get ahead and then they get behind. But they keep on until they're behind all the money that they set apart that they come with; there to gambling. And, when it gets to that point, they quit and go home. Now there are people that go to Las Vegas every year who do it just that way. But what fun they get out of that; I never could see.

You know, some people can get dope in them. They start out with marijuana and then they go into heroin. And they get to the place they crave it and they have to have more. Well, it just isn't healthy. Don't ever get yourself to the place where you crave that sort of thing. Now, I've never been inoculated with it. What fun they can get out of it, I've seen them in gambling dens, I've had to walk past those places. And, I don't see them looking really happy. They don't have their faces wreathed in smiles and happiness and just exuding joy and seeing how

much good they can do for everybody and everything in that sort,..

No, the best you can say is they just came for excitement, but most of them have a worried look. And I've seen some that had a terrible worried look before they got through and I've heard of many cases, in Las Vegas, for instance, and places like that, where people come in there, they lose all they got and where men will gamble away all of the money they had and they'd plan on something that the family needed and was going to do but they thought they could run it up just a little more money. Well, they don't do it, they lose all they had. If they do run up a little bit they haven't got sense enough to quit when they're ahead. Course you think probable you'd quit when you're ahead, oh no, you wouldn't, you're human just like everybody else. Very few ever do. And if they quit when they're ahead in one place, why they lose it later. And it's just like this boy said, if his mom got a head tonight, she'd lose it tomorrow night. Now that's human nature. You know that sort of thing just does not pay...

Well, to get back, and since I've started this I'd better finished this little story and show you exactly what happened. Now this Leonard added that when this woman got back home, she was mad, she'd curse at us and tell us that we're just in the way and if it weren't for us she could be free and have a good time. The boys describe the professional card games. Only, I guess I was a little farther along, I'm reading this, of course, something that I whip out. I was down here where she would lose the next night, whatever she'd win one night if she did win gambling. Well, that's the way it goes. Now, the boy's father, as they described him was well intentioned but weak and unable to do anything about it. When, their mother, isn't that the common idea today, yes, just as I told you, now that's in the Bible too.

A lot of things are in the Bible that makes sense. Only, most of you say, I just don't understand the Bible. And you some how got it in your head that the Bible doesn't make any sense. So, let me tell you it does. If you think that, you



just haven't understood it. (Armstrong HW. Hebrews Series 13 - Juvenile Delinquency. Radio broadcast, transcript)

Most people lose discipline and lose money when they gamble. Slot machines, paramutual horse racing, etc. are programmed to statistically guarantee it, while greedy human nature tends to further increase the losses.

As far as slot machines go, those "one-armed bandits" make a lot of noise when someone is winning, but are fairly quiet when people are losing. Since we can hear noise, the noise gives the impression that the machines will make someone win, when in reality they are programmed to ensure that the house/casino will always come out ahead.

## What About Casting Lots?

In the Bible, sometimes it is shown that lots were cast in order to determine God's will (Acts 1:23-26). This was something that God seemed to utilize prior to the pouring out of His Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost in Acts 2. While there may be possible place for this, it does not seem to have been a practice Christians felt needed to be continued. The sacred nature of appealing to God this way is another reason to be cautious about participating in carnal gambling.

## Who Loses the Most Gambling? Who Wins the Most Gambling?

A 2014 report showed who lost the most from gambling:

Some gamblers believe they are lucky or special and will beat the odds and win — it is untrue for the overwhelming majority of players. Inexperienced gamblers (and investors) may fall victim to the Dunning-Kruger Effect — the tendency for unskilled individuals to overrate their skill and ability, and underrate the difficulty of the task at hand. They may also create narrative fallacies and rationalizations to justify their belief that they can beat the odds and win.

So that covers the behavior of many casual gamblers, but for problem bettors, the issue

is often addiction. (Aziz J. How did Americans manage to lose \$119 billion gambling last year? The Week, February 5, 2014)

The article showed a chart of gambling losses per adult by nation, the biggest losers were those in Australia. Here is a listing of the nations whose people lost the most money per adult

Australia, Singapore, Finland, New Zealand, United States, Italy, Ireland, Norway, Canada, Sweden, Britain

The Australians lost over USD\$1000 per adult in 2013, whereas the Brits lost just under \$400 per adult. It was interesting to note that the American and Anglo-Saxon nations had six of the eleven top biggest gambling losing nations in the world.

Since Australia was listed as first, I thought the following in the July-August 1983 edition of the old Plain Truth magazine would be of interest to some:

Commenting about the state of the nation, Australian teacher, writer and critic Bill Broderick is quoted in Time, September 22, 1980, as saying of modern Australia, "God is dead. Only in sport, gambling and sex is there hope of salvation. Nothing can shake the country of this cynicism except some catastrophe on a national scale."

In Hosea 5:14 God says, "For I will be unto Ephraim as a lion... I, even I, will tear and go away; I will take away, and NONE SHALL RESCUE HIM."

Placing their confidence in gambling and not God is not new for many Australians, or others for that matter. Christians are to have faith in God. (Noller DK. Australia the Beautiful ... Australia the Condemned!)

(Regarding faith See also, our free book, online at ccog.org, Faith for Those God has Called and Chosen.)

The way the odds are stacked for almost all games (blackjack can be an exception, though the casinos tend to stop successful blackjack players after a while--actor Ben Affleck was claimed to have been barred from playing blackjack at the Hard Rock Cafe casino in Las Vegas, because casino security told him: "You are too good at the game." (A later report said

he was allowed back) The casinos win the most from gambling.

## What About ‘Winners’ in the Lottery?

Many people fantasize about winning the lottery.

They are convinced winning a large amount of money will improve their lives.

Yet, that is most often not the case.

The ‘curse’ of winning the lottery?

Be careful what you wish for.

The New Hampshire woman who won the \$559.7 million Powerball jackpot last month is refusing to claim her prize until she’s assured anonymity. And she may have a compelling reason to seek the guarantee.

It turns out winning a jackpot of millions or even thousands of dollars can lead to financial ruin — or even death. Several recent lottery winners have turned up dead in communities across the country. ... You also seem to have an increased risk of being killed ...

Sometimes hitting the jackpot simply brings “more problems,” as rapper Notorious B.I.G. put it. ...

“Of the thousands of lottery winners I knew, a few were happy and a few lived happily ever after,” Edward Ugel, author of *Money for Nothing: One Man’s Journey Through the Dark Side of Lottery Millions*, told the Daily Beast. “But you would be blown away to see how many winners wish they’d never won.” ... (Carbone C. The ‘curse’ of winning the lottery? Fox News, February 6, 2018)

If you win the \$1.5 billion Powerball jackpot, you may not be as lucky as you may think. Many winners befall the so-called curse of the lottery, with some squandering their fortunes and others meeting tragic ends.

“So many of them wind up unhappy or wind up broke. People have had terrible things happen,”

said Don McNay, 56, a financial consultant to lottery winners and the author of *Life Lessons from the Lottery*. “People commit suicide. People run through their money. Easy comes, easy goes. They go through divorce or people die.”

“It’s just upheaval that they’re not ready for,” McNay told TIME on Tuesday. “It’s the curse of the lottery because it made their lives worse instead of improving them.”

About 70 percent of people who suddenly receive a windfall of cash will lose it within a few years, according to the National Endowment for Financial Education. (Chan M. Here’s How Winning the Lottery Makes You Miserable. Time, January 12, 2016)

So, even those who ‘win’ still lose.

Notice also:

### 5 reasons you don’t really want to win the lottery

No one wants to discourage you from winning, but here’s a reality check: Loot can bring some ugly into your life, so you had better be ready for it. These are the ways megabucks can megabackfire.

1. Your friends will take advantage.

Once word gets out that you have the winning ticket, you can expect everyone to try to cozy up to you, ...

2. Your relationship could fail.

Money woes can strain a relationship. But those who come into big windfalls find coming into a lot of money can also overtax a relationship. ...

3. You’ll have an increased risk of bankruptcy.

Given the fact that you’d have enough dough to clear up your debt, bankruptcy seems a long shot after winning the lottery. But experts say lottery winners actually are at greater risk of bankruptcy. ...

4. You’ll have to fight off a host of long-lost

family members.

Jeff Motske, a financial planner and president of Trilogy Financial Services, headquartered in Huntington Beach, California, says lottery winners often become targets for long-lost relatives who knock on the door with one hand and hold the other palm up. Somehow they think when one family member wins the lotto, the whole family wins the lotto. ...

5. You'll be a target for a litany of lawsuits and scams.

Hoping to carve out a chunk of your fortune, Motske says lottery winners are often targets for bogus lawsuits because everyone starts to come after them. (Kossman S. 5 reasons you don't really want to win the lottery. CreditCards.com, March 29, 2012)

The lottery is not the answer.

Instead of working harder, getting better job training, and/or improving education, many poor resign themselves that the lottery is their answer. They do not understand, What is the Meaning of Life?

Many purchasers of lottery tickets also do not heed the following:

31 Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' 32 For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. 33 But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. 34 Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble. (Matthew 6:31-34)

Instead of seeking first the Kingdom of God, they seek to get from others.

Of course, that is not limited to lottery ticket purchasers, but their focus suggests the way of get and not the loving way of give (though there can be exceptions).

Lotteries are not the answer. Lotteries are not good for humanity.

## Governments Should Not Promote Lotteries

Governments often promote lotteries as something good.

They are not.

Lotteries are deceptive and are one of the worst forms of gambling as the odds of winning at government lotteries is normally a lot lower than the odds at casinos.

Furthermore, because I feel that lotteries are a tax on the poor and function as a tremendous DISINCENTIVE for people to better their lives, I am not convinced that most governments are better off financially, overall, than they would be if they did not sponsor lotteries. Government lotteries play off the lust, hopes, hopelessness, and covetousness of their people.

Am I saying that all gambling must be a sin? No. Sometimes it is minor entertainment. But because it has a strong tendency to lead to covetousness, for most people it is best to be avoided most of the time.

The Apostle Paul wrote:

9 But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition. 10 For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. (1 Timothy 6:9-10)

This does not mean that Christians should not try to improve their financial conditions through honest work. But it is a warning about how far to pursue money.

Jesus taught that His followers were to pray:

13 And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one. (Matthew 6:13)

We are also to not lead our own selves into temptation. We all have strengths and weaknesses. What may tempt some, does not seem to have the same affect on some others (cf. Galatians 6:1).



While many pray that God will assist them when they gamble, here is a biblical reason that God generally will not answer that type of prayer:

2 You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask. 3 You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures. (James 4:2-3)

God does not wish to enable lusts. He wants you to work to better yourselves and others. That is normally done via productive work, not activities like gambling.

Do not deceive yourself (cf. 1 John 1:8) if you have a gambling problem.

7 Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. 8 For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life. (Galatians 6:7-8)

If gambling may negatively affect your financial standard of living, become an obsession, or lead to covetousness, it should be avoided.

Many governments are looking at extending the legality of gambling. I consider lotteries and similar programs as a tax on the poor. I believe it often demotivates people to improve themselves financially and often gets people to be focused on getting something for nothing. Gambling often leads to the violation of the 10th commandment.

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## STUDY THE BIBLE COURSE

### LESSON 17B: WHAT IS SIN?

**Bob Thiel, Editor-in-Chief**

Published 2020 by the *Continuing Church of God*

**Preface:** *This course is highly based upon the personal correspondence course developed in 1954 that began under the direction of the late C. Paul Meredith in the old Radio Church of God. Various portions have been updated for the 21st century (though much of the original writing has been retained). It also has more scriptural references, as well as information and questions not in the original course. Unless otherwise noted, scriptural references are to the NKJV, copyright Thomas Nelson Publishing, used by permission. The KJV, sometimes referred to as the Authorized Version is also often used. Additionally, Catholic-approved translations such as the New Jerusalem Bible (NJB) are sometimes used as are other translations.*



In this lesson we need to ask and answer the following questions:

Just what IS sin anyway? Does God DEFINE it in the Bible? And did Jesus Christ DO AWAY with the Father's spiritual law of love the Ten Commandments? Do we find the apostle Paul and the New Testament Church TEACHING OBEDIENCE to God's law?

Were the Ten Commandments FIRST GIVEN to Moses at Mount Sinai, and ONLY for the "Jews"

to keep from that time forward? Are the Ten Commandments the same as, or part of, the RITUALISTIC LAW of Moses?

Did God withhold His spiritual law from the world during the time between Adam and Moses? Or did He FIRST REVEAL this way to supreme happiness to Adam and Eve in Eden?

Let's learn the truth about God's law from the Bible!

But first, read these important instructions!

This lesson is intended to direct you to the BIBLE – to help you learn the truth of God’s Word. Here is the method of study.

Is your Bible in front of you? If not, GET your Bible – or Bibles, if you have more than one translation – BEFORE YOU DO ANOTHER THING! Have a good dictionary, a concordance if you own one, and your notepaper all placed in front of you on a desk or table.

Remember – you must open your Bible to EVERY PASSAGE. Never say to yourself, “Oh, I think I know what this scripture is referring to” – and then pass over it. You need to “KEEP YOUR NOSE IN THE BIBLE,” so to speak. You must read and re-read and think out each passage. MEDITATE on this new knowledge in your leisure time, especially during the following twenty-four hours, and in your time of prayer – SO YOU WON’T FORGET it!

Make God’s Word a PART OF you! Don’t forget, this is a BIBLE STUDY Course not just a study of these words we send you.

Here is the method of taking effective notes: Write down neatly (or print) the title of this lesson. Underneath that write down the lesson number. As you come to each question section, write down its heading. Then, at the left-hand margin of your paper, number each question and write down the scriptural answer to each, together with any pertinent ideas that come to your mind.

Be SURE to WRITE OUT the scripture which answers each question. If you have not done so before, BEGIN TO DO IT NOW! Writing down every word of each Bible passage, and any comments you wish to make as you go along, will help you greatly in REVIEWING and REMEMBERING.

This lesson, like all others, is extremely important to you. Have you PRAYED to God for understanding? If not, then go to a private place, kneel down, and ask God for SPIRITUAL UNDERSTANDING and wisdom. Ask Him to HELP you grasp and apply in your own life the knowledge this lesson will reveal to you in the Bible.

And now for the lesson itself!

## LESSON 17

# WHAT SIN IS

People have numerous ideas about what constitutes “sin.” Many think that sin is something to be DESIRED. To illustrate, decades ago in Hollywood – the movie capital of America – there was sold in newsstands a book titled “How to Sin in Hollywood.” Visitors from all over the world who came to Hollywood would buy that book.

Actually, the book was quite harmless, merely giving names of restaurants and similar places. Most of them were eating places WITHOUT any entertainment.

But the point is that sin always SEEMS to be the “forbidden fruit” that is most glamorous and that would be most desirable if some unfair God had NOT denied it to us. That seems to be what human beings think of sin.

But that ISN’T WHAT GOD THINKS about sin!

1. What is God’s definition of SIN? Is it the TRANSGRESSION of the LAW? 1 John 3:4, KJV.
2. IS GOD’S law being spoken of in the previous scripture? – didn’t Paul state that the LAW says, “You shall not covet.”? Romans 7:7.

COMMENT: The LAW that said, “You shall not covet”, TAUGHT the apostle Paul what constitutes sin. And one cardinal point of that law is the TENTH COMMANDMENT! (Exodus 20:17.)

So the law against coveting is ONE of God’s TEN COMMANDMENTS! God reveals that the VIOLATION of His commandments and their principles constitutes SIN!

3. Does sin – the VIOLATION of the Ten Commandments and their principles – work AGAINST our own best interests? Romans 6:23.

COMMENT: “The WAGES of sin” – the “reward” YOU EARN by sinning against God’s law – the thing you BRING upon yourself – is DEATH! A shorter and unhappier life here, and ETERNAL OBLIVION in the hereafter – unless you REPENT of all your sins, have them WIPED AWAY by Christ’s blood and begin OBEYING GOD’S COMMANDMENTS!

## Way to Happiness Must Be REVEALED!

You want to be HAPPY, don't you? Nearly everyone does!

You would like to lead a life that is just full and abundant and INTERESTING – as a matter of fact, a little bit exciting all the way along, wouldn't you? And you want a life where everything is pleasant, where there is no pain or suffering.

You don't want a life of boredom. You don't want a life of sorrow. You want a HAPPY life, and you would love to feel well, jolly and joyful – happy all the time.

YOU COULD have a life like that. Everyone could. This ENTIRE WORLD could be like that – if we only UNDERSTOOD THE WAY! That way has to be REVEALED!

GOD reveals that way in His Guidebook for mankind – the Holy Bible! God Almighty in His great LOVE for humanity, reveals that He set a LAW in motion. That law was designed to PRODUCE just that kind of happy life in you!

God is Creator not only of matter – solid matter, liquid matter and gaseous matter, as we know it – but God is also Creator of FORCE, ENERGY and of EVERY POWER and LAW. The laws of physics, the laws of chemistry – every law that is in motion and is energized. Do you realize that God Almighty also created a SPIRITUAL LAW? That spiritual law is what REGULATES YOUR HAPPINESS!

But most people are NOT living that way. They're breaking that law, and have been breaking them for a long time, because that's precisely what happens when you BREAK GOD'S SPIRITUAL LAW!

That law is simply LOVE. It's the WAY of love. It's the way that love should be EXPRESSED – love toward God and love toward neighbor.

1. Did Paul say he would not have known what sin is except the law had pointed it out to him? Romans 7:7.

COMMENT: We don't know what is right and what is wrong unless God REVEALS it. Even the apostle Paul would not have known what sin is if God's law had

not told him.

Human nature will not teach you because human nature tends toward lust and evil (Jeremiah 17:9). As Paul says, "I would not have known covetousness" That is, he would not have known that coveting was wrong or evil; HE DIDN'T HAVE SUCH INSTINCTIVE KNOWLEDGE – "unless the LAW HAD SAID, "You shall not covet."

Do you realize that when you were born you DIDN'T KNOW ANYTHING! YOU WEREN'T even born with instinct as animals are.

Animals don't have to be taught a law to know what to do or not to do; they don't have to learn about a law that will show them HOW to be happy, and how to AVOID suffering. Animals are just dumb brutes which God has equipped with INSTINCT. They respond AUTOMATICALLY to this instinct God built into their simple brains when He originally created them.

But you and I are vastly different. We are made AFTER GOD'S IMAGE. Our minds possess, to a very limited degree, divine characteristics. We were put here as free moral agents for the purpose of PRODUCING CHARACTER – holy, righteous, spiritual character. If we submit to God and follow His law of love, He will be creating His spiritual character within us.

2. Did the apostle Paul say that the law – the Ten Commandments and their principles – is SPIRITUAL? Romans 7:14.

COMMENT: But Paul said he was CARNAL. He was fleshly and material. So are we all.

The law is a SPIRITUAL PRINCIPLE, and it REGULATES YOUR HAPPINESS – a SPIRITUAL matter. God's law directs and guides you as to what YOU SHOULD do so you can be happy.

3. Did Paul say God's law is sin? Romans 7:7. Or did he say the law is HOLY, and the commandment is HOLY, just and good? Romans 7:12.

COMMENT: That isn't what we are taught today, is it? Many people (particularly of certain Protestant persuasions) have been reared in the belief that the law is UNHOLY, harsh and cruel and ALTOGETHER WRONG! That it's bad for us, and therefore Christ had to DO AWAY with it!

WHAT A PARADOX! People think God's law – the very thing that points the WAY to true happiness – is WRONG! God reveals it is the very thing which shows us HOW to AVOID unhappiness!

May God help you to SEE and ACT on this marvelous truth!

## Commandments in Force Before Mt. Sinai

Some have claimed that the Ten Commandments were not in effect before God wrote them on the tablets of stone on Mt. Sinai. But that is not accurate.

The law was in effect since no later than Adam. The reason that we say 'no later' is that Lucifer and his followers also would have known about it.

God REVEALED the commandments to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. Why? So that they and their progeny could know what sin IS and AVOID it!

EVERY ONE of the Ten Commandments was then in full force and effect. And it was a SIN to break any one of them between the time of Adam and Moses, just as it is TODAY! Let's understand the truth.

1. Didn't Paul plainly state that sin is NOT IMPUTED where there is NO law? Romans 5:13.

COMMENT: God reveals that "the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23). But where there IS NO law, there obviously could be NO lawbreaking and therefore NO penalty could be imposed!

2. But do we find death DID reign – that the death penalty was IMPUTED because of sin – beginning with the very time of Adam? Romans 5:12, 14. Then didn't there obviously have to be a LAW in existence at least by the time of Adam?

COMMENT: Adam SINNED! But he could not have sinned had there been no law. How plain that God's law existed then and that it STILL is in existence to this day; for God says: "all have sinned"! (Verse 12, KJV.)

The law of God existed FROM THE BEGINNING. God instructed Adam and Eve in His law and revealed that living BY His laws would net them true happiness and material abundance. It is likely that He revealed all

this to them on the very NEXT DAY after their creation – on the SABBATH – the SEVENTH day of the week!

3. Doesn't all this plainly show that God's law was first given far EARLIER than many have assumed – much earlier than the time of Moses? Romans 5:14. Note the words "Adam TO Moses." Didn't Adam PRECEDE Moses? Same verse.

COMMENT: Obviously those who believe that God's spiritual law was not given UNTIL the time of Moses are absolutely WRONG!

EVERY ONE of the Ten Commandments was in existence during the time of Adam. It was SIN to break any one of them BEFORE they were RESTATED to Moses and the people at Mount Sinai!

(To see quotes of each of the Ten Commandments before Mt. Sinai, you can check out the article at <https://www.cogwriter.com/ten.htm>. For more on the Ten Commandments, you can also see our free book, online via [www.ccog.org](http://www.ccog.org), titled: . The Ten Commandments: The Decalogue, Christianity, and the Beast.)

## Humans Must Choose

God ordained from the beginning that He would NOT FORCE His way to supreme happiness – His spiritual law – upon mankind. He determined man would have to CHOOSE whether or not he would obey.

1. After creating Adam, did God place him in the Garden of Eden? Genesis 2:8. Then what did God give him PERMISSION to do? Verse 16.
2. Now notice God's WARNING immediately afterward. Genesis 2:17. Is it indulging in a MIXTURE of good and evil actions that God warns us against? Same verse.

COMMENT: Here we see that God is Supreme Ruler. God is giving the orders and is teaching. The man DIDN'T KNOW he shouldn't partake of the tree of good and evil. He had to be told. He had to be TAUGHT and INSTRUCTED.

3. What is the PENALTY – what can be expected when one "eats," or partakes of a MIXTURE of good and evil? Genesis 2:17.



COMMENT: God warned man that disobedience – SIN – to His command would end in DEATH, for “the wages of sin is death”! (Romans 6:23.)

But notice that the very fact God said “in the day that you eat of it ...” shows that man was ALLOWED to do it, that the man was a FREE MORAL AGENT – that the man himself had to MAKE THE CHOICE!

God designed that you and I must CHOOSE whether we will obey His law or not.

Animals don’t make choices like humans. Animals have instinct. And animals are usually contented. We have our “contented cows.” But we don’t have many contented people. Do you know WHY?

God simply ordained cows from their creation that they would AUTOMATICALLY live basically contented lives. But God ORDAINED that you and I MUST MAKE A CHOICE. And if we CHOOSE the RIGHT WAY to live according to that law which God set in motion to produce happiness and contentment and a full, thrilling, enjoyable life – WE CAN HAVE IT! (Deuteronomy 30:15-19.)

But if we CHOOSE to live the OTHER WAY, we’re going to have suffering, SORROWS and CURSES – that’s what the world has elected to do!

## Job Chose to Obey the Ten Commandments

Many scholars teach that Job was likely to have been alive around the time of the patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob), thus the subjects in the Book of Job were all known prior to Mount Sinai. Biblical evidence includes the facts that both Job and Abraham’s wealth are listed in livestock (Job 1:3;42:12; Genesis 12:16;13:2;30:43;32:5), the Chaldeans are portrayed as raiders (Job 1:17; as a people, they were not raiders later), the particular Hebrew word for ‘piece of silver’ in Job 42:11 is only used otherwise in conjunction with Jacob (Genesis 33:19; Joshua 24:32), and Job’s age (Job 42:16) appears to be consistent with the patriarchs.

Job knew about God before the Book of Genesis was written, as he said, “I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees You” (Job 42:5).

Here are some Jewish views on when Job may have

lived:

According to Bar Kappara, Job lived in the time of Abraham; according to Abba b. Kahana, in the time of Jacob, he having married Dinah, Jacob’s daughter (ib.; B. B. 15b; comp. additions in Targ. Yer. to Job ii. 9). R. Levi said that Job lived in the time of Jacob’s sons; and he also said, in the name of Jose b. Halafta, that Job was born when Jacob and his children entered Egypt and that he died when the Israelites left that country. Job consequently lived 210 years (comp. Rashi on Ex. xii. 40). When Satan came to accuse the Israelites of being idolaters, God set him against Job, whence Job’s misfortunes (Gen. R. l.c.). ... Levi b. Lahma also held that Job lived in the time of Moses, by whom the Book of Job was written. Some of the rabbis even declare that the one servant of Pharaoh who feared the word of God (Ex. ix. 20) was Job (Ex. R. xii. 3). Raba, specifying the time more accurately, said Job lived in the time of the spies who were sent by Moses to explore the land of Canaan (B. B. 15a). According to these rabbis, Job was a Gentile, an opinion which is elsewhere expressed more fully, in that Job is said to have been a pious Gentile or one of the prophets of the Gentiles (ib. 15b; Seder ‘Olam R. xxi.). (Job. Jewish Encyclopedia of 1906)

A few have indicated that Job could have been the first written book of the Bible, though many point to a later time of writing. Even if it were not written down prior to Mount Sinai, the narrative appears to be before the children of Israel entered the land of Egypt during the time of Joseph.

Job knew and kept the Ten Commandments. 1st Job 31:28, 42:1-2; 2nd Job 31:27-28; 3rd Job 2:9-10; 4th Job 2:13, 7:1, 20:5,20; 5th Job 14:21, 22:8; 6th 24:14; 7th Job 24:15; 8th Job 24:14, 31:27-28; 9th Job 6:28; 10th Job 31:27-28, 36:4; 10th Job 5:2, 31:1, 9-12.

Notice that Job chose to obey:

1 I have made a covenant with my eyes; Why then should I look upon a young woman? (Job 31:1).

It is from the 7th and 10th commandments one who come to that conclusion. Job knew and kept the Ten Commandments.

## The First Sins

1. God, the Creator, lovingly warned man that if he committed sin, he would SURELY DIE (Genesis 2:17). But what did the Devil say? Genesis 3:1-4. Note especially verse 4.

COMMENT: "YOU will NOT surely die" is the FIRST LIE of which we have any historical record. It was not told by a human, but by the DEVIL.

"YOU WILL NOT SURELY DIE. You're an IMMORTAL SOUL." Or "You have an immortal soul that won't die." That's what the devil was REALLY saying.

2. What else did the devil say? Genesis 3:5.

Note especially the words, "For God KNOWS."

COMMENT: In other words, the devil said "God knows better; God's been LYING to you!" That's what he wanted the woman to believe.

3. And then what did Eve do? Genesis 3:6. Did her husband also partake of the fruit? Same verse. Here was the FIRST human sin!

COMMENT: Analyze exactly what happened. God is the One we are to OBEY. Do you realize that's one of the definitions of God? Whoever or whatever you obey is your god. It might be your slavishness to your automobile. Maybe it's an actual idol. Whatever it is, THAT'S your god.

Adam and Eve had another god IN PLACE of the true God – they broke the first commandment, "You shall have NO OTHER GODS BEFORE ME" (Exodus 20:3). They also broke the FIFTH (Exodus 20:12) by dishonoring their only Parent. How? The genealogy of Christ goes back to Adam who was the "SON of God," because God CREATED him (Luke 3:38). Adam was the son of God by a DIRECT CREATION, not by begetting or birth.

Adam not only dishonored his Parent, but he also broke the TENTH commandment (Exodus 20:17). There was LUST when the woman saw that the fruit was good for food and to make one wise – vanity, egotism and pride entered into her heart.

Lust is what causes a person's inordinate desire to have something that is not legal. Lust causes one to STEAL

and Adam and Eve broke the EIGHTH commandment (Exodus 20:15) by STEALING what was not theirs.

FOUR OF THE TEN COMMANDMENTS WERE DIRECTLY BROKEN IN THE ORIGINAL SIN. And in other ways, ALL of the Ten Commandments were actually broken in the very first sin!

4. What were the names of Adam and Eve's first two named children? Genesis 4:1-2. What did Cain do? Verse 3. And what did Abel do? Verse 4. Was Cain's offering – Cain's act – ACCEPTABLE to God? Verse 5 and 1 John 3:12.
5. If one does well – does the things God wishes – aren't his deeds acceptable to God? Genesis 4:7, first nine words. But if one does that which is NOT ACCEPTABLE to God, what "lies" at his door – SIN? Same verse.
6. Did Cain MURDER Abel out of jealousy? Verse 8. Did God therefore punish Cain? Verses 9-12.

COMMENT: Murder was a sin FROM THE VERY BEGINNING! And when God asked Cain, "Where is Abel your brother?" Cain replied, "I do not know" (Verse 9). But Cain DID KNOW. He knew his brother was dead. Therefore, he LIED and broke another commandment. That, too, was SIN!

Cain broke the SIXTH (Exodus 20:13) and NINTH (Exodus 20:16) commandments. EVERY ONE OF these commandments was known from creation because God had REVEALED THEM TO ADAM. He thus revealed them to mankind at that time. But humanity as a whole has REJECTED them ever since!

7. Was literal idolatry committed BEFORE the time of Abraham? Joshua 24:2.

COMMENT: Here were people before Abraham's time – LONG BEFORE MOSES' TIME – worshiping idols, committing a SIN – a transgression of God's LAW. No wonder we are told in the Bible that "death" – the PENALTY OF SIN – "REIGNED FROM ADAM TO MOSES" (Romans 5:14), for the law was in existence ALL DURING THAT TIME!

8. Was the sin of IDOLATRY also committed in the generations AFTER Abraham? Genesis 35:2.

COMMENT: Jacob was Abraham's GRANDSON.

9. Did Jacob command those of his household who worshipped idols, to PUT AWAY their foreign gods? Same verse. What was DONE with these idols? Verse 4.

COMMENT: Even back then, long BEFORE Moses, it was a SIN to WORSHIP these idols they possessed!

## The Third and Fourth Commandments Broken

1. What is the THIRD commandment? Exodus 20:7.

COMMENT: To take God's name IN VAIN IS profanity. It is PROFANING the name of God.

2. Did God tell Moses and the rest of the Israelites that the heathen who possessed the promised land in generations PREVIOUS to Moses' time had been doing MANY ABOMINATIONS? Leviticus 18:1, 27. What was one of these abominations? Verse 21, last half. Did God say these heathen nations had DEFILED themselves and the land because of such abominations? Verses 24 and 27. Then taking the name of God in vain was a sin at that time, wasn't it?

COMMENT: The third commandment of the law was being violated here. Therefore, profanity – taking the name of God in vain – was a SIN BEFORE MOSES' TIME!

For additional proof, consider the following from Job (which most scholars believe were stated well before the Ten Commandments were inscribed in tablets on Mt. Sinai) and then one from his wife:

- 5 ... It may be that my sons have sinned and cursed God in their hearts (Job 1:5).

- 9 ... Curse God and die! (Job 2:9)

Job fully realized that taking God's name in vain was a sin. Job's wife realized that cursing God brought the death penalty.

3. What is the FOURTH commandment? Exodus 20:8-11. Is it the day on which everyone should REST from all his labors? Verse 10. Did God REST on that day after He had finished creating the earth and all life upon it? Genesis 2:2-3.

4. Did God tell Moses to have all the people KEEP – rest on – the Sabbath? Exodus 16:23, 30. Did God command Israel to keep the Sabbath to PROVE whether they would walk in – OBEY – His LAW or not? Exodus 16:4. Note the word "law."

COMMENT: Here is God's law ALREADY IN EFFECT at that very time! God wanted to see whether the people would obey its fourth cardinal point – WEEKS BEFORE THEY CAME TO Mount Sinai where the Ten Commandments were RESTATED (Exodus 20) and, months later beginning in Leviticus 1 the PHYSICAL RITUALISTIC "law of Moses" was FIRST GIVEN!

Consider further that Jesus stated, "The Sabbath was made for man" (Mark 2:27). Humans were created well before the inscribing of the Ten Commandments on Mt. Sinai.

5. Did some of the children of Israel disregard God's command to pick up a double portion of manna on the sixth day – did they decide in advance to go out and WORK at gathering manna on this seventh day – the SABBATH day – on which God had commanded them to REST? Exodus 16:27.
6. What did God say about this act of disobedience? Exodus 16:28. Notice this in particular – did God just confine his rebuke to those refusing to keep this one command, or did He call attention to ALL HIS COMMANDMENTS and LAWS they had been breaking? Same verse.

COMMENT: This conversation was going on weeks BEFORE God RESTATED His spiritual laws to Moses and the people at Sinai. And it was MONTHS BEFORE God gave the SEPARATE RITUALISTIC LAW of sacrifices and ablutions which was to be in force ONLY UNTIL Christ's death!

So the Sabbath was ALREADY the law of God at that time, as well as the other commands and laws God referred to in verse 28!

## The Fifth, Seventh and Eighth Commandments

1. What is the FIFTH commandment? Exodus 20:12. Do we find a retribution – a curse falling on one who broke this law LONG BEFORE the time of

Sinai? Let's examine.

2. Did Noah become drunk? Genesis 9:20-23. Did he realize a sin had been committed against him? Verse 24. What CURSE fell upon Canaan as a result of this sin against Noah, his GRANDPARENT? Verse 25.
3. What is the SEVENTH commandment? Exodus 20:14. Was it also in effect and known LONG BEFORE God reiterated His spiritual law to Moses and the people at Mount Sinai? Let's consider.
4. When Joseph was in Egypt serving the Egyptians (Genesis 39:1-2), what IMPROPER advances did Potiphar's wife make toward him? Genesis 39:7. Did Joseph refuse? Verse 8. Why? Did Joseph say it would have been a SIN to follow her wishes? Verse 9.

COMMENT: Remember, where there is no law, sin is NOT IMPUTED. But here we see that Joseph KNEW God's law and he knew that sin WOULD be imputed if he broke that law! ADULTERY was a sin hundreds of years BEFORE Moses!

5. What is the EIGHTH commandment? Exodus 20:15. Did Jacob, who lived LONG BEFORE the Ten Commandments were repeated at Sinai, use the word "stolen"? Genesis 30:33.

COMMENT: Jacob knew and understood the meaning of the word "steal." Stealing was a SIN in those days the SAME AS IT IS TODAY!

## The Ninth and Tenth Commandments

1. Does God forbid the bearing of false witness – LYING – in His NINTH commandment? Exodus 20:16. Was Eve deceived from false witness by the serpent? Genesis 3:4-5, 13. Did God announce a punishment on the serpent for doing that? Genesis 3:14-15.

COMMENT: The serpent WAS LYING and God cursed the serpent! Jesus later stated that the devil as the father of lies (John 8:44). The serpent BROKE the ninth commandment!

The Bible also records that Job complained that his "friends" bore false witness against him (Job 13:4) and

that he was not doing that (Job 27:4, 36:4). Consider that the Bible declares that Job was "upright" (Job 1:1) and since all of God's "commandments are righteousness" (Psalm 119:172), Job would only be "upright" if he actively strove to keep them.

How plain it is that God's law was in existence from Adam.

2. What about COVETING – is it the last of the Ten Commandments? Exodus 20:17. Were the people BEFORE the flood breaking this commandment through their thoughts? Genesis 6:5. Note the word "wickedness." Does God say, through the inspired Psalms, that the WICKED are those who FORSAKE HIS LAW? Ps. 119:53. Was covetousness specifically pointed out as an undesirable trait before Mt. Sinai? Exodus 18:21. Did the married Job realize desiring another woman would be wickedness? Job 31:9-11.
3. Now here comes the CLINCHER! Did Abraham, who lived BETWEEN the time of Adam and Moses, have a THOROUGH KNOWLEDGE of God's COMMANDMENTS? Genesis 26:5. And God's STATUTES? Same verse. And God's LAWS? Same verse. How did Abraham LEARN all these things? Note the word "voice."

COMMENT: The people before the time of Moses were MUCH BETTER INFORMED about the law of God than is generally admitted today!

## Obedience Necessary Today!

The Ten Commandments constitute a SPIRITUAL LAW that is eternal and inexorable. It is a law showing the way of LOVE and the FULFILLING of which is love. It is a law that God set in motion for man's HAPPINESS to produce EVERYTHING GOOD which man foolishly denies himself.

Obedience to God's law was JUST AS NECESSARY for the well-being and happiness of the world BEFORE the time of Moses and AFTERWARD, AS IT IS TODAY! That is why we have just seen that every one of the Ten Commandments EXISTED FROM CREATION. It has been a SIN to break any one of them from the beginning!

God created man a creature of CHOICE. And so God



decreed that man **MUST CHOOSE WHETHER** or not he will obey God's law. The world as a whole has **CHOSEN NOT** to obey and you see the **RESULTS** of sin all around you!

Yes, the **CHOICE IS YOURS**. But the actual fulfilling of God's royal law of love does not lie within **YOUR OWN** power. It is only possible through the **POWER** of God's Spirit!

But there are **PRIOR CONDITIONS** to receiving God's Holy Spirit. First you must **REPENT** of your past sins – come to recognize and **UTTERLY ABHOR** your past disobedience to God's laws and **QUIT SINNING!** Then you must acknowledge Jesus Christ as your personal Saviour Who shed His blood to blot out your sins and reconcile you to the Father. Finally, God commands **WATER BAPTISM** as a symbol of your sincere repentance.

Once you have fulfilled these requirements, God promises to give you His Holy Spirit as a **FREE GIFT!** (Acts 2:38.) Only then will you be able to keep His **SPIRITUAL** law in its true spiritual intent.

Do you begin to realize how **DESPERATELY YOU** need to have God's spiritual law of love – the Ten

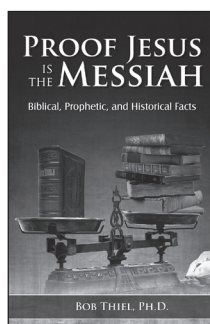
Commandments – being **FULFILLED** in you? It is the **ONLY WAY** to achieve the true happiness and material and **SPIRITUAL** blessings you really desire! What are you going to **DO** about it?

(Be sure to write for the astounding free booklet **Ten Commandments: The Decalogue, Christianity, and the Beast**. Do you know much about the Ten Commandments? How long have they been in place? What did early Christians think about them? How did early Christians number them? Were they in effect before Mt. Sinai? Were they 'nailed to the cross' as some claim? What is the "mystery of lawlessness" that the Apostle Paul warned about in 2 Thessalonians 2:7? What do most professing Christian groups misunderstand about the Ten Commandments? What is the relationship between Christians, the Ten Commandments, and the Beast of Revelation in the end times? In addition to addressing those questions, this booklet explains various practical points about the Ten Commandment and how to not violate them. Each of the Ten Commandments is discussed separately and many scriptures are referenced related to each one. The Ten Commandments are important to understand in the end times.)

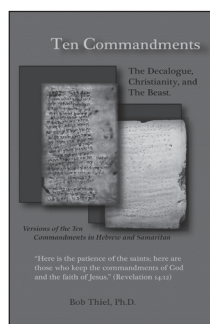
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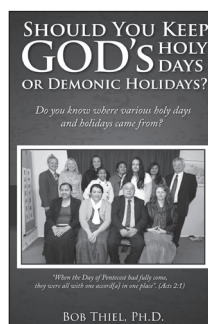
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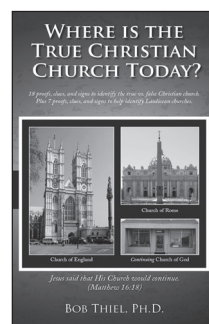
Proof Jesus is the Messiah



The Decalogue, Christianity, and the Beast



Should You Keep God's Holy Days or Demonic Holidays?



Where Is The True Christian Church Today?

# THE FEAST OF TRUMPETS AND YOUR FUTURE



By George M. Kackos

*This article was originally published in the old Good News magazine in August 1982 by the old Worldwide Church of God.*

Most of {professing} Christianity believes that God's Holy Days, including the Feast of Trumpets, were "done away with" — that they have no relevance today. But nothing could be further from the truth!

You may have heard the term "planned obsolescence."

People often use this term to describe products that, seemingly by design, outlive their usefulness within a given period of time.

We've all had experiences with manufactured goods, such as automobiles or appliances, that function for only a short time and then cease to work.

Consider, for instance, the car that breaks down even before it is completely paid for. It's as if the manufacturer wants you to be forced to buy another!

## Is God's law outdated?

It's unfortunate, but some who consider themselves Christians are under the impression that God uses "planned obsolescence" when it comes to His law and His plan for mankind!

Millions believe that Christ's crucifixion "did away with" the need to keep God's commandments, including God's Holy Days, which outline His plan.

It's true that God no longer requires certain acts of His people. For example, Christ's sacrifice eliminated the need for God's people to perform animal sacrifices (Heb. 10:1-6).

But man has taken it upon himself to declare obsolete other areas of God's instructions that God definitely has not (Mark 7:6-9). Christ Himself said: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled" (Matt. 5:17-18).

God's law, including those instructions that concern God's Holy Days, is in force today.

One of the festivals God commands us to keep is the Feast of Trumpets, which this year falls on September 19. Most professing Christians have not even heard of it. They have been blinded to this important Festival of God, though the Feast of Trumpets is designed to have important meaning for us ...

Christ's death did not at all do away with the need for us to keep the Feast of Trumpets today. This Holy Day of God is relevant now, and very much so.

## Origin of the Feast of Trumpets

God first introduced the Feast of Trumpets to ancient Israel after the dramatic Exodus from Egypt, commanding them to keep this day as a Sabbath, a holy convocation (Lev. 23:23-25).

Notice that the Israelites were to mark this particular day as a memorial of the meaning trumpets had for their nation, both physically and symbolically.

God instructed them to use silver trumpets to gather the Tribes for assemblies and to signal when it was time to move during their migration to the promised land. The Israelites were to blow the trumpets when they were preparing to attack or to defend against an attack. Moreover, trumpets were blown during God's festivals and at the beginning of each month. Each use of the trumpets gave added meaning to the festivals as the Israelites understood them (Num. 10:1-10).

Since the Israelites, awestruck and trembling, had already experienced God's tremendous use of a blaring trumpet when God gave them the Ten Commandments at Mt. Sinai (Ex. 19:19), they were familiar with the use of trumpets in correlation with momentous events in their lives.

God continued to associate trumpet blasts with important events after that era as well — and He does so for us today.

## The warning message for today

The Bible shows that during Israel's later history, which was heavily punctuated with conflicts and rebellion, trumpets continued to be used as warning devices, to call to arms or as preludes to important messages — always to mark an event of tremendous import to the whole nation.

God used the prophets, among them Isaiah, Ezekiel, Hosea and Joel, to warn Israel about punishments He would bring upon them for their constant rebellion against His laws. These prophets were to use their voices like trumpets to blare their warnings to God's people.

Notice, for example, God's instruction to Isaiah: "Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins" (Isa. 58:1). See also Hosea 5:8 and Joel 2:1.

Portions of the prophets' warnings were fulfilled, in type, by ancient Israel's captivity. Yet many of these prophecies are dual, having both ancient and modern fulfillments. Such is the case with the message of the prophet Ezekiel.

God set Ezekiel as a watchman to Israel. Ezekiel, through his message, symbolically blew a trumpet of warning to God's people (Ezek. 33:1-7).

Ezekiel's warning, however, did not reach the house of Israel, because they had already gone into captivity! Ezekiel's visions of Israel's impending destruction were given "in the fifth day of the month, which was the fifth year of king Jehoiachin's captivity" (Ezek. 1:2). Jehoiachin went into captivity in 597 B.C., or about 125 years after the removal, to Assyria, of the last of the northern tribes, which occurred from 721-718 B.C.

If Ezekiel's message did not reach ancient Israel — could not have reached them — for whom was it intended?

God's warning through Ezekiel was intended for the modern descendants of the ancient Israel — the peoples of the United States, Britain and, in general, northwestern Europe today!

For more information on who the modern descendants of ancient Israel are, and how they are identified in Bible prophecy, read our {online article available at <https://www.cogwriter.com/usa-canada-uk-australia-new-zealand-divided.htm>}.

Ezekiel's message is reaching the modern Israelites. God has set a modern-day watchman to thunder to our peoples the impending consequences of their sins. ...

The book of Revelation outlines God's future use of trumpets.... These terrible plagues are released on the earth by... God, who will be forced to shake carnal, rebellious humanity to its senses!

## The trumpets of Revelation

The book of Revelation outlines God's future use of trumpets. This message is for the entire world, and concerns events before and including the return of Jesus Christ, who will soon return to rule this earth with God's government.

This message about God's end-time use of trumpets begins with the opening, in heaven, of Revelation's seventh seal (Rev. 8:1-2). Seven angels are given seven trumpets to blow. The blowing of these trumpets represents God's intervention in world affairs just after the world has endured Satan's wrath and the heavenly signs (Rev. 6:9-14).

Notice what happens when the first four trumpets are blown: At the sound of the first trumpet supernatural fire will burn the grass and one third of the earth's trees. At the sound of the second trumpet God will kill a third of all sea life. People will no longer freely sail the oceans. Dead, bloated, stinking carcasses of sea creatures will abound.

After this, a third trumpet is blown and a third of the earth's fresh water will turn bitter. The result? The death of many humans. Finally a fourth trumpet is

blown, and one third of the light from the sun, moon and stars will be eliminated (verses 7-12).

These terrible plagues are released on the earth by an angry, righteous God, who will be forced to shake carnal, rebellious humanity to its senses!

We come now to the final three trumpet plagues or “woes” (Rev. 8:13).

When the fifth trumpet is blown, the bottomless pit is opened (Rev. 9:1-11). What emerges is the beast power described in Revelation 17:8-14, the final resurrection of the Holy Roman Empire. This beast will have ensnared the world in its satanically inspired, Babylonish religious and political system. ...

Horrible weapons, symbolized by locusts, are unleashed. They have the power to torment men for five months, perhaps through the use of chemical, biological or radiological weaponry. The beast power will use these weapons on the nations to the northeast of Palestine (Dan. 11:44).

This attack will result in a counterattack. The sixth angel sounds and an army from east of the Euphrates River — an army of 200 million men! — emerges, wielding more frightening weapons. This conflict will destroy one third of mankind (Rev. 9:13-19, Isa.13:4-10)!

And yet, as unbelievable as it may seem, mankind still will not repent (Rev. 9:20-21). The third “woe” — God’s final trumpet plague — is yet to occur.

## The seventh trumpet

“And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever” (Rev. 11:15).

Jesus Christ will return in power and resplendent glory to seize control of this world (Rev. 19:11-21). The saints will be resurrected to eternal life to rule with Christ (I Cor. 15:51-52, Rev. 5:10).

But it will take the seven last plagues, which compose the seventh trumpet, to complete the job of bringing mankind under the control of God.

These final plagues are described in Revelation 16. First, painful sores will appear on those still subservient to the beast (verse 2). The second and third plagues turn the seas, rivers and springs of water into blood (verses 3-7).

The fourth plague turns the normally life-giving sun into a life-destroying power as the sun heats the earth to incredible temperatures. This fourth plague will still not bring mankind to repentance (verses 8-9). The fifth plague plunges the beast’s realm into darkness (verses 10-11.)

With these nightmarish plagues completed, mankind will be united to fight Christ at His return. Satan the devil, working through the beast (the end-time military leader) and the false prophet (religious leader) will gather the “kings of the east” to join the armies that remain from the devastated beast power. The gathering location will be Armageddon (verses 12-16), the site of ancient Megiddo, in the valley of Jezreel about 20 miles south of the modern port of Haifa. Many wars have been fought at this site.

But the combined efforts of these Satan-inspired powers will be to no avail. The seventh and last plague will seal their fate. The mightiest earthquake in history will occur. Dormant volcanoes will erupt. Hailstones weighing 100 pounds (the modern equivalent of a “talent”) will fall from the skies (verses 17-21).

“And the seventh angel sounded...” God’s government will be established. A new age will dawn upon mankind — an age filled with happiness, abundance and true peace...

Christ’s climactic battle with these armies will occur at Jerusalem: “Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city.

“Then shall the Lord go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle. And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall



be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south” (Zech. 14:1-4).

God’s government will be established. Those of us who qualify to be born into the Family of God will start the process of reconstructing the world — the right way, this time — through the remaining human beings.

A trumpet will be blown to gather Israel from the places in which they have been captive. The Israelites will be brought to the land of Israel to live and worship God (Isa. 27:12-13).

A new age will dawn upon mankind — an age filled with happiness, abundance and true peace, which the world has not known since creation.

## Meaning of this Feast

The meaning, then, of the Feast of Trumpets, which pictures Christ’s return to establish God’s Kingdom on earth, is revealed by the various uses of trumpets throughout the Bible.

Old Covenant Israel had a limited, physical understanding of the Feast of Trumpets. But the Philadelphia era of God’s Church understands, through God’s Word, and with the help of God’s Holy Spirit, its commission to offer this dying world this tremendous news about the future. We are to provide the trumpet blast that gives the Gospel of Jesus Christ to this world.

The Feast of Trumpets is not obsolete at all. God has placed great meaning in it. We need to rehearse that meaning each year by keeping this Festival.

By doing so, we show our obedience to God’s Word. We proclaim our belief in God’s warning messages, the return of Jesus Christ and the resurrection of the saints. In addition, we prepare ourselves for the Family of God.

Truly, God has been gracious to give us this Festival!

*The Feast of Trumpets is on September 19 in 2020, September 7 in 2021, September 26 in 2022, September 16 in 2023, and October 3 in 2024 (its observance begins the evening before the Roman calendar date and runs until sunset on the Roman calendar dates shown).*

## FASTING AND THE DAY OF ATONEMENT



*People fasting on the Day of Atonement*

Jesus taught that His followers would fast (Matthew 9:15).

But what about a proscribed fast?

The Bible enjoins the Day of Atonement (Leviticus 23:27) and it is referred to as “the fast” in the New Testament (Acts 27:9).

Here are some Old Testament scriptures about the Day of Atonement:

1 And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 2 “Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: ‘The feasts of the Lord, which you shall proclaim to be holy convocations, these are My feasts. (Leviticus 23:1-2)

26 And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: 27 “Also the tenth day of this seventh month shall be the Day of Atonement. It shall be a holy convocation for you; you shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire to the Lord. 28 And you shall do no work on that same day, for it is the Day of Atonement, to make atonement for you before the Lord your God. 29 For any person who is not afflicted in soul on that same day shall be cut off from his people. 30 And any person who does any work on that same day, that person I will destroy from among

his people.

31 You shall do no manner of work; it shall be a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings. 32 It shall be to you a sabbath of solemn rest, and you shall afflict your souls; on the ninth day of the month at evening, from evening to evening, you shall celebrate your sabbath.” (Leviticus 23:26-32).

7 ‘On the tenth day of this seventh month you shall have a holy convocation. You shall afflict your souls; you shall not do any work. 8 You shall present a burnt offering to the Lord as a sweet aroma: one young bull, one ram, and seven lambs in their first year. Be sure they are without blemish. 9 Their grain offering shall be of fine flour mixed with oil: three-tenths of an ephah for the bull, two-tenths for the one ram, 10 and one-tenth for each of the seven lambs; 11 also one kid of the goats as a sin offering, besides the sin offering for atonement, the regular burnt offering with its grain offering, and their drink offerings. (Numbers 29:7-11)

Evening to evening means from sunset to sunset.

Fasting is historically how the phrase “afflict your souls” (Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance word 6031), has been interpreted by the Jewish and Church of God communities—unless one is somehow ill, and thus is already afflicted.

The Hebrew words kaphar (Strong’s #3722) and kopher (Strong’s #3724), from which the word translated as “Atonement” Kipurium (Strong’s #3725 is kippur) in Leviticus 23:27 comes from, literally means “to cover or cover over” (and Strong’s #3722 is used in passages such as Numbers 29:5 to refer to the atonement sacrifice. The New Testament discusses the idea of covering over sins through Jesus sacrifice.

Notice what the Apostles Paul and Peter were inspired to write:

5 But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness, 6 just as David also describes the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness apart from works: 7 “Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are

forgiven, And whose sins are covered; 8 Blessed is the man to whom the Lord shall not impute sin.” (Romans 4:5-8)

21 For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps:

22 “Who committed no sin, Nor was deceit found in His mouth”; 23 who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously; 24 who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness — by whose stripes you were healed. 25 For you were like sheep going astray, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls. (1 Peter 2:21-25)

This is something Christians need to realize, and the Day of Atonement (as well as Passover) serves as an annual reminder.

## Kept Post-New Testament

Christians kept the Day of Atonement after the New Testament was written.

A Muslim document, dated from the period of the fifth-tenth century, states that Jesus and His disciples kept the fast on the same days as the Jews. It indicates that Judeo-Christians were still keeping the Day of Atonement while the Greco-Romans came up with a 50 day Lenten-like fasting period that Jesus did not keep (Tomson P. Lambers-Petry L. The Image of the Judaeo-Christians in Ancient Jewish and Christian Literature, Volume 158 of Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament. Mohr Siebeck, 2003, pp. 70-72; Stern SM. Quotations from Apocryphal Gospels in ‘Abd Al-Jabbar. Journal of Theological Studies, NS. Volume XVIII, (1) April 1967: 34-57).

Reports from other historians support this view (cf. Pines S. The Jewish Christians of the Early Centuries of Christianity according to a New Source. Proceedings of the Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, Volume II, No.13; 1966. Jerusalem, pp. 32-34).

This is further substantiated in a Jewish account

(reported in the Talmud) which has been related by a Catholic scholar. Priest Bellarmino Bagatti stated that it is recorded that an early second century Christian named Jacob (100-120 AD) held a discussion with a Jewish scholar about the Day of Atonement. In it, the Christian Jacob explained how it was a reminder which helped show "Christ head of the angels" and that we are to be "blameless" in our "conduct" (Bagatti, Bellarmino. Translated by Eugene Hoade. The Church from the Circumcision. Nihil obstat: Marcus Adinolfi. Imprimi potest: Herminius Roncari. Imprimatur: +Albertus Gori, die 26 Junii 1970. Franciscan Printing Press, Jerusalem, p.97).

And of course, when God has an angel bind Satan (Revelation 20:1) this will be another related fulfillment for the Day of Atonement and it does help show that Christ is the head of the angels (and that Satan is not).

Furthermore, it is known that in the first and second century, Polycarp of Smyrna kept both the Spring Holy Days and the Fall Holy Days. Polycarp also knew that Satan was behind sin:

"For whosoever does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh, is antichrist"(1 John 4:3), and whosoever does not confess the testimony of the cross, is of the devil; and whosoever perverts the oracles of the Lord to his own lusts, and says that there is neither a resurrection nor a judgment, he is the first-born of Satan. Wherefore, forsaking the vanity of many, and their false doctrines, let us return to the word which has been handed down to us from the beginning (Polycarp's Letter to the Philippians, Chapter VII. Ante-Nicene Fathers, Volume 1 as edited by Alexander Roberts & James Donaldson; American Edition, 1885; Reprint Hendrickson Publishers, 1999, pp. 33-36).

In the early third century, Origen of Alexandria (a Greco-Roman, not COG, leader) taught:

A DAY of atonement is necessary for all who have sinned, and for this reason among the festivals of the Law, which contains visions of heavenly mysteries, one certain festival is held which called a day of atonement." (Origen. Gary Wayne Barkley editor. Homilies on Leviticus,

1-16. Homily 9 (1), p. 176),

But he discouraged keeping that day by fasting (Ibid, Homily 10 (3-5), p. 205-207). The way he wrote against fasting indicates that there were others who were fasting then and that Origen disapproved.

It is reported that early Christians kept the Day of Atonement in Antioch the same time the Jews observed Yom Kippur in the third and fourth century (Ben Ezra DS. The Impact of Yom Kippur on Early Christianity: The Day of Atonement from Second Temple Judaism to the Fifth Century. Mohr Siebeck, 2003, pp. 2, 261, 277)

Canons 37 & 38 of the Council of Laodicea of the fourth century prohibited the observation of the unleavened bread and other festivals of the Jews and there was a similar condemnation in Canon 69/70 of the Syrian Apostolic Canons near this time which also prohibited in Jewish fasts (Seaver JE. Persecution of the Jews in the Roman Empire (300-438), Issue 30 of University of Kansas publications: Humanistic studies. University of Kansas Publications, 1952, pp. 34-35; also at [http://vlib.iue.it/carrie/texts/carrie\\_books/seaver/text.html](http://vlib.iue.it/carrie/texts/carrie_books/seaver/text.html)).

Notice a translated quote from the falsely named Syriac 'Apostolic Canons':

If any bishop, presbyter, or deacon, or any one of the list of clergy, keeps fast or festival with the Jews, or receives from them any of the gifts of their feasts, as unleavened bread, any such things, let him be deposed. If he be a layman, let him be excommunicated. (The Apostolic Canons, Canon 70. Translated by Henry Percival. From Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Second Series, Vol. 14. Edited by Philip Schaff and Henry Wace. (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1900).

Hence this practice of Christians keeping the Holy Days also must have been going on then in Asia Minor and elsewhere or there would not have been such condemnation—others scholars share that opinion (Seaver, p. 34; Bagatti B, Priest. The Church from the Circumcision, pp. 87-88).

Furthermore the keeping of these days was condemned by John Chrysostom near the end of

the fourth century, thus confirming that professors of Christ were keeping the biblical holy days. John Chrysostom specifically condemned observing the Day of the Fast that the Jews also kept.

The festivals of the pitiful and miserable Jews are soon to march upon us one after the other and in quick succession: the feast of Trumpets, the feast of Tabernacles, the fasts. There are many in our ranks who say they think as we do. Yet some of these are going to watch the festivals and others will join the Jews in keeping their feasts and observing their fasts.

This condemnation, though, is specific proof that some who professed Christ still observed the Day of Atonement into the fourth century.

Additionally, comments by Jerome and Epiphanius near that time concerning the Nazarene Christians would also seem to support that those who kept the Holy Days, such as Atonement, were located in several areas at that time.

In the 21st century, we in the Continuing Church of God continue to observe the Holy Day.

## Fasting Observations and Tips

In the past several years, researchers have concluded that fasting can have a variety of health benefits. Contrary to popular myth, many people can safely go a couple of days without food or water.

God's faithful people, who are physically able, should fast on the Day of Atonement.

As far as children go, in our family my wife and I tended to ease our children into it, based upon their age and health. First, we always would prohibit any type of desserts and similar snacks on the Day of Atonement. One certainly is not afflicting one's soul by consuming sweets or 'junk food.' We also would tend have them have dinner before Atonement and after Atonement, so they would generally be eating less during the actual Day of Atonement. We later, as they were older, would then prohibit fruits. Finally, when they were ready and basically asked to fast, then they would avoid all food and drink as we, their parents, did.

As far as heavy meals go, the Jews have a Talmudic tradition (Yoma 81b, Rosh HaShana 9a, Pesachim 68b, Berakhot 8b.; Rashi, Yoma 81b, s.v. kol.) that whoever eats a lot prior to the Day of Atonement will be considered to have fasted for twice as long as far as God is concerned (Brofsky D. The Mitzva to Eat on Erev Yom Kippur and the Teshuva of Yom Kippur. Torah Musings, October 2, 2014. <http://www.torahmusings.com/2014/10/mitzva-eat-erev-yom-kippur-teshuva-yom-kippur/#rf5-37509> accessed 09/12/15). Well, while that is not the case, our sons normally tended to think that eating a lot before the Day of Atonement was a good idea. Whether it is or not depends on the person, but drinking more water the days prior to sunset and the start of the Day of Atonement is a good idea.

It never seemed to bother them (or us) to eat 'heavy meals' prior to the sunset for the Day of Atonement. However, I would add that our family tends not to consume caffeine, and those that do consume caffeine tend to have a harder time fasting. Also, if you consume a lot of salt, that will tend to make you thirstier on the Day of Atonement. So, we would not recommend that you eat a lot of salty things in your last meal before the start of the Day of Atonement.

As far as water goes, biblical examples show that fasting means to go without food and water:

9 When I went up into the mountain to receive the tablets of stone, the tablets of the covenant which the Lord made with you, then I stayed on the mountain forty days and forty nights. I neither ate bread nor drank water. (Deuteronomy 9:9)

15 Then Esther told them to reply to Mordecai:  
16 "Go, gather all the Jews who are present in Shushan, and fast for me; neither eat nor drink for three days, night or day. My maids and I will fast likewise. And so I will go to the king, which is against the law; and if I perish, I perish!" (Esther 4:15-16)

1 Now the word of the Lord came to Jonah the second time, saying, 2 "Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and preach to it the message that I tell you." 3 So Jonah arose and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the Lord.



Now Nineveh was an exceedingly great city, a three-day journey in extent. 4 And Jonah began to enter the city on the first day's walk. Then he cried out and said, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!"

5 So the people of Nineveh believed God, proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest to the least of them. 6 Then word came to the king of Nineveh; and he arose from his throne and laid aside his robe, covered himself with sackcloth and sat in ashes. 7 And he caused it to be proclaimed and published throughout Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying,

Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything; do not let them eat, or drink water. 8 But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily to God; yes, let every one turn from his evil way and from the violence that is in his hands. 9 Who can tell if God will turn and relent, and turn away from His fierce anger, so that we may not perish?

10 Then God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God relented from the disaster that He had said He would bring upon them, and He did not do it. (Jonah 3:1-10)

8 Then Saul arose from the ground, and when his eyes were opened he saw no one. But they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. 9 And he was three days without sight, and neither ate nor drank. (Acts 9:8-9)

Refraining from food and water reminds us that we are physically frail and helps us realize that we do need God's sustenance. The process of fasting helps teach us that we of ourselves are not sufficient--we are not immortal and we cannot save ourselves.

Why is this day to be kept so solemnly?

28 And you shall do no work on that same day, for it is the Day of Atonement, to make atonement for you before the Lord your God. (Leviticus 23:28)

What does atonement mean? Webster says to atone means to "set at one." To join in one -- to form by uniting. This day actually symbolizes God and humans

being set at one: literally the Day of At-one-ment! But God and humankind will not be fully at one -- in full agreement -- until Satan is restrained.

Jesus prayed that Christians would be one with God as He was with His Father:

20 "I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; 21 that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. 22 And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: 23 I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me. (John 17:20-23)

As far as the purpose for fasting goes, notice something from the old Worldwide Church of God:

#### Humility Through Fasting

Jesus Christ, the future ruler of earth, qualified to rule by being completely submissive to the government of God and perfectly humble. One of His last acts with His disciples included establishing the New Testament Passover ordinance of foot washing to picture humility. His suffering and death to pay the penalty of human sin was an act of extreme humility, of complete submission to His Father's will, of perfect love for us. True Christians in like manner must become humble to rule with Christ. No ruler in God's Kingdom can be arrogant or selfish (Mark 10:42-45).

Fasting on the Day of Atonement is a vivid reminder of the state of mind necessary for salvation—of humility, godly sorrow, earnestly seeking God and His way. (Ambassador College Correspondence Course. Lesson 29 - Day Of Atonement - The World at One with God, 1984)

Fasting is not penance — NOT a hunger strike to force your own will on God. Mahatma Gandhi fasted that way. A Christian is to fast in order to humble his or her own fleshly mind with its carnal will and to draw closer to God. To acknowledge his or her own nothingness and

ask for GOD’S strength.

Jesus Christ received the strength to resist the Devil’s strongest temptation by fasting 40 days and nights! Spiritually, He was at His strongest at the end of 40 days, because He was completely humble before God. God, of course, doesn’t ask or expect us to fast 40 days. He only commands one day of us each year, though we are also told to fast voluntarily at other times. (Ambassador College Correspondence Course. Lesson 37 - Day of Atonement - AT-ONE-MENT WITH GOD! 1969)

Real humility is not some outwards show, but a realization of the truth. One such truth is that we, of ourselves, cannot save ourselves from our sins. Fasting should help us draw closer to God.

Being at one is clearly a Christian concept. A concept that those that do not keep the Day of Atonement do not tend to fully grasp.

Hopefully you are (or will be if you can) among those who obey God and fast on the Day of Atonement.

*In 2020, the Day of Atonement is to be kept from sunset September 27 to sunset September 28. And in 2021, from sunset September 15 to sunset September 16*

## MISTRANSLATIONS AND GOD’S HOLY DAYS

By Bob Thiel

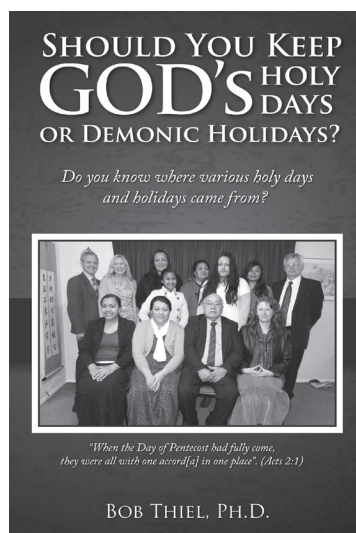
*This article was originally published in the old Good News magazine in August 1982 by the old Worldwide Church of God.*

Most of {professing} Christianity believes that God’s Why do most who profess Jesus not keep the biblical Holy Days? In addition to anti-Judaic sentiment, compromise, ignorance, and misplaced ideas about ‘tradition,’ mistranslations are a reason many do not seem willing to accept that they need to observe God’s festivals.

There are usually a couple of mistranslated/misunderstood passages that people tend to point to as supposed ‘proof’ that the biblical holy days are done away with.

Colossians 2:16-17

Probably, the most common portion of the Bible that is often cited as “proof” that the biblical Holy Days and the weekly Sabbath are done away is Colossians 2:16-17. So, let’s examine one slight mistranslation of it:



16 Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: 17 Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ (Colossians 2:16-17, KJV).

The above translation is close, however, it added a word “is” (which is why the KJV translators put is in italics) that is not in the original Greek.

A truly literal translation would leave it out as it is not in there. Notice the Strong’s Concordance numbers and related words for verse 17:

3739... 2076... 4639... 3588...  
Which are a shadow of things  
3195.... 3588... 1161... 4983...  
to come; the but body  
9999... 3588... 5547  
..... of Christ.

It should be noted that 9999 means that there was no word in the biblical text—the word “is” is not in this scripture.

Because the same three Strong’s words (#4983, 3588, & 5547) are used four other times in the New Testament and in those times the KJV translates them as “body of Christ” (Romans 7:4; 1 Corinthians 10:16; 1 Corinthians 12:27; Ephesians 4:12)--as does the NKJV—so should have the KJV.

Therefore, if those translators were simply consistent

with themselves, they would have translated Colossians 2:16-17 to state (and included parentheses or commas):

16 Therefore let no man judge YOU in eating and drinking or in respect of a festival or of an observance of the new moon or of a sabbath 17 (for those things are a shadow of the things to come), but the body of Christ.

Or in other words, do not let those outside the 'body of Christ' (the church, Colossians 1:18) judge you regarding Holy Days, but only the true church itself. Colossians 2:16-17 is not saying that the Sabbath and Holy Days are done away.

Even the early Orthodox bishop Ambrose of Milan recognized that Colossians 2:17 was referring to the "body of Christ" as he wrote the following commenting on that verse:

Let us, then, seek the body of Christ...where the body of Christ is, there is the truth. (Ambrose of Milan. Book II. On the Belief in the Resurrection, section 107)

It is sad that modern translators of the Greek have often ignored what the expression really meant.

It is poor exegesis (biblical interpretation) to rely on a mistranslation to claim that the holy days are done away with.

Galatians 4:8-10

Another common objection is to keeping the Holy Days is Galatians 4:8-10. Some Protestants tend to use this to say that no biblical dates are to be observed. So let's look at what those scriptures actually teach:

8 But then, indeed, when you did not know God, you served those which by nature are not gods. 9 But now after you have known God, or rather are known by God, how is it that you turn again to the weak and beggarly elements, to which you desire again to be in bondage? 10 You observe days and months and seasons and years.

There are several problems with the anti-Holy Day argument here.

One is that the Galatians were Gentiles (although

there were apparently some Jews addressed in later verses) and were NOT keeping the biblical Holy Days prior to conversion.

Plus, there is no way that the Bible would call biblical requirements as "beggarly elements." Paul was clearly warning against pagan observances as the Galatians had "served those which by nature were not gods."

Another is that Catholics/Protestants/Eastern Orthodox should consider that they often do observe various days and years (Sunday, Easter, Christmas, New Year's), so they should not observe anything if they feel that no religious days are to be observed.

Galatians 4:8-10 is not doing away with the biblical Holy Days, but instead is a warning against clinging to non-biblical observances.

What about the seventh day Sabbath?

The seventh day Sabbath is first of the festivals of God listed in Leviticus 23. Even though it is a weekly, not annual Holy Day, some brief comments would seem to be in order.

The seventh day of the week, the biblical Sabbath, is now called Saturday. Although Sunday is shown on certain calendars as the seventh day of the week, the reality is that Sunday is the first day of the week. The New Testament clearly shows that Jesus (Luke 4:16, 21; 6:6; 13:10) as well as the Apostles and the faithful (Acts 13:13-15, 42-44; 17:1-4; 18:4; Hebrews 4:9-11) kept the seventh day Sabbath.

Many claim that the seventh day Sabbath is not enjoined in the New Testament, so it does not need to be kept today. But the only way to make that claim is to rely on mistranslations of the Bible. If one looks at what is believed to be the original Greek, original Aramaic, and the original Latin Vulgate, it is clear in all of those languages that the seventh day Sabbath is enjoined for Christians.

Even according to certain Catholic and Protestant translations of the Bible, the seventh day Sabbath rest was to remain for the obedient Christian people of God:

4 For he has spoken somewhere about the seventh day in this manner, "And God rested on the seventh day from all his works"; 5 and

again, in the previously mentioned place, “They shall not enter into my rest.” 6 Therefore, since it remains that some will enter into it, and those who formerly received the good news did not enter because of disobedience, ... 9 Therefore, a sabbath rest still remains for the people of God. 10 And whoever enters into God’s rest, rests from his own works as God did from his. 11 Therefore, let us strive to enter into that rest, so that no one may fall after the same example of disobedience. (Hebrews 4:4-6,9-11, NAB)

4 For somewhere he has spoken about the seventh day in these words: “And on the seventh day God rested from all his work.” 5 And again in the passage above he says, “They shall never enter my rest.” 6 It still remains that some will enter that rest, and those who formerly had the gospel preached to them did not go in, because of their disobedience...9 There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God; 10 for anyone who enters God’s rest also rests from his own work, just as God did from his. 11 Let us, therefore, make every effort to enter that rest, so that no one will fall by following their example of disobedience (Hebrews 4:4-6,9-11, NIV)

The New Testament clearly states that Christians are to keep the seventh day Sabbath. In addition to allowing for spiritual growth and personal rejuvenation, the Sabbath also pictures a coming time of God’s millennial rest.

While many do not consider that the seventh day Sabbath is a Holy Day, the Bible does (Leviticus 23:3; Exodus 20:8; Isaiah 58:13). The New Testament warns against not keeping it (Hebrews 4:4-11), yet many reason around with “empty words” (cf. Ephesians 5:26).

It should also be understood, although some have pointed to the Romans 14:5-6 to claim no specific days matter and that which days to observe are an individual choice, that view is in contradiction with many scriptures. Furthermore, the subject of Romans 14:5-6 dealt with which day(s) people, themselves, choose to fast throughout the year (this is not a command related to the Day of Atonement, cf. Matthew 9:15). The Apostle Paul’s point in Romans 14 was that you should not try to impose your non-biblical preferences on others as doctrine.

It perhaps should also be mentioned that despite mistranslations hinting otherwise, the second century Bishop Ignatius of Antioch did NOT replace the seventh day Sabbath with Sunday (Thiel B. Ignatius and the Sabbath. The Sabbath Sentinel, Volume 69 (3): 18-21, 2016 and Thiel B. More on Ignatius and the Sabbath. The Sabbath Sentinel, Volume 70 (2): 15-17, 2017). Nor did the ancient document called the Didache (Thiel B. The Didache and the Sabbath. The Sabbath Sentinel, Volume 69 (2): 10, 19-20, 2016).

The weekly and annual Sabbaths were not done away and no one should rely on mistranslations or improper teachings to try to defend violating God’s instructions concerning them.

## Questions and Answers



**Q. Where does the Bible foretell of the automobile?**

A. In Nahum 2:3, 4. “The chariots shall be with flaming torches in the day of his preparation” (just before the Second Coming of Christ),... “The chariots shall rage in the streets, they shall jostle one against another in the broadways: they shall seem like torches, they shall run like the lightnings.”

The above was in the Plain Truth magazine, February 1934, published by the old Radio Church of God.





# Fulfilling Matthew 24:14 and Matthew 28:19-20



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**CDLIDD.ES** La Continuación de la Iglesia de Dios. This is the CCOG Spanish language website.

**PNIND.PH** Patuloy na Iglesia ng Diyos. This website is focused on the Philippines.



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The *Continuing Church of God* also uses books, personal visits, daily electronic newsletters, and weekly letters to the brethren to support Matthew 24:14, Romans 11:25, and Matthew 28:19-20.