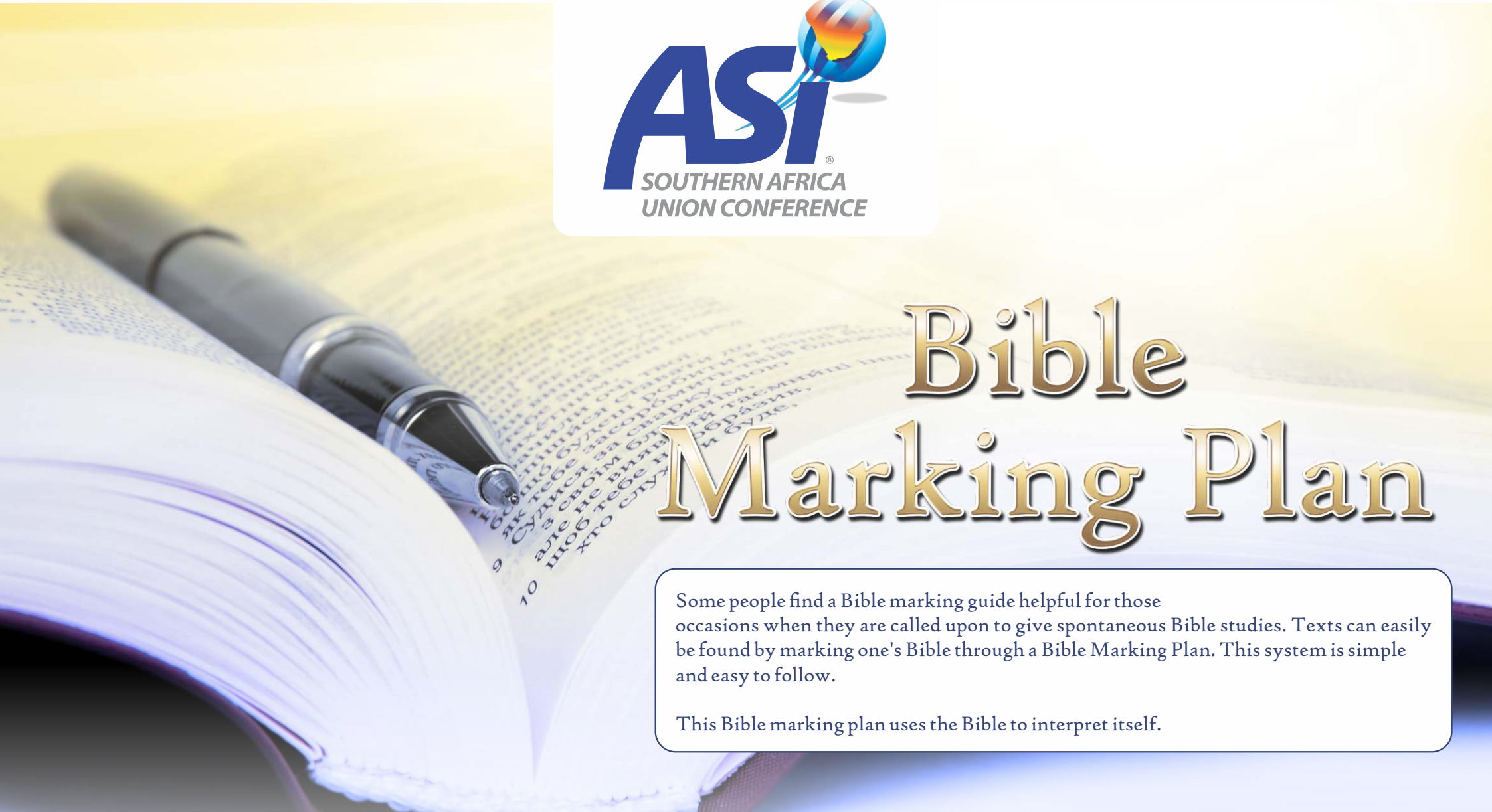
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Bible Marking Plan

Some people find a Bible marking guide helpful for those occasions when they are called upon to give spontaneous Bible studies. Texts can easily be found by marking one's Bible through a Bible Marking Plan. This system is simple and easy to follow.

This Bible marking plan uses the Bible to interpret itself.

How to Use the Bible Marking Plan

1. Cut out the title box to the right of this page, containing the 'Bible Study Titles' & paste it on a blank page in the front or back of your Bible.

2. In that box, you will find the doctrinal topics and the first text (called the Title Text) next to each particular doctrine.

3. Use the title text as the starting point in your Bible marking process.

4. Some entries in the Bible Marking Text Guide will have more than one text. Just use the text in brackets ( ). The additional ones are supporting texts.

5. Get a marking instrument(s). You could either use a pencil throughout the marking process, but most people have found that using a set of colour gel pens – different colours for different doctrines – works the best.

6. The italicised sections are notes to help explain the verses.

7. You are now ready to mark your Bible.

8. Each doctrine has a code in the title box. For e.g., OE stands for Origin of Evil, TC for True Church.

9. It also has a sequence of numbers next to that code. This sequence gives the order of the Bible verses in the study.

10. If you are planning to use colour, colour--code the doctrines in your title box first. then use the same colour for that doctrine throughout your marking process.

11. Let's take an example from the very first lesson: **01 Inspiration of the Bible (IB)**. Go to your title text, 2 Pet 1:21. When you get there bracket the verse on one side with a colour pen of your choice. Brackets should be placed between the columns of text. Put the bracket as close to the text as possible since some texts may be used a number of times for other doctrines as well. Write down the code and next verse of that doctrine.

    In the example we are using, close to 2 Pet 1:21 write '**(IB-1) 2 Tim 3:16**' in the colour you have chosen for that doctrine.

    Depending on the space in your Bible, some people even put a short description of that text. For example: **(IB-1) Holy men of God spoke by the Holy Spirit (2 Tim 3:16)**. The description 'Holy men of God spoke by the Holy Spirit' refers to 2 Pet 1:21 while 2 Tim 3:16 points to the next verse in the Bible marking plan. Now go to 2 Tim 3:16, bracket it in a similar fashion on one side & write '**(IB-2) Rom 15:4' OR '(IB-2) One of the purposes of God's Word is to give us hope (Rom 15:4)**' as close to the verse as possible.

12. Continue in this way until you reach the last verse. Write the word 'End' next to that verse to indicate the close of the lesson, **(IB-15: End)**

Bible Study Titles

1. Inspiration of the Bible **(IB)**, 2 Pet 1:21
2. Who is God **(WG)**, Ps 90:2
3. Divinity of Christ **(DC)**, Matt 1:23
4. Origin of Evil **(OE)**, Gen 1:31
5. Salvation **(S)**, Gen 1:31
6. Daniel 2 **(D2)**, Isa 46:9 - 10
7. Second Coming **(SC)**, Jhn 14:1 - 3
8. The Sanctuary **(TS)**, Isa 59:2
9. Judgment - Part 1 **(J)**, Rev 14:6 - 7
10. Judgment - Part 2 **(J2)**, Dan 7:9 - 10
11. The Holy Spirit **(HS)**, Matt 28:19 - 20
12. Law of God - Part 1 **(LG)**, Rev 14:7
13. (Law of God - Part 2, Matt 22:37 - 40)
14. Sabbath - Part 1 **(SA)**, Rev 14:6 - 7
15. (Sabbath - Part 2, Ex 31:12, 17)
16. The Great Historical Apostasy **(HA)**, 2 Thess 2:3
17. First Day **(FD)**, Matt 28:1
18. Sabbath Keeping **(SK)**, Isa 56:2
19. Healthful Living - Part 1 **(HL)**, 3 Jhn 2
20. (Healthful Living - Part 2, Prov 31:6 - 7)
21. State of the Dead - Part 1 **(SD)**, Jhn 11:11 - 14
22. (State of the Dead - Part 2, 1 Sam 28:3 - 20)
23. Marriage and the Family **(MF)**, Gen 2:20 - 22
24. True Church **(TC)**, Matt 16:18
25. Gift of Prophecy **(GP)**, Amos 3:7
26. Baptism **(B)**, Matt 28:19-20
27. Growing as a Christian **(GC)**, 2 Pet 3:18
28. The Lord's Supper **(LS)**, Jhn 13:1
29. Tithe / Christian Stewardship **(T)**, Deut 8:18
30. Christian Standards **(CS)**, 2 Cor 5:20
31. Mark of the Beast **(MB)**, Rev 13:1 - 2
32. Millennium **(M)**, Jhn 14:1 - 3
33. Destruction of the Wicked **(DW)**, 1 Jhn 4:8
34. The New Earth **(NE)**, 2 Pet 3:10 - 13

01 Inspiration of the Bible (IB)

IB-0 *Title text:* Holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit (2 Pet 1:21)

IB-1. All Scripture is inspired by God (2 Tim 3:16)

IB-2. One of the purposes of God's word is to give us hope (Rom 15:4)

IB-3. The Scriptures make us wise unto salvation (2 Tim 3:15)

IB-4. The Hebrew Old Testament has three general divisions (Luke 24:44-45). *'The Law of Moses' (or Torah) was a term for the first 5 books of the Bible, the 'Prophets' include Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, plus the 12 Minor Prophets (Hosea – Malachi). The 'Psalms' (also known as 'The Writings' comprise the rest of the books.*

IB-5. The Scriptures reveal Jesus as our Saviour (Jhn 5:39)

IB-6. The experiences of Jesus were written down that people may believe in Him and thus find life. (Jhn 20:31))

IB-7. The experiences of Bible characters were recorded for our admonition (i.e. to warn us not to repeat the same mistakes) (1 Cor 10:11)

IB-8. The Sadducees were in error because they did not know the Scriptures nor the power of God (Matt 22:29)

IB-9. The natural man (unconverted person) cannot understand the Bible because it is spiritual discerned (1 Cor 2:14)

IB-10. As we study we must 'correctly handle the word of truth' (2 Tim 2:15*). This means we should interpret the Bible correctly, and not make it say what we want it to say.*

IB-11. Luke commended the Bereans because they eagerly received God's word and daily studied the Scriptures for themselves to see if what Paul and Silas were saying was correct (Acts 17:11). *It is good to have an open attitude toward Scriptures, and be willing to check out what people say against the Word of God.*

IB-12. Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to guide us into all truth (Jhn 16:13)

IB-13. Truth is contained in God's word (Jhn 17:17)

IB-14. God's Word is compared to a lamp that guides a person in the moral darkness of this world (Ps 119:105)

IB-15. He who sincerely desires to do the will of God will be enlightened (Jhn 7:17) (End)

A Few Proofs of the Bible's Accuracy

- *World Empires Predicted*. Dan 2 is a prophecy that predicts the rise and fall of world empires from Babylon all the way down to Western Europe, even up to the Second Coming. This astounding prophecy is so important that a whole upcoming lesson is dedicated to it.
- *Cyrus*. In Isa 44:28, God mentions Cyrus by name a century and a half before his time and tells what part he was to play in the liberation of the Jews.
- *Fall of Jerusalem*. In Matt 24:2, Jesus predicted, concerning Jerusalem's Temple, that 'not one stone will be left on another." During the siege of Jerusalem, in the year AD 70, some Romans, angered by the fanaticism of the Jewish resistance set fire to the gold-plated wood of the temple's walls and ceiling. But even after the burning of the Temple, the survivors refused to surrender. In anger Titus let his troops loose and ordered the entire city, including the temple to be razed to the ground. Not one stone was left upon another, accurately fulfilling the words of Christ 40 years earlier.
- *Fall of Babylon*. God predicted that one of the most magnificent cities of ancient times, Babylon, would be overthrown 'just like Sodom and Gomorrah' (Isa 13:19). It almost seemed impossible for this world empire to fall but Isaiah predicted, 200 years before Babylon's fall, that it would happen according to God's word. Jeremiah supported this by saying of Babylon: "You will be desolate forever" (Jer 51:26, 62). This great city fell to Cyrus in 539 BC. Today if you visit Babylon you will find a lonely mound of ruins, testimony to the accuracy of the Bible.
- *Fall of Tyre*. In Eze 26, there is a detailed prophecy about the fall of Tyre. In the sixth century BC, Tyre was one of the wealthiest and most powerful seaports in the world. In Eze 26:4, the prophecy says: "I will scrape away her rubble and make her a bare rock." Nothing happened for over 250 years. In the meantime a flourishing new city (New Tyre) grew up on an island about 2.5km offshore. Then Alexander the Great and his Greek legions swept through the land. He called on the island city to surrender. She refused. He then ordered his soldiers to take the ruins of the original mainland Tyre and build a cause-way 60m wide to the island. So urgent was the demand for materials that the very dust of the ancient city was scraped and dumped into the sea. Alexander then marched over the solid roadway and captured the city. This once again shows how accurate and reliable God's word is.
- *The Middle Ages*. The Bible precisely foretold that a major religious body would dominate Christendom for 1260 years during the Middle Ages. This literally happened as predicted, from 538-1798. More on this amazing Bible prophecy in a future lesson.
- *Baptism and Crucifixion of Jesus*. In an upcoming study, we will look at how a 2300 year long prophecy accurately predicted the exact year of both Christ's baptism and crucifixion, over 500 years before it happened. That could only have happened if the Bible was inspired by God.

02 Who is God (WG)

WG-0. *Title text:* God is from 'everlasting to everlasting' (Ps 90:2). *This means God is from eternity in the past to eternity in the future. No greater statement could be made of God's eternal nature.*

WG-1. God is One (Deut 6:4). *All revelations about God in the Bible refer to the same, one divine reality, not to many different gods. The word for 'one' in this verse does not mean 'single.' It is the same word used when God blessed Adam and Eve's union, saying that the two shall become one flesh (Gen 2:24). They were to be one in purpose and unity even though they were two separate beings with different personalities.*

WG-2. Yet God is plural (Gen 1:26; 3:22; 11:7). See Isa 6:11. *In all these verses, the word 'us' is used of God.*

WG-3. This 'us' of Genesis (and Isaiah) is clarified in the New Testament. Jesus said that disciples are to be baptised in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit (Matt 28:19). *This can only mean that all three Beings are equal and is a reference to what Christianity calls the*

'Trinity': Three distinct Beings working as one. See 1 Pet 1:2 and 2 Cor 13:14 where one will find trinitarian formulas. Notice how all three Beings of the Godhead come together at Jesus' baptism: the Voice of the Father was heard from heaven, Jesus was in the water, and the Holy Spirit was manifested in the form of a dove (Matt 3:16-17)

WG-4. God is love (1 Jhn 4:8). *In fact the plan of salvation is couched in the setting of God's love: "For God so loved the world that He gave…"(Jhn 3:16), "But because of his great love for us, God … made us alive with Christ …"*

WG-5. The Bible also speaks of God's wrath - which is His negative reaction to sin (Deut 9:7). See 2 Chron 36:16. *God's wrath is seen when men persistently sin and reject His offer of salvation. Because He is a God of love, He does not want 'anyone to perish, but that all should come to repentance' (2 Pet 3:9). God's wrath can be averted through repentance (1 Kings 8:46-51; Joel 2:12-14)*

WG-6. God is powerful and wise (Dan 2:20)

WG-7. God does not change (Mal 3:6). See James 1:17. *That is, God is always the same; He is constant and consistent in His relations, purposes and actions toward us.*

WG-8. God sets up and takes down kings (Dan 2:21). *He is the sovereign ruler of the Universe.*

WG-9. He declares the end from the beginning (Isa 46:10). See Ps 139:16. *God has foreknowledge. He can read the future*

WG-10. He is the all powerful Creator (Ps 33:6, 9). *He created the heavens by His word.*

WG-11. God is patient, gracious, merciful and forgiving (Ex 34:6-7)

WG-12. God is the Owner of the world (Ps 24:1)

WG-13. God supports and strengthens us in all our difficulties (Isa 41:10)

WG-14. God promises never to leave nor forsake us (Heb 13:5) (End). *Although He is the great God of the universe, He cares for us individually and promises His continued Presence.*

03 Divinity of Christ (DC)

DC-0 *Title text:* Immanuel means "God is with us" (Matt 1:23)

DC-1. Word was God (vs 1); Word (Jesus) was made flesh (Jhn 1:1, 14)

DC-2. Jesus existed with the Father before foundation of world (Jhn 17:5)

DC-3. Jesus is the "I Am" that existed before Abraham (Jhn 8:58)

DC-4. "I Am" is the name of God (Ex 3:14)

DC-5. Jesus forgave sins, only God can do that (Luke 5:20-24)

DC-6. Thomas testified that Jesus was both Lord and God (Jhn 20:28)

DC-7. The Father addresses the Son as God (Heb 1:5-9)

DC-8. Jesus is everlasting and eternal (Isa 9:6)

DC-9. Christ's goings forth have been from everlasting (Mic 5:2)

DC-10. Jesus is the 'first and last' with keys to the grave (Rev 1:17-18)

DC-12. The designation 'first and last' is used in the Old Testament of God (Isa 44:6) See Isa 48:12

DC-13. Jesus voluntarily gave up aspects of His divinity to become our Saviour (Phil 2:5-11) (End)

Note on the Identity of Michael

- Jude 9 – Michael is called an Archangel
- 1 Thess 4:16 – At voice of the Archangel, the dead are resurrected at Second Coming
- Jhn 5:28 – Jesus says that the dead will come to life when they hear His voice.
- Therefore Jesus has to be Michael
- In Rev 12:7; Dan 10:13; 12:1 Michael is portrayed as a supernatural being and defender of His people
- The confusion comes in with the word 'angel.' People think that since an angel is a created being, Michael also has to be a created being. But the word 'angel' which means messenger, is used a number of times with reference to God. See the following 'Angel of the Lord' passages, which show that this 'Angel' was actually the Lord Himself (Ex 3:2, 4; Zech 3:1-2 cf. Ex 23:20-21)

04 The Holy Spirit (HS)

HS-0 *Title text:* The Holy Spirit is part of the Godhead (Matt 28:19-20)

HS-1. The Spirit participated with the Father and Son in creation of the world (Gen 1:2)

HS-2. The Holy Spirit convicts us of sin (Jhn 16:8)

HS-3. The Holy Spirit can be grieved (Eph 4:30)

HS-4. Holy Spirit strives with us, leading us to do right (Gen 6:3)

HS-5. The Holy Spirit intercedes for us (Rom 8:26)

HS-6. The Spirit confirms to our hearts that we are God's children (Rom 8:16). *The Spirit, through various ways, gives us enough assurance that we are children of God, that we are not abandoned but loved and cared for by God. This is particularly special when we are going through suffering and trial.*

HS-7. The Holy Spirit produces His fruits in our lives (Gal 5:22-23)

HS-8. The Holy Spirit causes us to walk in obedience (Eze 36:27)

HS-9. If the Spirit of God dwells in a person, He will also resurrect that person at the Second Coming (Rom 8:11)

HS-10. The Holy Spirit guides us into all truth (Jhn 16:13)

HS-11. The Holy Spirit teaches us all things and brings to remembrance Jesus's words (Jhn 14:26). *The Holy Spirit is a teacher, shaping our spiritual experience. He also brings to mind truths that have slipped from the mind (cf Matt 10:19-20)*

HS-12. Rejecting the convicting, converting, instructing power of the Holy Spirit continually is to commit the unpardonable sin (Matt 12:31-32)

HS-13. Those who are continually led by the Spirit ARE children of God (Rom 8:14) (End)

05 Origin of Evil (OE)

OE-0. *Title text:* God created a perfect world (Gen 1:31)

OE-1. An enemy of God sows evil tares in the field of the world (Matt 13:24-28)

OE-2 Satan is the cause of suffering (Luke 13:10-16, particularly vs 16) See Job 2:7

OE-3 God created a beautiful angel, named Lucifer, with freedom of choice, whose pride led him to rebel (Eze 28:12-17)
OE-4 Lucifer desired to exalt his throne above God's (Isa 14:12-14)
OE-5. There was war in heaven and Satan was expelled (Rev 12:7-9)
OE-6. God created humans in His image and placed them in Eden (Gen 1:27-31)
OE-7. Satan led Adam and Eve to mistrust God by openly defying His command (Gen 3:1-7)
OE-8. Disobedience results in death (Rom 6:23)
OE-9. The human race changed as the result of mankind's disobedience, their nature became sinful (Jer 17:9)
OE-10. Through Adam's sin the entire human race plunged into guilt, disobedience and sin (Rom 5:12a)
OE-11. Jesus took human nature (Heb 2:14-17)
OE-12. Jesus redeemed Adam's failure (Rom 5:17-19)
OE-13. Through Jesus, salvation is ours as a gift (Eph 2:8-9) See Jhn 3:16
OE-14. We will still have troubles while on earth, but Satan's power has been broken (Jhn 16:33)
OE-15. God is with us in all our trials (2 Cor 1:3-4) See 1 Cor 10:13
OE-16. Satan will be completely destroyed at the end (Eze 28:17, 18) See Rev 20:10
OE-17. God will establish a new heavens and a new earth, in which there will be no sin (Rev 21:1-4) (End)

06 Salvation (S)

S-0 *Title text:* God created a perfect world (Gen 1:31)
S-1. Adam and Eve mistrusted God by openly defying His command (Gen 3:1-7)
S-2. Sin brought about a change in humankind's relationship to God (Gen 3:8-10) See Isa 59:2
S-3. Through Adam's sin, the entire human race plunged into guilt, disobedience and sin (Rom 5:12a)
S-4. Sin changed human nature (Jer 17:9)
S-5. Disobedience brought death into the world (Rom 6:23)
S-6. No one is exempt from death, for all have sinned (Rom 3:23)
S-7. God's love prompted Him to save us (1 Jhn 4:8-9)
S-8. Jesus became sin; He took its penalty for us (2 Cor 5:21) See Heb 2:9
S-9. Salvation is a gift, received through faith (Eph 2:8-9)
S-10. We receive eternal life if we have Jesus (1 Jhn 5:11-13)
S-11. Salvation is available to everyone (Jhn 3:16 – '*whoever believes*')
S-12. The Bible does not support the idea of 'once saved always saved.' It is possible to turn one's back on salvation after having received it (2 Pet 2:20-22)
S-13. Salvation is personal. We need to personally: Believe (Acts 16:30-31)
S-14. Repent (Acts 2:36-39) See Acts 3:19
S-15. Receive Jesus (Jhn 1:12) (End)

(It's a great time to commit / recommit your life to Jesus now)

07 Daniel 2

D2-0. God knows the future (Isa 46:9-10)
D2-1. God reveals the future through His prophets (Amos 3:7)
D2-2. Nebuchadnezzar had a disturbing dream but could not remember it (Dan 2:1, 3)
D2-3 The king asked his wise men to tell him his dream (Dan 2:2-3)
D2-4 The king condemned his wise men to death because they could not tell the dream (Dan 2:12-13). *Daniel and his friends, who probably had recently graduated from the University of Babylon, were regarded as part of the 'wise men' and therefore also sought out to be killed.*
D2-5 When they sought to kill Daniel, he turned to prayer (Dan 2:16-18)
D2-6 God reveals Nebuchadnezzar's dream to Daniel in a vision (Dan 2:19)
D2-7 Nebuchadnezzar's dream applies to the time of the End (Dan 2:28)
D2-8 Daniel reveals the dream to Nebuchadnezzar (Dan 2:31-35)
D2-9 The metals represent kingdoms (Dan 2:38-40)
D2-10 Babylon (Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom) is represented by the head of gold, (Dan 2:38 last part). *Babylon reigned from 605 BC – 539 BC.*
D2-11 The breast and arms of silver stand for Medo-Persia, the kingdom that conquered Babylon (Dan 2:39 first part; Dan 5:28). *Medo-Persia ruled from 539 BC – 331 BC.*
D2-12 The belly and thighs of bronze is a symbol of Greece, the kingdom which overthrew the Medes & Persians (Dan 2:39 last part; Dan 8:20-21). *Greece ruled from 331 BC – 168 BC*
D2-13 A description of the iron kingdom (Dan 2:40). *According to history, Rome conquered Greece in 168 BC, becoming the fourth world empire of Nebuchadnezzar's dream. It ruled till AD 476.*
D2-14 The breakup of the iron kingdom of Rome, resulting in the formation of Western Europe (Dan 2:41)
D2-15 European nations would never be united into one, cohesive, lasting, political nation (Dan 2:42-43)
D2-16 The next event in history after divided Rome is the set up of Christ's eternal Stone Kingdom, at His Second Coming (Dan 2:44-45*). Compare with Luke 20:17-18, where Christ refers to himself as a 'Stone.'*
D2-17 God's Stone kingdom will last forever (Dan 2:44) (End). *See 2 Pet 1:11. This is the best news ever. God's righteous kingdom will never be replaced by another kingdom!!*

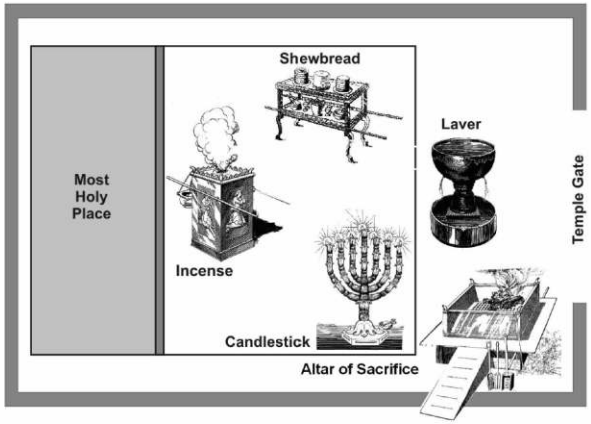
08 Second Coming (SC)

SC-0 *Title text:* Jesus promised He would return (Jhn 14:1-3)
SC-1. Angels confirmed His promise and testified to its truthfulness (Acts 1:9-11)
SC-2. Enoch prophesied of our Lord's return (Jude 14)
SC-3. David declared 'Our God shall come.' (Ps 50:3). *There are over 1500 prophecies of Jesus' Second Coming in the Bible. For every prophecy of His first coming mentioned in the Old Testament, there are 8 predicting His Second Coming. The return of Jesus is mentioned in 1 out of every 5 verses in the New Testament.*
SC-4. When Jesus returns every eye shall see Him (Rev 1:7)
SC-5. His return will be visible like lightning across the sky (Matt 24:27)
SC-6. It will be an audible event (1 Thess 4:16). *It is not a secret coming. Notice the words, 'shout,' 'voice of archangel' and 'trumpet' in this verse, all indicating the that Second Coming will be a noisy affair.*

SC-7. God will clothe His children with immortality (1 Cor 15:51-54).
SC-8. When Jesus comes, He will bring His reward of immortality with Him (Matt 16:27) See Rev 22:12
SC-9. The wicked are afraid and cry for rocks to fall on them (Rev 6:14-17)
SC-10. The righteous are delighted to see Him come (Isa 25:9)
SC-11. As King of kings leading the armies of heaven, He returns as triumphant Lord (Rev 19:11-16)
SC-12. His coming is called the "Blessed Hope" of a lost mankind (Titus 2:13)
SC-13. Before Jesus comes, the gospel will be preached to the whole world (Rev 14:6-7). *Just before the Second Coming of Christ described in Rev 14:14-20, there are 3 messages that go to the world, found in Rev 14:6-12. Verse 6 of that chapter tells us that the gospel will be proclaimed to 'every nation, tribe, language and people.'*
SC-14. God's counsel is, 'Be ready at all times' (Matt 24:42-44) (End)

09 The Sanctuary (TS)

TS-0. *Title text:* Our sin separates us from God (Isa 59:2)
TS-1. After sinning Adam and Eve hid from God (Gen 3:7-10)
TS-2. The sanctuary was a tangible way to show that God wanted to 'dwell among' us and remove the separation sin had caused (Ex 25:8, 22)
TS-3. The earthly sanctuary was a pattern (i.e. miniature representation) of the original (Ex 25:9, 40)
TS-4. The original is the heavenly sanctuary erected by God (Heb 8:1-5). *So in order to understand what is happening in the heavenly sanctuary, we need to understand how the earthly sanctuary functioned.*
TS-5. The detailed structure and furnishings of the sanctuary can be found in Ex 25-30. Its main features were the:
- Outer Place (where the Altar of Sacrifice and the Laver were found)
- Holy Place (which had the Table of Shewbread, the 7-branched Candlestick and the Altar of Incense)
- Most Holy Place (where the Ark of the Covenant was, in which the Ten Commandments were placed – Deut 10:4-5)



Note: *The sanctuary services mainly revolved around sacrifice, in which an innocent animal died in the place of the guilty offerer*
TS-6. The sanctuary teaches us that the 'wages of sin is death' (Rom 6:23). *It shows how sin causes the death of innocent animals*
TS-7. Blood is a symbol of life (Lev 17:11), but sin demands the removal of life
TS-8. Without the shedding of blood (the shedding of life) there is no forgiveness of sin (Heb 9:22). *Through all the sacrifices and blood, the sanctuary also teaches us how gruesome and ugly sin really is.*
TS-9. Sacrificed animals had to be spotless (Lev 4:32)
TS-10. This symbolised the sinless Lamb of God (1 Pet 1:19). See 2 Cor 5:21; Jhn 1:29.
TS-11. The blood of animals could not atone for sin and guilt (Heb 10:4)
TS-12. Only Jesus' blood could redeem us from sin (1 Pet 1:18-19).
TS-13. The book of Daniel predicts the end of 'sacrifice and offering' (Dan 9:27) (End). *In a later study we will show how the sanctuary services came to an end at the crucifixion of Jesus.*

Brief Notes on How the Sacrificial System Functioned:

The *daily* service generally followed this pattern (see Lev 4):
- After having sinned, a man brings an animal without defect to the sanctuary (Lev 4:27-28)
- Before killing it, he places his hands on the animal, symbolising the transference of his sin and guilt onto the animal. He is now clean and pure, but the animal, as his substitute, bears his sin and guilt (Lev 4:29)
- The animal is 'guilty' and thus deserves to die. The offerer slays the animal and its blood, which carries the man's sin, is captured in a bowl and sprinkled, applied or poured either in the Holy Place (Lev 4:5-7) or at the Altar of Burnt Sacrifice outside in the courtyard (Lev 4:30)
- Thus, through this daily ritual, the sanctuary becomes polluted / defiled with sin from all the daily sacrifices throughout the year (see Lev 16:16, 19 which implies that Israel's sins polluted the sanctuary during its daily activities)
- Although the penitent sinner is forgiven, his sin is only finally dealt with later, on the Day of Atonement (see below), when his case comes up for review, and when sin is finally removed from the sanctuary.

The Day of Atonement service took place *once a year*. It was viewed as a day of judgment (Lev 23:29) on which Jews were expected to fast (Lev 23:27). Its service was played out as follows (see Lev 16):
- After some initial offerings, lots were cast for 2 goats – the Lord's Goat, and Azazel [the Scapegoat] (Lev 16:7-10)
- The goat on which the lot fell, was the Goat of the Lord, which was then sacrificed. Notice that there was no hands laid on this goat, which means there was no transference of sin onto it, i.e. its blood did not carry sin into the sanctuary. Its blood was clean blood designed to purify the sanctuary and not to pollute it.
- The blood of the Lord's Goat was then carried into the Most Holy Place, and sprinkled before the Mercy Seat (the golden lid of the Ark of the Covenant in which the Ten Commandments were found, the very

commandments which were broken by the sinner who brought his animal to the sanctuary.

- The high priest also placed blood on the horns (small projections on the corners) of Altar of Incense on his way out of the Most Holy Place (Lev 16:18-19; cf Ex 30:10). The Altar of Incense was one of the places where blood was placed during the daily services. (see Lev 1:5, 4:7, etc.). This 'blood record of sin' was now covered and cleansed by the pure blood of the Lord's Goat.
- As he left the Holy Place on his way out, the high priest symbolically took all the sins, that had accumulated in the sanctuary for the past year, upon himself and transferred them (Lev 16:21) to the live Scapegoat. The latter was then led into the wilderness (called the rite of elimination) to remove all of Israel's sins (see Lev 16:22) from the camp. Note that the Scapegoat only comes on the scene *after* atonement had already been made by the Lord's Goat. There was no blood from the Scapegoat and thus no atonement from his side (see Lev 16:20-22)
    - The Scapegoat in Lev 16:8 literally means 'to/for Azazel' which is in contrast to the first goat which was 'to/for the Lord.' Clearly the two are opposite to each other. So if the Goat to the Lord (i.e. the Lord's Goat), stands for the Lord (and the atonement He offers), Azazel has to be a symbol of Satan, the only true opponent of God.
- Israelites who did not confess their sins and were impenitent during the Day of Atonement (the time when their sins were being finally removed from the sanctuary), were 'cut off,' (i.e. banished from the camp) – see Lev 23:29. They were judged!!

Summary of Some Lessons from the Sanctuary:

- The earthly sanctuary is a mini representation of the work of the heavenly sanctuary
- It essentially deals, in symbolic format, with the work of salvation on behalf of mankind
- Sin causes separation from God (God's presence was only entered into once a year, and only by the high priest)
- A substitute dies in place of the sinner
- All the blood and sacrifices of the sanctuary show us how gruesome and ugly sin is
- God is a holy God and must be approached with reverence and respect
- The daily service brought sin into the sanctuary, while on the Day of Atonement sin was removed from the sanctuary
- The Day of Atonement was a day of judgment
- Sin's responsibility and/or accountability will ultimately be placed on Satan, its originator (which was symbolised by the Scapegoat)

10 Judgment – Part 1 (J)

J-0 *Title text:* God's final message to mankind pictures judgment. (Rev 14:6-7)

J-1. The judgment is certain event (Acts 17:31a)

J-2. If Jesus comes with rewards at the Second Coming, there must be a prior judgment to determine who receives what reward (Rev 22:12)

J-3. We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ (2 Cor 5:10). See Rom 14:12

J-4. God's pattern of judgment is to first investigate before taking action (Gen 3:8-11, 17-19)

J-5. A second example of God first investigating before taking action (Gen 11:5, 7-8)

J-6. A third example of God first investigating before taking action (Gen 18:20-21, 19:24-25)
Summary of above 3 passages: God investigates first before He executes to show that His dealings with mankind are fair, just and transparent. This is how God operates. Similarly He will first investigate before He comes with His reward at the Second Coming.

J-7. God will bring every secret thing into judgment (Eccl 12:13-14). See Heb 4:13

J-8. God has a record of everything we do. The Bible refers to: a) *The Book of Life* – where all the names of the righteous are recorded (Phil 4:3; Rev 20:12, 15);

J-9. b) *The Book of Remembrance* – where all the righteous acts, accomplished through the grace of Christ, are recorded (Mal 3:16) and

J-10. c) *The Book of Sins* – a record of disobedience (Isa 65:6, 7 – "written before me")
We are therefore judged from accurate records kept in heaven. These records are not needed by God but are evidence, for our benefit, that He has dealt faithfully and mercifully with every person.

J-11. The standard against which we are judged is God's Law (James 2:12)

J-12. God's judgment is always just and fair (Ps 96:13) See Gen 18:25

J-13. If we turn to God in repentance, our *sins* will be blotted out of God's record in the final judgment (Acts 3:19)

J-14. If we continue in sin, failing to overcome, our *names* will be blotted out of God's record (Rev 3:5). See Ex 32:31, 33

J-15. The only way to overcome the condemnation of judgment is through Jesus (Rom 8:1) (End)

11 Judgment – Part 2 [1844] (J2)

J2-0. *Title text:* Daniel saw the sitting of the Supreme Court of the Universe in heaven and the opening of the books of judgment (Dan 7:9-10). *From our previous study we found heaven keeps an accurate record of our lives in 'books'*

J2-1. This heavenly judgment takes place after 2 300 prophetic days? (Dan 8:14). *Remember from an earlier study that the cleansing of the sanctuary was actually a day of judgment. To further prove this, see the parallel chapters of Dan 7 and 8 bring out this very point: The Heavenly Judgment of Dan 7:9-10 is actually the same as the Cleansing of the Sanctuary in Dan 8:14*

Daniel 7	Daniel 8
Lion (Babylon) – vs 4	Babylon Omitted
Bear (Medo-Persia) – vs 5	Ram (Medo-Persia) – vss 3-4, 20
Leopard (Greece) – vs 6	He-Goat (Greece) – vss 5-8, 21-22
Fourth Beast: Pagan Rome – vs 7	Horizontal Work of Little Horn: Pagan Rome – vs 9
Fourth Beast's Little Horn: Papal Rome – vs 8	Vertical Work of Little Horn: Papal Rome – vs 10-12
The Next Great Event: The Heavenly Judgment Scene – vss 9-10	The Next Great Event: The Sanctuary is Cleansed – vs 14
Burning of Little Horn – vs 11	Breaking of Little Horn – vs 25

J2-2. In symbolical Bible prophecy one prophetic day equals one literal year (Num 14:34). See Eze 4:6. *Note: In symbolical prophecy, when a miniature object (e.g. a beast) represents something much larger (i.e. an empire), the time elements in those prophecies also represent something larger. To understand what exactly those time elements are, we go to the story of the 12 spies in Num 13-14. There the principle of miniature symbolisation is also at work: One spy (miniature) represented a whole tribe (thus 12 spies for the 12 tribes of Israel – see Num 13:3-15). Because of their later disbelief and disobedience their punishment was also from miniature to large, i.e. for each day of exploring Canaan they received one year of wilderness wandering (hence 40 years) – see Num 14:34. Thus in symbolical prophecy one day equals a year. In Eze 4 we find a similar principle. The context shows miniature representation: vss 1-3: a brick stands for a miniature model of Jerusalem; vss 4-8: Ezekiel himself becomes a miniature symbol of the whole house of Israel, then the whole house of Judah. So the time elements in that section should also stand for something larger. Thus the 390 + 40 days in that context = 430 years. This principle of a day standing for a year is accepted by historicists, the only biblically consistent school of interpretation.*

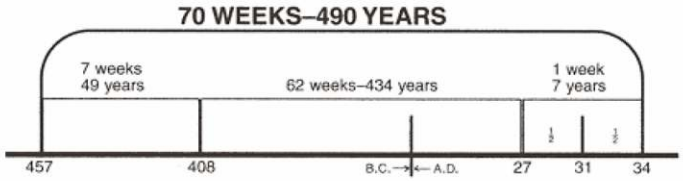
J2-3. The vision of the 2 300 days applies to the 'time of the end' (Dan 8:17, 19). *This refers to the period of time before our Lord's Coming. It is therefore relevant to our day.*

J2-4. The key to unlocking the starting point of the 2 300 day prophecy is found in Dan 9:24. *Dan 9 is the key to to the starting point for the 2 300 days for the following reasons:*

- *Dan 8 has 2 sections, viz., the 'visual' vision (what Daniel SAW: vss 1-12) and the auditory 'vision' (what Daniel HEARD: vss 13-14). The interpretation of the visual section is given in vss 15-29, but the auditory vision, which deals with the 2 300 days, is NOT explained in Dan 8. In fact it is this auditory vision (called the 'vision of evenings and mornings' in vs 26) which Daniel could not understand that caused him to be 'exhausted' and 'to lay ill several days' since it was 'beyond understanding' (Dan 8:27)*
- *As mentioned, Dan 8 ends with the fact that the vision of the 2 300 days was 'beyond understanding' (NIV) / 'no one understood it' (NKJV). In Dan 9 however, Gabriel says that he came to bring Daniel 'understanding' (NIV)/ 'skill to understand' (NKJV). The only section that needed explanation from Dan 8's prophecy was the 2 300 days. Thus we can expect Gabriel to bring understanding to Daniel in Dan 9 specifically about the 2 300 days.*
- *The word for 'vision' in Dan 9:23 ('therefore consider the matter and understand the vision') is the same technical word for the auditory vision of Dan 8 (i.e. the vision of the 2 300 evenings and mornings), once again proving that of Dan 9 sheds light on the 2 300 days of Dan 8:13-14*
- *Finally, the same angel, Gabriel, is in both visions. In Dan 9:21, the NIV puts it well when it says: 'While I was still in prayer, Gabriel, the man I had seen in my earlier vision, came to me…'). The 'earlier vision' here is a reference to that of Dan 8; more evidence that Dan 9 is explaining Dan 8.*

J2-5. The 2 300 day prophecy starts with the issuing of the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem (Dan 9:25). *Historical evidence shows that this decree was issued by King Artaxerxes in the autumn of 457 BC, when he allowed the Jews to return to their homeland and rebuild Jerusalem. You can read the decree in Ezra 7:12-26.*

J2-6. Seventy weeks of the 2 300 day prophecy apply directly to the Jews (Dan 9:24). *According to Dan 9:24 seventy weeks or 490 prophetic days (i.e. 70 x 7 = 490 literal years) are 'determined' (NKJV) or 'decreed' (NIV) upon Daniel's people (i.e. the Jews). The word translated 'determined' or 'decreed' literally means 'cut off or amputate' So the verse actually reads: 'Seventy weeks are cut off (or amputated) for your people.' What could the seventy weeks be cut off from? The only option is that it is cut off from the larger 2 300 days.*



The key time markers of the 70 weeks prophecy are:

- 457 BC: Beginning of the 70 weeks prophecy
- 408 BC: Rebuilding of the Jerusalem completed. *The first division of the 70 weeks, viz., the 7 weeks or 49 years is assigned to the restoration and rebuilding of Jerusalem. There is not much historical evidence to support this date, but this does not mean it did not happen. One thing we do know, according to the post exilic books of Ezra, Nehemiah and Haggai, is that there were many difficulties and delays in rebuilding Jerusalem and its Temple after the exiles had been set free by Cyrus in 539 BC.*
- AD 27: Jesus anointed at his baptism
- AD 31: Death of Jesus
- AD 34: Stephen stoned

J2-7. There are 69 weeks (7 + 62) from the issuing of the decree to the anointing of the Messiah (Dan 9:25). *Consult diagram above. Although Jesus was*

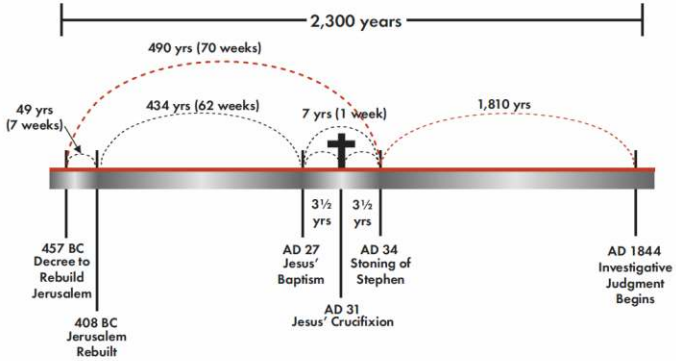
humanity's sinless Example throughout His life, He officially became Messiah when He was anointed with the Holy Spirit at His baptism – Luke 4:1, 14, 18; Acts 10:37-38. According to the prophecy His baptism took place in AD 27. Luke 3:1 tells us the John the Baptist began his ministry in the 15th year of Tiberius Caesar. According to historical records the latter took place in AD 12. Thus his 15th year was AD 27. Thus the details of the prophecy perfectly line up.

J2-8. In the middle of the last prophetic week, Messiah was to be 'cut off' or crucified and bring an end to 'sacrifice and offering' (Dan 9:26-27). *Jesus was crucified three and a half years after His baptism (i.e. in the spring of AD 31). His death brought an end to the animal sacrificial system, dramatically signified when the Temple curtain was torn from top to bottom (Matt 27:51).*

J2-9. At the end of the 70 weeks, the Jewish nation sealed their doom and were rejected as God's chosen people. This happened when the highest Jewish authority, the Sanhedrin, seized and stoned Stephen, the first Christian martyr (Acts 6:12; 7:51, 54, 59-60). *Jesus predicted that the Jewish nation would be rejected in Matt 21:33-43 [particularly vs 43]; Matt 23:37-38; cf. Acts 13:46. In its place He raised up the church – 1 Pet 2:9.*

The date of Stephen's martyrdom is based on the career of the apostle Paul. At Stephen's stoning, he was still unconverted (Acts 7:58). A short time later he went to Damascus to persecute Christians but instead was himself converted (Acts 9:1-9). In Gal 1 Paul gives some biographical details about his career: His first visit to Jerusalem came 3 years after his conversion (vs 18) and the second 14 years after the first (2:1). Shortly after his second visit to Jerusalem he went to Corinth (Acts 18). While there, he appeared before the proconsul Gallio (Acts 18:12). So he stood before Gallio 17 years after his conversion (14 years between his second and first visit to Jerusalem added to the 3 years between his first Jerusalem visit and his conversion). From an inscription found in Corinth we know that Gallio's one year proconsulship in Corinth occurred in AD 51. If the 17 years for Paul's 2 visits to Jerusalem are subtracted from the date of Paul's appearance before Gallio, then his conversion and Stephen's stoning should be dated AD 34, the very date that ends the 70 weeks prophecy – see William Shea, <u>The Abundant Life Bible Amplifier: Daniel 7-12</u>, pp. 68-70.

<u>Note:</u> The 2 300 day prophecy ends in 1844, which is the beginning of the heavenly judgment. *If the 2 300 day period starts in 457 BC, then 2 300 years later brings us to 1844 (remember that time counts down when you count in BC. Also keep in mind that there is no year '0' which means that we have to add another year to our calculations. If you are struggling with this, ask something who loves mathematics to explain it to you.*



J2-10. Wise counsel on how to live, knowing that we are in the judgment hour (Rom 13:11-14)

<u>Why an Investigative Judgment</u>?

- *God's Day of Judgment is His 'Day of Atonement' when He vindicates and cleanses everyone who sincerely desires to be at-one with Him, and removes everyone who wants to be separated from Him. The choice of where our final destiny will be is in our hands, not God's. The judgment merely reveals the genuineness of our faith.*
- *The personal message of Dan 8:14 is that God loves us (Jhn 16:27), has offered to be our Advocate and Defender (1 Jhn 2:1) and wants us all to be saved (Jhn 3:16)*
- *In the earthly 'Day of Atonement' only the names of Israel (God's believing children) came into judgment. Thus we can safely say that the heavenly investigative judgment is for those 'who have called on the name of the Lord'. The wicked are automatically judged when they are excluded from heaven at the conclusion of the judgment.*
- *The investigative judgment tells us that God deals openly with His children. He investigates before He executes. When Jesus comes at the Second Coming, His reward of eternal life will be with Him (Rev 22:12). This implies a prior investigation to decide who should or shouldn't get the reward.*
- *The investigative judgement actually also puts God on trial in a sense. The way He deals with His children, tells the Universe that He is a faithful and just God. He can be trusted throughout the ages of eternity. All Satan's lies and accusations about God are therefore shown to be false.*
- *This pre-Second Coming judgment tells us that God is a God of justice and will not allow any earthly power, like the little horn, to go unpunished. The little horn, under the guise of Christianity, meddled with God's plan of salvation, persecuted His children and spread deception and lies about God. God's justice forces Him to act through judgment. The judment, by implication, not only deals with the little horn, but with all God-opposing powers both before and after Rome.*
- *The records of God's investigations, done between 1844 and the Second Coming will be accessed by the righteous in heaven during the 1 000 years after Christ's coming. It will help answer some critical questions about why some people are not in heaven, while others are there. More about this in a later study.*
- *The investigative judgment ultimately restores God's Name, honour, law and kingship – all of which have been attacked, trampled on and villified.*

12 Law of God - Part 1 (LG)

LG-0. *Title text*: God's final message to a world living on the verge of social collapse is to 'fear' Him (Rev 14:7). *To fear God means to respect and reverence Him. It is a call to obedience.*

LG-1. Our own hearts or minds cannot adequately judge between what is right or wrong because it deceives us (Jer 17:9). *We therefore need a standard outside of ourselves to help us know right and wrong.*

LG-2. That standard of right and wrong, by which we will be judged is God's Ten Commandments (James 2:12 [see vss 8-11 for context]). *These Ten Commandments are found in Ex 20:1-17.*

LG-3. They were written by God's own finger, showing their permanence (Ex 31:18)

LG-4. The Bible is crystal clear that no amount of law-keeping will save a person. Salvation comes always and totally by grace (Eph 2:8-9) See Gal 2:16

LG-5. Yet God desires His children to produce good works (2 Cor 9:8). See also Titus 2:13, 13. *In other words, He wants His children to be obedient and law-abiding. So while obedience does not save a person, it is a fruit that every Christian will possess because of their love for Jesus. In other words, law-keeping does not save a person, but a saved person will be law-abiding.*

LG-6. The purpose of the law is to give us a knowledge of sin (Rom 3:20) See Rom 7:7. *That knowledge is to drive us to Jesus for forgiveness and salvation.*

LG-7. Paul strongly condemned using God's law in order to be saved (Gal 3:1-3). *As mentioned, the law was never designed to save, but only to expose sin.*

LG-8. We are not "under the law" but under grace (Rom 6:14). *In other words, we are not under the law as a means of salvation; we should not keep the law to be saved. We are under grace.*

LG-9. Although we are under grace, this does not give us liberty to break God's law and be disobedient (Rom 6:15). See Rom 3:31.

LG-10. Sin is defined as breaking God's law (1 Jhn 3:4)

LG-11. The wages of sin is eternal death (Rom 6:23). *By putting 1 Jhn 3:4 and Rom 6:23 together we conclude that breaking God's law leads to eternal death.*

LG-12. The sinful (carnal) mind causes human's to refuse, or be unable to obey God's law (Rom 8:7)

LG-13. The converted person however loves to obey God's law (1 Jhn 5:3). See Ps 40:8

LG-14. If we love God we will keep His commandments (Jhn 14:15)

LG-15. The genuine test of knowing God is obedience (1 Jhn 2:4-5)

LG-16. God's Holy Spirit leads us to obey His laws (Eze 36:27). *We cannot claim to be filled with the Holy Spirit and at the same time reject God's law.*

LG-17. The remnant, like the faithful throughout the ages, is identified as a law keeping community (Rev 12:17) (End). See Rev 14:12

13 Law of God - Part 2 (The purpose of this section is to provide you with key arguments to counter the major misconceptions of the law in Christianity. It is mainly for personal enlightenment and clarity. Do not present this whole section in one study. The content can sometimes be technical and the volume of arguments may prove to be overwhelming. So select only a few critical ones for use in your study)

- Doesn't love to God and one's neighbour replace the Ten Commandments? (Matt 22:37-40).

  Answer: No. The Commandments are a concrete expression of love to God and humanity. If we love God we will keep the first 4 commandments, if we love our fellow human beings, we will keep the last 6.

- Doesn't love fulfill the law (Rom 13:10), thus doing away with it?

  Answer: No. The word 'fulfill' does not mean 'to do away with,' but 'to do' or 'to keep' (see Matt 3:15, Gal 6:2). So when the Bible says 'love is the fulfillment of the law' it means that the law should be kept or practised in a loving way.

- Doesn't Jesus' new commandment of love replace the Ten Commandments? (Jhn 13:34)

  Answer: No. The commandment to love one's neighbour was not new (see Lev 19:18). In Jhn 13:34 Jesus gave us a new way of doing that, viz., 'as I have loved you.' Never before had mankind seen loved so expressed as had been seen in the life and ministry of Jesus. This was the 'new' way Jesus wanted His disciples to practise an old command. Incidentally there are over 900 direct commands and 300 indirect ones in th NT (including repetitions for emphasis), showing that no spiritual authority – Jesus, Paul or Peter – trusted love as the only safe single command or felt that the Holy Spirit internal guidance was a replacement for all specific divine commandments.

- Didn't the law only come into effect at Sinai, showing that it only applied to the Jews?

  Answer: The Law operated even before Sinai. Here are a few examples: Cain was condemned for killing his brother. If he did not know it was wrong, he would not have been guilty (see Rom 4:15; 5:13). Yet God found him guilty – see Gen 4:7-10. Jacob was told to remove his foreign gods (what the 1st commandment prohibits) – see Gen 35:2-4. Joseph knew that adultery (7th commandment) was a sin – Gen 39:9.

- Didn't Jesus break the commandments? (Jhn 5:18)

  Answer: No. Jesus always upheld His Father's commandments (Jhn 15:10), but rejected false interpretations and traditions of men. For example, Jesus broke the Sabbath, *according to Jewish, man-made customs* that rejected the healing of a man on the Sabbath, but upheld the Sabbath as was originally intended by God and given to mankind.

- What Law was abolished in Christ's flesh (Eph 2:14-16)?

  Answer: In this passage Paul shows that at the Cross two things happened:

  1. Christ broke down the 'dividing wall of hostility' (vs. 14)
     - Christ's blood figuratively broke down the wall of separation between Jews and

Gentiles, the wall that made it difficult for Gentiles to become part of God's people. By His death Christ made Jews and Gentiles into one Christian church.

2. He abolished the "law with its commandments and regulations" (vs 15). What laws visibly separated the Jews from the Gentiles?
   - For one, the Jews had the temple service with the daily sacrifices, regulated by ceremonial laws, as well as numerous regulations that were added later - all these very clearly distinguished Jew from Gentile (see for instance Acts 21:28, 29 cf. Acts 10:28)
   - God called Israel out to be separate from the nations (Ex 19:5, 6; 1 Kings 8:53). Various regulations maintained this separation. The Jews sadly interpreted these laws in a legalistic and exclusive way, creating a hostile wall of separation between them and the rest of the world (see Eph. 2:11).
   - Thus the "law with its commandments and regulations" is a reference to the ceremonial laws and legal regulations that made it difficult for Gentiles to become part of God's people. At Calvary Christ did away with burnt offerings, sacrifices, festivals, etc. – the things that were peculiar and special only to the Jew. This tore down the wall of separation.

- Please explain Col 2:13-14 (the Law nailed to the Cross)?

  Answer: The 'written code with it regulations' (vs 14) is a reference to the ceremonial laws of the Old Testament. The word for 'regulations' in Col 2:14 is the same word found in Eph. 2:14, 15, where it has to do with ritual that separated Jews from Gentiles, especially circumcision. The context of Col. 2:14 indicates regulations having to do with ceremonial celebrations and food offerings (v. 16). Thus the ceremonial system, which pointed forward to Christ (a 'shadow of things to come' – Col 2:1, was nailed to the Cross (vs. 14).

  The ceremonial system is said to have stood contrary to Jew and Gentile ('us'), not because God has made it that way, but it became a source of pride and exclusivism to the Jews on the one hand, and prevented the Gentiles from accepting salvation because of the Jewish attitudes, on the other.
  The Ten Commandments could not have been nailed to the Cross. That would mean that since the Cross mankind had been freed from the Law and thus given license to steal, lie, disobey their parents, blaspheme, commit adultery, kill, etc. This runs contrary to all of Scripture.

- The Bible says that Christ is the end of the Law (Rom 10:4). So when I have Christ, I don't need the Law

  Answer: The Greek word for 'end' does not only mean 'to do away with' or 'abolish,' but also 'goal, outcome, purpose, design and achievement, as in 'the end justifies the means.' A good comparison is to read 1 Tim 1:5 in the KJV and then compare it to modern translations like NCV, NIV, CEB, etc. Thus you will find that Christ is the goal of the law. God's laws were designed to ultimately lead people to Christ. A second, legitimate way of understanding this verse, based on the context of Rom. 9:30 – 10:5 which speaks about the misuse of the law is: For those who believe, "Christ is the end of the law as a *means of righteousness*."

- Gal 3:13 calls the law a 'curse.' This means we don't have to keep it.

  Answer: The curse is not the law, or disobedience to it (since the text says Christ became a curse for us), but the consequence of disobedience (viz., death). For a criminal the curse was death by being hanged on a tree (Deut 21:21, 23). God's laws were intended to bring life (Lev 18:1-5) but through humanity's disobedience, we reaped death. So God liberated us from the curse of the law, viz., death. He died in place of the accursed ones.

- The Bible says we are not under law but under grace. That means we don't have to keep the law!

  Answer: That verse can be viewed in 2 ways: Historically it means that man, before Calvary, was corporately 'under the condemnation of the law,' and legally lost. However after the Cross, with the penalty of sin paid, man was 'under grace.' In this sense Paul was saying: "Don't let sin be your master since Jesus has died for your sin. You are now no longer under the law's condemnation, but under grace."

  Experientially this passage can be viewed as follows:

Under Law	*Under Grace*
"Sin shall… be your master" (vs 14)	"Sin shall no longer be your master" (vs 14)
You are "alive" to "sin" (vs 11)	"Count yourself dead to sin… alive to God" (vs 11)
Sin "reigns in your body… [you] obey its evil desires" (vs 12)	"Do not let sin reign in your body [or] obey its desires" (vs 12)
"Offer… yourself to sin as an instrument of wickedness" (vs 13)	"Offer yourself to God… as an instrument of righteousness" (vs 13)
Unconverted person	*Converted person*

Thus experientially, a person before conversion, is living in the left column - under "the law of sin," under the control of the sinful nature (Rom 7:25) – bent toward immorality (Gal. 5:19-21) or legalism (Phil. 3:4-6). After conversion however, the person moves to the right column, having accepted by faith the provisions made available by Jesus on Calvary for his salvation, and lives a life controlled and directed by the Spirit.

Life 'under grace' is not free from intense struggle with sin, as both Scripture and any Spirit-led believer can testify. Indeed, the Christian experience is characterised as spiritual warfare (Eph. 6:10f). The difference is that before conversion the unbeliever is hostile to God (Rom. 8:7), but after conversion the believer switches sides and begins to fight as a citizen of heaven against the "spiritual forces of evil" (Eph. 6:12).

- Gal 2:19 says that through the Law I died to the Law. What does that mean?

  Answer: Here Paul is merely stating that through the law (i.e. by personal experience of trying to earn salvation through law keeping, he had proved to his own satisfaction that the system did not work.) he died to the law (i.e. as a means to salvation. He abandoned the idea altogether that the law can save a person.)

- Rom 7:6 speaks of being released from the law to serve God in a new way. That surely means that we don't have to keep the Ten Commandments any longer!

  Answer: Rom 7:1-6 is an illustration from marriage. A careful understand of that passage shows that the marriage to the first husband is a metaphor for legalism, for a life controlled by the flesh and separated from God. When a sinner accepts Christ he/she dies (baptism is a death – Rom 6:4) to the enslaving marriage of the flesh. This frees him/her to be married to Christ. Thus the new believer is released from legalism's false relationship to the law. Notice that it is not the *law* that dies, but the sinner's fatal *relationship* to it. Now in Christ the sinner has a correct relationship to the law and no longer sees it as a means to salvation, but as a fruit of salvation.

- The law is not for the righteous but for lawbreakers (1 Tim 1:10-12) I am not a lawbreaker, therefore I don't need the Law.

  Answer: Although the law is holy, righteous and good (see Rom 7:12), it also has a negative side. Anything out of kilter with His law comes under judgment. In its negative expression, the law is a terror to evildoers. So the law was made 'for murderers, for adulterers and perverts, for slave traders and liars and perjurers" – to put, as people sometimes say, 'the fear of God in them,' to turn them around, to arrest their attention, which appears to be the meaning in this passage.

- The law was added that sin would increase (Rom 5:20). I am trying to live a holy life and therefore need to reject the law?

  Answer: The law in this context refers to the Ten Commandments which 'came in' at the time of Moses. It was the clearest revelation of God and sin up to that time. When the Law came in, it exposed sin. This naturally excites opposition in rebellious hearts and thus becomes the occasion of stirring up sin, and in this sense multiplying transgression. If men's hearts were holy, and there were a disposition to do right, law would have no such tendency. Remember that the law in and of itself cannot cause us to sin more. Only our sinful natures lead us to sin more (Rom. 7:21-23; 8:2)

- The law was merely a guardian to lead me to Christ (Gal 3:25). But now that Christ has come, I no longer need the law

  Answer: This is part of a bigger passage, viz., Gal 3:15-25. In that section it shows God's promises of the covenant to save mankind by faith was given to Abraham 430 years before the formal giving of the law. The law did not set aside that covenant - which means God didn't later change His promise of saving men by faith to saving them through the law. In vs 19 it states that the law was 'added because of transgressions,' in other words it was given to the Israelites, who had recently come out of Egypt and had been exposed to centuries of idolatry, to make them conscious of the true character of sin. It was also to prepare them for the coming of the Messiah (the 'Seed.').

  In vs 21 it asks, whether God's Law is incompatible with Abraham's covenant? In other words, Has God replaced the promise of salvation by faith with a programme of salvation by works? The answer is, 'Absolutely not!' Then in vs 23 it says that before this faith came (a reference to Christ's first historical coming, the Object of our faith), we were held prisoners by the law [the law is pictured as a jailor], locked up until faith should be revealed [when Christ came, He released us, through His death, from the condemnation of the law. The jailor [i.e. the law] could no longer keep us in prison as a human race, because the penalty of our sin had been paid. We were now free!!]. In vs 24 Paul changes his metaphor of the law from a jailor to that of a guardian.

  According to that verse, the proper function of the law was to show people their need of salvation and lead them to the One who would provide that salvation. But when Christ ('that faith') came the supervisory function of the law came to an end. In other words, the Jewish legal system – which included the moral, ceremonial and civil laws – was suppose to create a need in the heart of the believers for the future historical promised Messiah and the salvation He was to bring, but now that He had come, that 'guardian' function of the law was no longer required.]

- The commandments produce evil desires (Rom 7:8) and I want to avoid evil desires

  Answer: This verse is part of a whole passage, Rom 7:7-13. Paul clearly shows that the law is not at fault (vs 5, 12), but sin/the sinful nature is. To create dramatic effect, he personifies sin as an aggressor in this passage. He illustrate his point by using the example of the 10th commandment. That commandment which said he should not covet, made him covet all the more. The fact that something is forbidden often seems to make it

appear all the more desirable, because of the evil passions of the rebellious sinful nature.

In vs 9, he states that in his unconverted state he thought he was alive, but when the spiritual significance of the 10th commandment was brought home to his mind, sin sprang to life (it was always there, but in the full light of the commandment, he could recognise its true nature and its fatal consequences) and he died to spiritual pride and self confidence. This passage shows how the sinful nature deceives a person to the true nature of the law. It deceives the sinner by saying, 'You can become good and earn salvation by keep the law.' In vs 13 Paul states that it was sin/sinful nature, and not the law, that was produced death in him. It used God's good commands, designed for our good, for evil purposes.

- According to 1 Cor 15:56-57, the strength of sin is the law. That sounds like the law should be avoided.

  Answer: The law is the strength of sin in 2 ways:
  - The sinful nature will war against God's law, urging us to break it or observe it legalistically (see Rom. 7:7-8-2)
  - It makes us conscious of sin (and therefore shows us the power of sin in our lives) (End)

14 Sabbath – Part 1 (SA)

SA-0. *Title text:* God's final message to mankind: worship the Creator (Rev 14:6-7)

SA-1. The basis of all worship is the fact that God created us (Rev 4:11)

SA-2. Since Jesus was the active agent in creation, Revelation's final call to worship the Creator is a call to give honour to Jesus (Eph 3:9) See Jhn 1:3

SA-3. We worship Him as Creator by keeping His Sabbath (Ex 20:8-11)

SA-4. No other god can create - this is His identifying mark. The Sabbath commandment points to the Creator who has no rival (Jer 10:11). See Ps 96:5; Acts 14:15

SA-5. The Sabbath was set apart at creation. God ceased from His creative work before the 7th day, then blessed and hallowed it (Gen 2:1-3).
Since the Sabbath was established at Creation, it means God intended it for all mankind.

SA-6. The Sabbath was given to the human race about 2 000 years before the existence of the Jews, as a memorial for all mankind (Mark 2:27, 28)

SA-7. The Sabbath is a sign as a between God and His people (Eze 20:12, 20). *The Sabbath is a visble, external and perpetual sign between God and His people that He is their God and Sanctifier; and they are His covenant people and belong to Him. A sign serves as a remembrance, confirmation and distinction.*

SA-8. Jesus was a faithful Sabbath keeper (Luke 4:16)

SA-9. Jesus predicted the Sabbath would be kept in 70 AD at the destruction of Jerusalem over 35 years after His death (Matt 24:20). *This means that Jesus did not come to abolish the Sabbath, but predicted its continuance.*

SA-10. Paul kept the Sabbath himself and met to worship God with the whole city - Jews and Gentiles alike (Acts 13:14, 42, 44).

SA-11. In Philippi, Paul met privately with a group of believers on a Sabbath (Acts 16:13)

SA-12. The Lord still has a special day at the end of the first century (Rev 1:10). *That verse does not clearly reveal which day is the Lord's Day, but Matt 12:8, Mark 2:27-28, and Luke 6:5 do. These verses indicate that Christ is Lord of the Sabbath, in other words it is His day or 'the Lord's Day.' Even through He made the Sabbath for humanity, He still retains the right as Lord of that day.*

SA-13. Scripture makes it clear which day the Sabbath is (Luke 23:50-56; 24:1-3). *Christ died on Preparation day (vs 54). The very next day was Sabbath (vs 54), during which He rested in the tomb. The day after the Sabbath was His resurrection (24:1-3). History shows that this order has not changed for over 2000 years. We still celebrate it today over Easter: Good Friday commemorates Christ's death. According to Scripture the next day was Sabbath, which therefore has to be Saturday. Christ rose from the tomb on Sunday, the first day of the week.*

SA-14. In the new heavens and new earth we will celebrate the Sabbath weekly (Isa 66:22-23) (End).
Notice the following from this passage (mainly summarised from Ron du Preez, Feast Keeping and the Faithful, pp. 96-99, 138-139:
- *Isaiah is the only Old Testament prophet that uses the phrase 'new heavens and new earth,' a clear reference to Creation (Gen. 1:1). By linking Isa 66 to Creation, the prophet is pointing to a total renewal of Creation.*
- *The phrase 'new heavens and new earth' is picked up in by Peter (2 Pet. 3:13) and John (Rev. 21:1) in the New Testament, who both seem to be alluding to Isa. 66. In those verses, these New Testament writers are speaking about the New Earth – giving indication that they understood Isaiah to be referring to it as well.*
- *Concerning 'New Moon,' in vs. 23, standard lexicons agree that in connection with the special grammatical construction of this verse, the preferred translation is 'month,' thus rendering it 'from month to month.' Ninety percent of the time the Hebrew word is translated as 'month,' and 10% as 'new moon.' The Geneva Bible, Young's Literal Translation, New English Bible, the Septuagint, etc., correctly translate this phrase as 'month to month' – which links up well with Rev. 22:2 (the tree of life that yields fruit every month).*
- *Vs. 24 uses metaphorical language to speak of complete destruction, picturing the end of sin and sinners.*
- *Putting it altogether, Isa 66:22-24 tells us that in the New Earth, the saints will have a special monthly worship service (presumably coinciding with the new fruit from the tree of life) and will observe the weekly Sabbath. We are also reminded that in the New Earth sin and sinners will be completely destroyed.*

15 Sabbath - Part 2 (This section gives answers to the major arguments against Sabbath keeping)

- The Sabbath is for ancient Israel and not the Christian church. According to Ex 31:12, 17 it is a sign between God and *Israel*, not God and the Christian church.

  Answer: If one takes that line of argument (while ignoring all the other Scriptures that show the Sabbath is for all mankind) then how do you explain that the new covenant (which almost all Christians say is applicable to New Testament believers) is also made with the "house of Israel" (see Heb. 8:8, 10)? Although the house of Israel historically referred to the Jewish nation, Gal. 3:7 defines Israel – Abraham's children – as 'those who believe.' So if the Sabbath applied literally to Israel only, then so should the new covenant. But if the new covenant, which is 'for the house of Israel,' applies to 'those who believe,' it is reasonable to conclude that the Sabbath, which is God's sign between Himself and Israel should likewise apply to 'those who believe.'

- Paul says that we should not let anyone judge us according to sabbaths – so if I keep it or not, please don't judge me.

  Answer: Before we tackle this text, it is important to note that there were 2 types of Sabbaths: weekly and annual. On the annual sabbaths Israel was to "have a holy convocation" and "do no customary work" (Lev. 23:7). Examples of annual sabbaths include the Feast of Trumpets (Lev. 23:24), the Day of Atonement (Lev. 23:32), etc.

  There are special language markers that show the difference between the weekly and annual Sabbaths. Although there are a number of them, only 2 will be highlighted as context for Col 2:16-17:
  - *God used the definite article, 'the' when identifying the weekly Sabbath (Ex 20:8; Num 15:32; 2 Chron. 2:4; Neh 10:31, etc.), whereas no definite article is used with annual sabbaths (Lev 16:31; 23:32).*
  - *God calls the weekly Sabbaths "My Sabbaths," (Ex 31:13; Lev 19:30; Neh 9:14; Isa 56:4, etc.) but calls the annuals Sabbaths her [Israel's] sabbaths (2 Chron 36:21; Hos 2:11) or 'your sabbaths' (Lev 23:32; 26:35).*

  With that in mind, let's look at Col 2:16-17 says: "So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths, which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ."

  The closest biblical parallel to Col. 2:16 is Hos. 2:11. In that vs the Hebrew word for 'feast' refers to the three annual pilgrim festivals of Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles. The reference to "her sabbath" identifies this as Israel's ritual sabbath(s) rather than the weekly seventh-day Sabbath, which is never spoken of in this way.

  Similarly, the Greek word for 'festival' in Col 2:16 is limited in the New Testament to the three annual pilgrim festivals (i.e., Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles), the Greek word for new moon indicates the lunar new year celebrations, while the Greek word for sabbaths includes the three ritual "rest" times (i.e., Trumpets, Atonement, and Sabbatical years).

  Putting this altogether, we can see that Paul is not referring to the weekly Sabbath, but to the cultic sabbaths that were part of the ceremonial system. These, he says, were "shadows of things to come" (vs. 17) – i.e. they were symbols that pointed forward to the work of the Messiah.

  Col 2:16-17 can therefore be paraphrased as follows: "Don't let anyone judge you now that you, as Christians, are not observing the Jewish ceremonial system which involves meal and drink offerings, annual pilgrim festivals, new moon celebrations or annual sabbaths (such as Trumpets, Day of Atonement, etc.). These are part of the old ceremonial system which pointed to the Messiah, but now that Christ has come, they are no longer necessary to observe."

- Rom 14:5-6 says that it does not matter which day we worship God.

  Answer: The context of Romans 14 is about disputable matters (see vs 1). The Sabbath is never a disputable matter in the Bible. What evidently had caused conflict within the Jewish Christian community was whether Christians could or should observe ceremonial festivals, feast, fast or holy days. Paul responded in Rom 14 by saying: 'In these disputable matters, let each decide for himself.'

  During the transitionary period from the ceremonial system to a correct understanding of Christ's death/resurrection, etc., there was no sin in having a personal view of such ceremonies (see Acts 20:6 cf. Acts of the Apostles, p. 390-391). Thus Jewish Christians were not to feel that Gentile Christians had to attend such feasts. Each person had to be 'fully convinced in his own mind' regarding this matter.
- The Bible says in Mark 2:27-28 that the Sabbath was made for man. That means that I can choose when to serve God, as long as I give him one day of rest.
  Answer: According to the verse, although the Sabbath was made for mankind, 'the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath.' In other words, even though God made the Sabbath for mankind's benefit, He still retains the right as Lord of that day. He did not give that over to human beings. No where in Scripture does it show that we can choose which day to celebrate the Sabbath. God gave specific instructions concerning when and how His day is to be kept.

Other Arguments Outside of Scripture:

- The change from the Julian to Gregorian calendar changed the Sabbath as well

Answer: No, not at all. The Julian calendar was 11 minutes and 10 seconds too long each year. As a result, the calendar year gained about three days every four centuries. By the 16th century, the excess calendar time had increased to place the Julian calendar 10 days ahead of the normal season sequence. The excess was not of real-time, but of calendar time.

Pope Gregory XIII corrected this (with the help of an Italian astronomer) by removing 10 calendar days (i.e. dates of the month) and treating them as non-existent. Tues, 5 Oct 1582 was simply renumbered to Wed 15 Oct 1582. Although the date was altered, the day was not. The weekly cycle was not changed at all.

- I worship God every day, not just the Sabbath.

Answer: It is true that we should worship God every day, but it is equally true that we CANNOT (biblically speaking) keep the Sabbath every day for the following reasons:

- *God only sanctified the seventh day as His Sabbath, not the other days (see Ex. 20:11)*
- *If anyone keeps the Sabbath everyday, that person would never work, for God said that no work should done on a Sabbath (Ex. 20:10). How would that person make a living or provide for their family?*
- *Worshipping God on the Sabbath does not prevent a person from worshipping on other weekdays.*

- If you say the Sabbath was changed, who then changed it?

Answer: There are many references that can be quoted, but one short and sharp one, quoted by Peter Geiermann in The Convert's Catechism of Catholic Doctrine, Second Edition, 1910, p. 50, would suffice:

- *Question: What is the Sabbath day?*
- *Answer: Saturday is the Sabbath day.*
- *Question: Why do we observe Sunday instead of Saturday?*
- *Answer: We observe Sunday instead of Saturday because the Catholic church, in the Council of Laodicea (AD 336), transferred the solemnity from Saturday to Sunday"*

16 The Great Historical Apostasy (HA)

HA-0. There will be a great 'falling away' (apostasy) before Jesus comes (2 Thess 2:3)

HA-1. Dan 7 pictures the Mediterranean Sea ('Great Sea') being stirrred up by the four winds of heaven (Dan 7:2)

HA-2. Winds represent strife and war (Jer 49:36)

HA-3. The sea from which the beasts will comes represents a populated area (Rev 17:15)

HA-4. A beast represents a kingdom (Dan 7:17, 23)

HA-5. The lion symbolised Babylon (Dan 7:4). *This is the same as the head of gold in Dan 2:32, 38.*

HA-6. The bear represented Medo Persia (Dan 7:5). *This is the same power as the breast and arms of silver in Dan 2:32 cf. Dan 5:28*

HA-7. The four headed leopard was Greece (Dan 7:6) *This is equal to the belly and thighs of bronze in Dan 2:32 cf. Dan 8:20-21. The extra wings indicated unparalleled speed of conquest by Alexander the Great. In 8 years he marched his solders more than 8 000km. The 4 heads stand for the 4 divisions into which the empire was sectioned after Alexander's death. They went to his 4 generals: Casssander (west), Ptolemy (south), Lysimachus (north) and Seleucus (east).*

HA-8. The nondescript beast (called such because Daniel did not describe the beast completely as he did the others) stood for Rome (Dan 7:7). *This nation is represented in Dan 2:33, 40 as the legs of iron.*

HA-9. The fourth beast (Rome) has 10 horns (Dan 7:7).

HA-10. The 10 horns represent 10 kings / kingdoms (Dan 7:24). *Daniel sometimes uses king to mean kingdom. For e.g. He said to Nebuchadnezzar, 'You, O king … are that head of gold' (vss 36, 38). He immediately then says, 'After you, another kingdom will arise' (vs 39). In Dan 7:17, 'The four great beasts are four kingdoms (literally, 'kings') that will arise from the earth.' Thus the 10 horns are not individual kings, but kingdoms that arose out of the political and military turmoil when Imperial Rome broke up under the attacks of the barbarian tribes, later resulting in the nations of Western Europe. This took a couple of centuries. The 10 horns parallel the feet of iron and clay in Dan 2. There were about 10 tribes that overran Europe: Franks, Anglo Saxons, Burgundians, Lombards, Alemanni, Visigoths, Ostrogoths, Heruli, Suevi and Vandals. The number 10 can also mean 1) a representative number for a corporate whole. In other words, ten is not an exact number but stands for the empire as a whole. 2) a symbol of completeness (Rome was completely parceled out) or 3) can be viewed as a rounded number.*

HA-11. A little horn arise (an eleventh one) comes up among the ten (Dan 7:8). *It is a well documented fact that Rome had 2 phases: pagan (heathen) and papal (religious). James P. Conroy, in the American Catholic Quarterly Review, April 1911, said: "Long ages ago, when Rome through the neglect of the Western emperors was left to the mercy of the barbarous hordes, the Romans turned to one figure for aid and protection, and asked him to rule them … and thus … commenced the temporal sovereignty of the popes. And meekly stepping to the throne of Caesar, the vicar of Christ took up the sceptre to which the emperors and kings of Europe were to bow in reverence through so many ages." We will now confirm this historical statement with identifying marks from Scripture:*

HA-12. The little horn comes up among the ten (Dan 7:8) *This means the little horn has to be a Western European power. The 10 horns were in Western Europe and the little horn comes up among them.*

HA-13. The little horn came out of the fourth beast (Dan 7:7). *This means the little horn is essentially Roman.*

HA-14. The little horn comes up after the 10 kingdoms are in place (Dan 7:24). *We are told that 'after them' another king (i.e. kingdom) will arise. According to historians the 10 horns were complete and in place by the year AD 476. Thus the little horn should be expected after that time. The little horn rose to power in AD 538, which is obviously after AD 476.*

HA-15. It uprooted 3 kings / kingdoms (Dan 7:24). *This refers to the wars against the Heruli, Vandals and Ostrogoths orchestrated by the Papacy. As a result these nations have disappeared from history.*

HA-16. It was different from the other 10 horns (Dan 7:24). *The other horns were all secular powers, whereas the little horn was a combination of the secular and religious. It joined church and state.*

HA-17. The little horn speaks pompous / boastful words against the Most High (Dan 7:8, 25). *This refers to the blasphemous claims of the little horn. Firstly it claimed to be 'Vicar of Christ,' which means that it stood in place of the Son of God, to represent Him here on earth. In an encyclical letter by Pope Leo XIII in the 1890s, Leo asserted that "the supreme teacher in the church is the Roman Pontiff. Union of minds, therefore, requires … complete submission and obedience of will to the Church and to the Roman Pontiff, as to God Himself."*
In 1894 Leo further stated, "we [as popes] hold upon this earth the place of God Almighty." The papacy also spoke pompous words by claiming to be able to forgive sins (something the Bible calls blasphemy – Luke 5:21). "The priest does not have to ask God to forgive your sins. The priest himself has the power to do so in Christ's name. Your sins are forgiven by the priest the same as if you knelt before Jesus Christ and told them to Christ Himself" (Quoted in Lorraine Boettner, Roman Catholicism, p. 197)

HA-18. It persecutes God's saints (Dan 7:25). *This refers to the millions of faithful believers who were tortured or martyred because they stood for truth, or because they differed in belief from the Papacy. Check out the Crusades, Inquisition, Thirty Years War (1618 – 1648), Persecution against Albigenses and Waldenses, St Bartholmew's Massacre on Aug 23, 1572 (in which 3 000 – 4 000 Protestant French Huguenots were killed), to name but a few.*

HA-19. It will try to change times and law (Dan 7:25). *This is an attempt to meddle with God's law. The plural use of the Aramaic word for 'times' indicates repeated points of time. These are connected with God's law (the word for 'law' is singular in the original language). The feature of God's law that best fits this description is the fourth commandment, where the seventh day is featured as regularly recurring points of time.*
Notice what John A. O'Brien professor of theology at the (Catholic) University of Notre Dame, in his book, The Faith of Millions, pp. 406-408 has to say: "The third [fourth in the thinking of most Protestants] commandment is: 'Remember thou keep holy the Sabbath Day, …. Saturday the seventh day of the week. Why then do Christians observe Sunday instead of the day mentioned in the Bible? The Church received the authority to make such a change from her Founder, Jesus Christ. He solemnly conferred upon His church the power to legislate, govern and administer … the power of the keys."
The 'power of the keys' is a false Catholic notion that Christ the keys of His kingdom to Peter (who is regarded as the first pope) – see Matt 16:19. In the latter passage, the 'keys' refer to the words of Christ (cf. Luke 11:52) that Christ gave to Peter and all the other disciples as well.
John Eck, papal representative who opposed Martin Luther at the Diet of Worms said: "The church has changed the Sabbath into the Lords (day) by its own authority, concerning which you have no scripture." (Seventh-day Adventist Bible Student's Handbook, p. 888)

HA-20. The saints would be given over to it for a time, times *and a half a time' (Dan 7:25). A time refers to a year - Dan 4:16 (Nebuchadnezzar was to be like an animal "until seven times (years) pass over him." Times denotes TWO years. In Hebrew, if 'times' does not have a numeral before it, it always means TWO years. 'Half a time' is therefore half a year*

Note: The Hebrew calendar had 30 days in a month. We see this clearly during the Flood story (Gen 6-8). The Flood began on the 17th day of the second month (7:11) and started receding on the 17th day of the seventh month (5 months exactly). The Bible says that that period was a 150 days (7:24; 8:3). As stated before, in symbolic prophecy a day equals a literal year (Num 14:34 Eze 4:6). Putting all of the above together, we come up with the following calculation:

- *Time = 360 days*
- *Times = 720 days*
- *Half a time = 180 days*
- *Total = 1 260 days or years*

The Papacy persecuted God's faithful church for 1 260 years from 538 AD (when absolute power over God's people is placed in the hands of the papacy) until 1798 AD (when the Pope was deposed, captured and exiled).
This exact period is referred to in other places in Scripture:

- *Dan 12:7 – "Time, times and a half a time"*
- *Rev 11:2; 13:5 – "42 months" (42 x 30 = 1 260 days)*
- *Rev 11:3; 12:6 – "1 260 days"*

Only ONE power meets all of of the specifications of this little horn, viz., the Roman Papacy. This is clearly not an attack against individual Catholics, or saying that they will not be saved. The Bible here condemns a system of error. There are many sincere Catholics who follow Christ with all their heart, who are not aware that they are being deceived by a religious system that God condemns.

17 First Day Texts (FD)

FD-0. *Title text:* The Disciples visit the tomb to embalm Jesus' body on first day (Matt 28:1)
There are only 8 texts in the New Testament that speak about the first day of the week. NONE of them even hint at a change from the seventh day to the first day of the week in honour of Christ's resurrection.

FD-1. The women came to the tomb on the first day (Matt 28:1

FD-2. The women came to the tomb on the first day (Mark 16:2)
FD-3. Jesus rose on the first day (Mark 16:9)
FD-4. The women come to embalm Jesus on the first day (Luke 24:1)
FD-5. Mary visits the tomb while dark (Jhn 20:1)
FD-6. A Saturday night meeting occurred on the dark part of the first day of the week (Acts 20:7). *Remember that a biblical day starts in the evening [see Gen 1:5, 8, 13, etc.]). Paul preached until midnight that Saturday evening for he was to leave the next day [i.e. Sunday morning]. No where does Paul sanctify Sunday here.*
FD-7. The disciples assembled on the first day of the week not to worship, but because they were afraid of Jews (Jhn 20:19)
FD-8. Paul tells the church to lay something aside on the first day of the week so that he does not have to make collections when he comes (1 Cor 16:2). *Some have assumed that Paul here advocated offerings (and thus worship) on the first day of the week. The context makes it clear that the Apostle was promoting a special project in behalf of needy believers in Jerusalem (vs. 3). Thus he suggested that the Corinthian Christians set aside a specific portion of their income for believers at Jerusalem on the first day of each week. The reason for this was because many people reviewed their finances from the previous week's business on Sunday morning in preparation for another week of business. Thus on Sunday morning they were to finalise bills, settle accounts and set aside and offering for the Lord's work. Furthermore, the phrase "each one of you" or "by him" (depending on your translation) could be translated literally "each one of you for himself," and suggests something done privately at home. So this verse has nothing to do with a church offering.*
FD-9. The symbol of the resurrection is baptism by immersion (i.e., death to the old person and *resurrection* to the new person in Christ), not Sunday worship (Rom 6:3-5) (End)

So after examining ALL the 'first day' verses in the New Testament, we have found that there is not a single shred of evidence supporting Sunday sacredness.

18 Sabbath Keeping (SK)

SK-0. *Title text:* God grants a special blessing to those who keep the Sabbath (Isa 56:2)
SK-1. The Sabbath is a sanctified day, set apart from all the rest (Ex 20:8-11). *This means that by its very nature, we should expect to do different things on a Sabbath.*
SK-2. Sabbath is called a "holy convocation" or gathering of God's people. It is a special designated day of worship (Lev 23:3)
SK-3. Jesus worshipped each Sabbath (Luke 4:16)
SK-4. Similarly, Paul attended church every Sabbath (Acts 18:4)
SK-5. A day begins at sunset and ends at sunset (Lev 23:32) See Gen 1:5, 8, 13, etc.
SK-6. The Sabbath is not a day for secular work, both for you and those who work for you (Ex 20:8-10)
SK-7. The Sabbath is a day to delight ourselves in the Lord. It is not a day for our own personal pleasure (Isa 58:13-14)
SK-8. The Sabbath may be defiled by buying, selling, and trivialising the Sabbath by ordinary worldly activities (Neh 13:15-18)
SK-9. Jesus illustrated in His life the joy of doing good on Sabbath (Matt 12:11-13)
SK-10. The Sabbath was designed for the welfare of humanity (Mark 2:27)
SK-11. When some of Israel worked on Sabbath to gather and prepare manna, neglecting to make arrangements on the preparation day, Friday, God openly rebuked them (Ex 16:28-30)
SK-12. The divine invitation is to come and find rest in Jesus. The Sabbath provides us with opportunity To renew our commitment with our Lord (Matt 11:28-30) (End)

The Sabbath is thus a time to connect with God by avoiding all secular pursuits. It keeps aflame our love and devotion for our Creator, and is an outward symbol that He comes first in our lives.

20 Healthful Living - Part 1 (HL)

HL-0. *Title text:* Paul desired Gaius not only to prosper in spiritual health, but also in physical health (3 Jhn 2)
HL-1. Sanctification includes mind, emotions and body (1 Thess 5:23) . *Notice that God is interested in sanctifying us completely: spirit (higher faculties of the mind), soul (emotions, desires, etc.) and body (the physical body).*
HL-2. We are to present our bodies as a living sacrifice unto God (Rom 12:1). *Paul here appeals to Christians to consecrate their bodies to God. God is interested in the whole person, not just the spiritual aspect. This sacrifice is 'living.' In other words, it is alive with all the Christian's energies and powers dedicated to the service of God.*
HL-3. Our bodies are the temple of God and we are to glorify God with them (1 Cor 6:19-20)
HL-4. Whatever we eat or drink should be done to the glory of God (1 Cor 10:31). *This means that we should honour God through our diets, not in order to gain salvation, but because we are already saved.*
HL-5. Wine is a mocker, strong drink is a brawler (Prov 20:1). *People often become mockers of religion and that which is right when under the influence of alcohol. Strong drink leads to aggressive attitudes and behaviour ('a brawler')*
HL-6. Do not drink fermented wine. It brings sorrow, woe, and contention. It is deceptive and clouds judgment (Prov 23:29-33)
HL-7. Woe to those who are intoxicated by wine (Isa 5:11)
HL-8. God's original diet for humanity was vegetarian (Gen 1:29). *This included grains ('herbs that yield seed'), fruit and nuts. Later this was supplemented, after the Fall with vegetables, known as plants of the field (see Gen 3:18)*
HL-9. At the time of the Flood, God told Noah to take 7 pairs of clean animals and 1 pair of unclean animals into the ark (Gen 7:2). *Notice the distinction between clean and unclean animals was already there before the Flood.*
HL-10. After the Flood, when all vegetation was destroyed, God gave permission to eat clean animals (Gen 9:3).

This verse is not license to eat anything that moves. Noah already knew the difference between clean and unclean animals as we have seen from Gen 7:2. Here God was merely saying: 'You may now eat flesh foods.' We can infer that the 'every moving thing' of Gen 9:3 could not include unclean foods for 2 reasons: 1) There was only one pair of unclean animals brought onto the ark. This means that if Noah ate any unclean animal that species would immediately become extinct. 2) Even if, for argument sake, he waited for an unclean animal to first reproduce, we know that he would not have eaten it since the rest of Scripture, as we will see below, clearly shows that unclean foods are to be avoided.

HL-11. Clean animals must have a split or divided hoof and chew the cud. Clean sea animals must have both fins and scales (Lev 11:2, 3, 9)

HL-12. Unclean foods and idolatry 'provoke God to anger' (Isa 65:3-4)

HL-13. Eating unclean foods is called an abomination (Deut 14:3). *God calls the following activities abominable: homosexuality (Lev 18:22), idolatry (Deut 17:2-4), communication with the dead (Deut 18:11-12), child sacrifices (2 Kings 16:3). That same word is used of unclean foods in Deut 14:3*

HL-14. Mankind is not to eat blood (Gen 9:4). *God further elaborates on this in Lev 17:10-11 in which he prohibits eating blood to <u>both Israelite and foreign</u> (thus a universal prohibition). Furthermore, in Acts 15:28-29 we find New Testament support for this ban. In these verses blood is forbidden to <u>both Jew and Gentile</u>, thus showing its universal nature.*

HL-15. Jesus provides spiritual strength to overcome physical appetites and habits (Phil 4:13)

HL-16. Jesus was tempted like we are. He fasted 40 days and overcame so we, too, can receive His power to overcome (Heb 4:15-16) (End)

<u>21 Healthful Living – Part 2</u> (Do not present all of these arguments – only choose a few key issues. The information is primarily to arm you with the major arguments in favour of wine and unclean foods):

<u>Issues Concerning Wine</u>

- What does Prov 31:6-7 mean when it says, 'Give strong drink to those who are perishing and wine to those who are bitter of heart. Let them drink and forget their poverty…' (NKJV)

  <u>Answer</u>: This verse appears to be speaking about various medicinal mixtures of alcohol (with narcotic herbs) to dull the pains of fatal illness. It can be paraphrased as follows: 'Wine is not fit for responsible people but if you have to give it, give it to the one who is perishing to relieve him of his misery.'

- In Jhn 2:1-11, Jesus changed water into wine. That means wine is an acceptable drink.
  <u>Answer</u>: Most people don't realise that the word for 'fermented wine' as well as 'unfermented grape juice' is one and the same word in the Greek language. This is often where the confusion comes in. Jesus would not have changed water into fermented wine, something which the Bible strongly condemns (Isa 5:11; 28:7; Prov 20:1; 23:20-21, 31-35; Hab 2:15; 1 Tim 3:2-3; Titus 1:7-8). Where the Bible does speak favourably about wine, it is with reference to grape juice, not fermented wine (see Gen 27:28; Deut 33:28; Isa 55:1; Ps 104:14-15, Joel 2:18-19; etc.). The 'choice wine' of Jhn 2:10 is not because of its alcoholic content but because it was fresh, unfermented grape juice. Jesus would never condemn fermented wine in the Old Testament and then serve it in the New Testament.

- Jesus gave wine to His disciples at the Last Supper in Matt 26:27-29, so surely wine should not be wrong.

  <u>Answer</u>: This too is unfermented grape juice (refer to argument above). The Last Supper was a memorial of Christ's death, of His body that was broken (Matt 26:26) and of His blood that was 'poured out' (Matt 26:28). At the Lord's supper Christ used bread (to symbolise His body) and wine (to symbolise His blood). The bread was unleavened (see Luke 22:1, 7) which means it had no yeast in it. Yeast was a symbol of sin (1 Cor 5:8; Luke 12:1). Since Christ's body had no sin in it, the bread was fittingly unleavened. Similarly, the pure atoning blood of Jesus could only be symbolised by pure grape juice, not fermented wine. Both symbols (bread and wine) were to be free from contamination, since they symbolised Christ's body. Furthermore, we also know from sources outside the Bible (e.g. Josephus), that the phrase 'fruit of the vine' (Matt 26:29) means 'freshly squeezed grape juice.'

- In 1 Tim 5:23 Paul counsels Timothy to no longer just drink water but use a <u>little</u> wine for his stomach. That seems to indicate that wine, used moderately, is fine.

  <u>Answer</u>: "No longer drink <u>only</u> water," could imply that Timothy, like the priests and Nazirites, had abstained until that time from all forms of grape products. Paul now encourages him to begin using a little wine, and not just to drink water. Second, the apostle recommended that Timothy use only a <u>little</u> wine, not for physical pleasure, but for the medical need of the stomach. Ancient writers such as Aristotle, Athanaeus, and Pliny indicate that unfermented wine was known and preferred to alcoholic wine for medical purposes, because it did not have the side effects of the latter. Thus it is reasonable to assume that the wine recommended by Paul for medical use was unfermented grape juice.

- Similarly in 1 Tim 3:8, which counsels deacons not to use <u>much</u> wine, Paul is surely encouraging moderation and speaking against excess. He is not against the use of wine, but the amount which is consumed.

  <u>Answer</u>: Moderation cannot be argued from this text because:
  - *It would contradict the rest of Scripture as well as Paul's requirement of abstinence for bishops. In studying 1 Tim 3:2-8 we find that vs 2 says that a bishop [overseer] should be an 'abstainer from wine' – <u>nephalios</u> in Greek, so too deaconesses/deacon's wives (vs. 11 - <u>nephalios</u>) as well as older men and women (Titus 2:2-3 - <u>nephalios</u>). Paul would thus set up an absurd*

double standard if he denies wine to one group but allows another moderate use.

- *The immediate context and the cultural setting of hospitality suggests that the phrase may represent a recommendation for deacons to be moderate in drinking grape juice to safeguard their reputation and that of the church while doing home visits. A deacon who drank several cups of juice would soon become known for his gluttony.*

Issues Concerning Unclean Foods

- Mark 7:19 says that Jesus declared all foods clean. This means that the distinction between clean and unclean foods no longer applies in the New Testament.

Answer: It is important to note that in this section (Mark 7:1-19), the washing of hands referred to was strictly ritualistic, not sanitary. A small quantity of water was poured on the fingers and palm of each hand, followed by a particular ritual.

To understand this passage we need to under a false concept that developed during the 400-year period between the Old and New Testaments, called 'defilement by association.' According to this belief, when something unclean (e.g., hands that were ceremonially unwashed) touched something clean (like an apple), the apple would become common or defiled. It was 'common' to the world (i.e. Gentiles could eat it), but forbidden to pious Jews. Jesus rejected this false man-made belief.

Notice His response in Mark 7: 18-19 - "Don't you see that nothing (i.e. no clean food) that enters a man from the outside can make him 'unclean' (since true uncleanliness comes from within a person)? For it (i.e. what the person eats) doesn't go into his heart (the place where morality comes from) but into his stomach (a mere digestive organ), and then out of his body." (Jesus was more concerned about morality than rituals) [In saying this, Jesus declared all foods "clean."] - i.e. Jesus declared all foods HE originally approved for man as clean even if they had been touched by ceremonially unclean hands.

Note the word Jesus uses in vs 19: "In saying this, Jesus declared all FOODS 'clean.'" The word for 'foods' here in Greek refers to ALL kinds of food, flesh or non-flesh in nature. Mark did not say: "… Jesus declared all unclean meats clean, but he declared all FOODS clean." The issue in Mark 7 is not about unclean meats, but about food in general. As mentioned, the Jews believed that ALL food (apples, grapes, nuts, beef, etc.) touched with ceremonially unclean hands became common or defiled. The story had nothing to do with the kind of food that was eaten (whether clean or unclean) but the way in which it was to be eaten—with or without ritual hand washing (vs 2, 3)

- In Peter's vision of Acts 10, he is told to kill and eat that which was unclean. This surely means that eating unclean foods is fine.

Answer: Peter was initially confused by the vision, but he later understood the vision had to do with people, not animals. Notice what he says: "… God has shown me (i.e. in the vision) that I should not call any man common or unclean" (Acts 10:28).

The vision does not say that the sheet was just full of unclean animals. In fact there were 2 types of animals on the sheet:

- *Common (Gr: koinos) animals: clean animals that had been contaminated or defiled by contact with unclean animals. This is the concept of 'defilement by association' mentioned above.*
- *Unclean animals (Gr: akathartos): Animals unclean by nature*

In the vision, the Voice (vs 13) never mentions "unclean" animals but reprimands Peter for calling creatures "common" which God had made clean. So Peter was reprimanded for regarding clean creatures as defiled, just because of their association with unclean creatures

Using the language of the vision God basically said: Clean foods (as Jews considered themselves) do not become common or defiled by associating with unclean food (i.e. Gentiles, as Jews viewed them).

The point of the vision was that Jews could mingle with Gentiles and would not become defiled. It was God's call for the Jews to reach out and mix with Gentiles in order to bring salvation to them.

Thus this vision has NOTHING to do with allowing man to start eating unclean foods.

- 1 Cor 8:8 it says that foods does not bring us near to God and in 1 Cor 10:25 it says that the Corinthians should eat whatever was sold in the meat market without asking questions for conscience sake. That must be a blanket approval to eat anything, including unclean foods.

Answer: In 1 Cor 8:7-11 and 10:25-28, Paul is dealing with a very sensitive issue, viz., of eating food sacrificed to idols. This was an issue that particularly bothered new believers who had come from an idolatrous background. It is important to note that the Bible is very clear concerning its disapproval of eating unclean foods. That is was already settled before. The issues in 1 Cor 8 and 10 are:

- *Could a Christian join friends/relatives at a pagan temple and eating foods sacrificed to idols?*
- *Could a Christian buy clean meat in the marketplace that has been associated with idolatry (i.e. buy clean meat offered to idols and then later sold in the market)? Wouldn't it be defiled meat?*
- *Could a Christian accept an invitation to a pagan's home if such meat was offered there?*

Paul's Response to These Issues

- *Do not accept invitations from friends or relatives to eat food in pagan temples (since it*

would imply worship to such gods) – see 1 Cor 10:14-22; 8:10

- *But you can buy clean meat that has been offered to idols / associated with idolatry (since an idol is nothing – 1 Cor. 8:4). See 1 Cor 10:25, where Paul is really saying: 'Eat whatever clean meat is sold in the market even if it has been offered to idols.'*
- *You can accept invitations from pagan friends or relatives who offer you such foods – see 1 Cor 10:27. In the latter verse Paul is saying: Eat whatever clean meat your host puts before you without asking them if it had been offered to an idol first. The meat is clean anyway. Clean meat does not become unclean by association.'*

One Exception
If eating clean food sacrificed to idols (when either buying it in the market or eating it at a pagan friend / relative's home) violated the weak conscience of someone, then you should not eat it for the sake of your weak brother, even though there is nothing really wrong with such food. Paul was more concerned about the interests of others than individual rights.

- Paul, in Rom 14 says he is convinced that no food is unclean in itself. This is clear evidence that unclean foods are acceptable.

Answer: A number of Bible commentators believe that it is reasonable to assume that Paul in Rom 14 is dealing with the same problem as in 1 Cor 8 and 10, viz., foods offered to idols. Thus in Rom 14:2, the strong person who eats all things is the person strong in the knowledge that an idol has no real existence. Therefore, whether the food has been offered to an idol or not makes no difference to him. The weak person who eats only vegetables is the recent convert from paganism, who has not entirely overcome his fear of his former gods, and therefore, to eat clean meat offered to idols would defile his conscience. To him the food is common and defiled.

In Rom 14:14 some interpret Paul as saying: "No food is unclean in itself, but is unclean to the person who regards it as such." So, if I for instance eat pork and don't consider it unclean, then for ME it is CLEAN. But if you don't eat pork because you consider it unclean, then for YOU it is UNCLEAN." This reasoning does not make sense. Pork is either clean or unclean; it cannot be clean for some and unclean for others. Surely the cleanness or uncleanness of an animal cannot only be in the MIND of the eater?

The word for 'unclean' in Rom 14:14 is actually 'common' – i.e. unclean by association, not by nature. Taking the context into account, Paul is trying to say: "I know and am convinced as one enlightened by the Lord that nothing which God created as food for man can become unclean by association, but if someone considers clean meat that was offered to idols as common (i.e. defiled by association with idolatry), then for that person it is unclean by association, not by nature. By eating such meat, this recent convert from paganism to Christianity would feel that he is going against his convictions. But be tolerant, he is still growing in his understanding and faith." So Paul is here appealing for mutual love and patience to weaker brothers. This passage therefore has nothing to do with abolishing unclean foods.

- 1 Tim 4:4 says that everything God created is good and therefore I can eat anything, as long as I pray over it.

Answer: The false teachings spoken about in 1 Tim 4:1-5 forbade marriage (something good which God instituted at Creation) and required abstinence from foods that God created for man from which to receive his necessary nutrition.

The Bible clearly identifies the foods that God gave at creation for man's nourishment:

- *At creation: fruits, grains, nuts (Gen 1:29, 30)*
- *After entrance of sin: vegetables (Gen 3:18)*
- *After the Flood: clean flesh foods (Gen 9:3)*

Thus 1 Tim 4:4 is really saying that: Everything God created [as food for man] is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving…" God did not create snakes, crocodiles, pigs, etc., as food for man. Thus this text cannot be used to support eating unclean foods.

22 State of the Dead – Part 1 (SD)

SD-0. *Title text:* Jesus compared Lazarus' death to sleep (Jhn 11:11-14). *The Bible compares death to sleep over 50 times.*

SD-1. Those asleep in Jesus rise at Second Coming (1 Thess 4:15-16)

SD-2. God made man out of dust. The formula is: Dust of the ground + breath of life = a living soul (Gen 2:7). *Notice that God did not put a soul into man; man himself was a living soul. In fact the word 'soul' is often is often translated as 'I,' 'me,' 'you,' 'he,' etc. (see Gen 12:13; Lev 11:43-44; Josh 23:11, etc.)*

SD-3. At death the body returns to dust and a person's spirit returns to God. There is no mention that the soul returns to God, but the spirit (Eccl 12:7)

SD-4. The word 'spirit' is same as God's breath of life (Job 27:3). *Some older translations (like KJV) use the word 'spirit' in this verse. Newer translations (like NKJV, NIV, NASB, etc) use the word 'breath.'*

SD-5. When breath returns to God, their thoughts/plans perish (Ps 146:3, 4)

SD-6. Only God has immortality, not humans (1 Tim 6:16)

SD-7. We 'seek' for immortality (Rom 2:7). *That means we don't have immortality naturally. We seek it. The Bible uses the word soul 1 600 times, but never once uses 'immortal soul.'*

SD-8. We receive immortality at the Second Coming (1 Cor 15:51-54). *Once again it is a gift we get at the Second Coming; it is not something we have naturally*

SD-9. The dead do not praise God (Ps 115:17). See Eccl 9:5. *If the dead are in heaven, they should surely be praising God, but the Bible is clear that they don't.*

SD-10. David did not ascend to heaven at death, but awaits the coming of Jesus and the first resurrection (Acts 2:29, 34)

SD-11. The dead do not know anything (Eccl 9:5). See Ps 6:5
SD-12. The righteous will be resurrected at Second Coming (1 Thess 4:16, 17). See Jhn 11:24
SD-13. A soul (person) can die (Eze 18:4). *This goes against the view that the soul is immortal.*
SD-14. The wages of sin is death (Rom 6:23). *Some people say that when you die, your soul still lives on, but that is not what the Bible says. Death is the absence of life. Immortality is a gift that God gives at the Second Coming, not something a person has naturally.*
SD-15. The apostle Paul awaited the coming of the Lord for his final reward (2 Tim 4:7-8)
SD-16. When Jesus comes, He will bring His reward of immortality with Him (Rev 22:12) (End). *He does not give that reward to His children prior to the Second Coming.*

23 State of the Dead – Part 2 (Once again, select only a few of these arguments. Do not present them all in one Bible study)

- In 1 Sam 28:3-20 we see the spirit of Samuel coming out of the earth to speak to Saul. This means that spirits do exist after death.

  Answer: This passage is a satanic impersonation of Samuel as will be shown below:
  - *Communication with the dead was banned in Israel and punishable to death (Lev. 20:27).*
  - *1 Chron. 10:13-14 shows that Saul's consultation with the medium was not approved by God.*
  - *If God did not answer Saul (see 1 Sam 28:6), why would He allow Samuel, His faithful servant, to communicate with him?*
  - *Samuel's spirit was supposedly brought up (see 1 Sam 28:15 cf. vs 11). If the doctrine held by most Christians, that a righteous man ascends to heaven at death, the spirit-impersonator of Samuel would have said, "Why have you brought me down?"*
  - *'Samuel' says to Saul, 'why have you disturbed me?' yet the Bible teaches that the dead dwell in silence, undisturbed (Eccl 9:5-6; Ps 115:17).*
  - *If Samuel supposedly was a spirit being, why did he wear a mantle? (vs 14)*
  - *It is also clear from the story that Samuel was not there. From the dialogue in 1 Sam 28:12-14 we realise that the woman saw Samuel, and from her description Saul perceived it was him.*
  - *'Samuel' said that Saul and his sons would be 'with me' (vs. 19). What view of the afterlife puts a godless king and a godly prophet in the same place?*
  - *'Samuel's' message was designed to burden Saul with guilt and fear, crushing any possible hope or repentance. This does not match God's character? Even the toughest divine rebukes are always accompanied with grace and hope through repentance.*
  - *It is therefore clear that Samuel did not communicate with Saul. It was a satanic impersonation of Samuel (see 2 Cor 11:13, 14)*

- Why did Moses appear to Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration. We know Moses died (Deut 34:5), therefore his soul must have gone to heaven.

  Answer:
  - *From Deut 34:5, 6 we know that the Lord buried Moses.*
  - *Jude 9 however says that Michael (one of the names of Christ) and Satan contended over the body of Moses.*
    - *Why would Michael, the life-giver (see Dan 10:1-2, where Michael appears in another context of resurrection) contend over the body of Moses, except if He were planning to resurrect him?*
    - *Although the biblical account is sketchy, one can only imagine that Satan would have disputed this resurrection. Never had life been given to the dead prior to this. Satan believed that the earth and all its subjects were his (cf. Matt. 4:8-9), even those in the grave. He would therefore have resisted any attempts to 'invade' or 'interfere' in his territory.*
  - *From Moses' appearance on the Mount of Transfiguration it may be concluded that the Lord triumphed in the contest with the devil and raised Moses from the grave.*

- In Luke 16:19-31 the story of the rich man and Lazarus clearly shows that there is activity after death.

  Answer: Let us closely look at why this story cannot support the idea of conscious existence after death:
  - *This story is actually a parable which starts in the same way as the 2 preceding parables: 'A certain man…' (see Luke 15:11; 16:1)*
  - *Because of the figurative nature of parables, they should never be used as a basis for doctrine.*
  - *Parables teach one fundamental truth and every detail does not necessarily have significance.*
  - *The central lesson of this parable is that destiny is decided in this present life by the use made of our privileges and opportunities.*
  - *This parable was directed at the Pharisees (see Luke 16:14) who falsely believed that riches were a sign of God's favour, and that salvation was based on Abrahamic descent rather that on character. Jesus addresses this false theology through the parable, showing that the reward for the rich man was opposite to what was expected.*
  - *'Abraham's bosom' is not found in Scripture, but an expression that occurs in literature outside the Bible indicating the place of happiness to which the righteous go at death (a concept that does not find support in Scripture).*
  - *The 'great gulf' is the permanent division that death fixes between the good and the bad at the close of earthly probation. Today one may*

pass from the state of the condemned (Jhn 3:18) to that of the pardoned. But when death comes, it is forever too late. The gulf is fixed.

- *Why does this parable NOT teach that the dead are conscious and receive their reward at death?*
  - *Elsewhere in the gospels Jesus refers to death as a sleep, i.e. there is no conscious activity after death (see Matt 9:24; Jhn 11:11-14)*
  - *According to the parable the rich man, after he had died, had 'eyes,' a 'tongue,' 'a finger' – that is, real bodily parts. This is contrary to the concept of an immortal, immaterial soul that leaves the body at death.*
  - *If this were literal, then heaven and hell are near enough for a conversation to be held between its inhabitants – not a desirable situation for either party. If all the righteous go to Abraham's bosom, imagine how big his bosom has to be!*
  - *It would contradict Christ's other teachings that say the righteous and wicked receive their reward at the Second Coming, and not before (Matt 16:27; 25:31-46; Luke 11:31, 32; 14:14).*
  - *According to Scripture, Abraham is not in heaven. In Heb 11, Abraham is mentioned (vss. 8-12) but in vss. 39-40 it says that none of those mentioned in chapter 11 (except for Moses, who was resurrected – Jude 9) received their reward of immortality yet. For only together with the rest of humanity, will they be made perfect, i.e. receive the eternal inheritance of heaven.*

- **Didn't Jesus say to the thief on the cross that He would be with Jesus in paradise that day? (Luke 23:42)**

  Answer: Christ said these words to the repentant thief on the day of His crucifixion (Friday). Christ rose on the third day (the Sunday - inclusive time reckoning) after making this promise to the thief (1 Cor 15:3, 4). Yet on the third day, He told Mary not to detain Him for He had not yet ascended to His Father [who is in Paradise] (Jhn 20:17). How can one then understand this apparent contradiction?
  A simple change of the comma from before "today," to immediately after, solves the whole difficulty, and harmonises all the Scriptures on this point.
  Remember that although God inspired the prophets to write Scripture, He did not inspire punctuation. Thus the text would read: "Assuredly I say to you today, you will be with me in paradise." Christ promised the thief on the Friday of His crucifixion ['today'], that one day in the future ['will be'] he would be with Him in Paradise.

  Furthermore, the Bible is clear that the righteous dead will only be "with the Lord" at the Second Coming (1 Thess 4:16, 17). Thus the promise to the thief that he would be with Christ in Paradise, would only take place at the Second Coming.

- **When Stephen died, he asked God to receive his spirit. Thus he wanted God to take him to heaven (Acts 7:59)**

  Answer: The word for 'spirit' is the same as that for breath (see Job 27:3 which says that "God's spirit [modern translations have it as 'breath'] is in my nostrils."). Since God originally gave breath to humans, He is the source of all human life. When a person dies, the 'spirit' or breath symbolically returns to Him who gave it initially (Eccl 12:7; Job 34:14). Never in the Bible is the word 'spirit' used with reference to an intelligent part of a person capable of existing by itself apart from the physical body. Thus Stephen is merely saying: "Lord accept back the breath (i.e. the life you have given me), since I am about to die."

- **In 2 Cor 5:8 Paul speaks about being 'absent from the body and present with the Lord.' What does that then mean?**

  Answer: Paul, in this passage, speaks about 3 states:
  - *The 'earthly house' (vs 1) / 'tent' (vs 4) – references to our mortal body in which we 'groan' and are 'burdened' (vs. 4)*
  - *A 'building from God' (vs 1) / a 'house not made with hands' (vs 1) / 'our habitation which is from heaven' (vs 2) – references to our new, immortal body, which we will receive at the resurrection when mortality will be 'swallowed up by life' (vs 4). This was the state the apostle longed for (vs. 2) – cf. Rom. 8:23 and Phil. 3:20, 21.*
  - *'Naked' (vs 3) / 'unclothed' (vs. 4) – the state between being in the 'earthly house' and that of putting on the 'building from God.' This naked or unclothed condition (when one is without either a mortal or an immortal body) refers to death.*

  In vs 4 Paul expresses a desire to be released from the frailties and sufferings of this present life, without tasting death ['not because we want to be unclothed']. With the above in mind, we can now explain 2 Cor 5:6, 8:
  - *Vs 6 – While we are in our mortal, earthly bodies, we are 'absent from the Lord' [i.e. not in His immediate presence, not able to see Him face to face - 1 Cor 13:12; cf. 3 Jhn 14]*
  - *Vs 8 – Being 'absent from the body' is to be 'absent from life in our present bodies.' This will only take place when we put on our new, resurrected bodies and are 'present with the Lord.'*
  - *Nowhere does the text say that being absent from the body means that one is immediately 'with the Lord.' The Bible is clear that all the*

righteous are simultaneously clothed with immortality at the Second Coming (see 1 Cor 15:51–54; 1 Thess. 4:15–17; 2 Tim. 4:6–8; Heb. 11:39, 40) and not individually at death.

- Paul seems to allude to an out of body experience which confirms that a person can leave their body after death (1 Cor 12:1-4)

Answer: The context of this section concerns 'visions and revelations' (vs 1). What the person saw in vision (and many commentators believe that Paul, in humility, is speaking about himself in the third person) was so real and vivid that he was not certain if God actually transported him to heaven, or whether he stayed on earth. How else can anyone express the thought of being in another place without physically going there?

- While in prison Paul mentions his desire to depart and be with Christ (Phil 1:23). This must definitely mean that he longs to see Christ, which will happen when he dies.

Answer: In these verses he expresses his desire to depart from this present troubled existence (i.e. to die) and be with Christ. This passage does not say or imply that the apostle expected to go to heaven immediately after death. Paul was very clear that he would not receive his reward until the Second Coming (2 Tim 4:8)

Why would death then be viewed as gain for Paul?

- *It would be an honour to die a martyr's death for his Saviour, whom he loved so much.*
- *It would bring release from temptation, trial, toil and sorrow.*
- *Because the very next thing Paul would know after the unconscious sleep of death ('departing') would be Christ coming on the clouds of heaven to raise the dead. It is then when he would be 'with the Lord' (1 Thess. 4:17 cf. 1 Cor. 15:51-54; 2 Tim. 4:7, 8)*

Paul however realised that although he had a desire to be with Christ, it was more needful that he be alive to guide and support the Philippian church (vs 24). Convinced of their need of him, Paul expressed his confidence that the Lord would permit him to live and continue to do his appointed work (vs. 25). This expectation was fulfilled for when he appeared before, Nero he was declared guiltless and was released.

- 1 Pet 3:18-20 speaks of spirits in prison. They must surely be the spirits of the wicked who died and are in hell?

Answer: In vs 18 it says that Christ died for our sins but was made alive [or resurrected] by the Spirit. The prison in this passage is a figurative expression of sin – see 2 Pet 2:19; Rom 7:14. Those in prison therefore denote disobedient sinners – cf. vs 20. Remember that Christ came to liberate the captives from the prison house of sin, from the shackles with which Satan bound them – see Luke 4:18.

The 'by whom' of vs 19 is a reference to the Holy Spirit. The same Spirit that raised Christ from the dead, also strove with disobedient sinners ['spirits in prison'] during the 120 years while the ark was being prepared (cf. Gen. 6:3)

As shown above, the word 'spirit' means 'breath' (see Job 27:3). Breath is one of the conspicuous characteristics of living beings, and by a figure of speech (synecdoche), in which a characteristic part of a thing stands for the whole, spirit simply means "person." Compare 1 Cor 16:18, where "my spirit" means "me," and Gal. 6:18; 2 Tim. 4:22; etc., where "your spirit" means "you"

Thus Paul's main point here is that the Spirit, which made Christ alive, also strove with disobedient sinners at the time when Noah was preparing the ark.

It cannot mean that Christ preached to disembodied spirits after His resurrection. This would go contrary to the rest of Scripture that says death is a sleep. Secondly, if Christ did preach to disembodied spirits it would teach the concept of a second chance of salvation, which is a non-biblical concept (see Heb 9:27). Finally, why would Christ only choose a select group (those at the time of Noah) to give a second chance to? That would be unfair to the supposed 'spirits of dead sinners' from other generations.

23 Marriage and the Family (MF)

MF-0. God made a special female companion for Adam (Gen 2:20-22). *Notice that God made Eve from Adam's rib. She was to stand side by side with him, as an equal partner in marriage.*

MF-1. God conducted the first marriage, a union which involves a 'leaving' and a 'cleaving' (Gen 2:24). *Marriage means 'leaving' one's parents to get involved in a relationship that supersedes that between the parent and child. 'Cleaving' means 'sticking to, holding onto.' This is a reference to the closeness and strength of the husband-wife relationship.*

MF-2. The husband and wife are to become 'one flesh' (Gen 2:24, last part). *This means that they are to share their bodies, material possessions, joys, sorrows, ambitions, fears, successes, failures, etc.*

MF-3. After the entrance of sin, God placed the husband over his wife (Gen 3:16). *This was not intended to change the equality the couple had shared prior to the Fall. The new arrangement would have proven a blessing if obeyed by mankind, but man's abuse of his supremacy often made life very difficult for the woman.*

MF-4. Polygamy (one person marrying more than one partner) was never God's intention for marriage (Lev 18:18). *There is extensive research showing that this passage simply means: 'Don't marry two women' ('sister' is often used in a broader sense than just a blood relative) – See Ron du Preez, Polygamy in the Bible, pp. 76-79, 285; Richard M. Davidson, Flame of Yahweh, pp. 194-198.*

MF-5. Polygamy was prohibited to kings and rulers (Deut 17:17). *Since rulers were role models to the people, it is evident that the law forbade all from practising plural marriage. Even though many of the prophets and kings were polygamous, it did not mean that God approved of their behaviour*

MF-6. Fornication (sex before marriage) is prohibited in Scripture (Eph 5:3)

MF-7. Sexual relations outside marriage is a sin (Ex 20:14)

MF-8. Looking on a woman lustfully is like committing adultery (Matt 5:27-28). *Jesus was not only concerned with the outward act of adultery, but also with the inner mental state (thoughts, desires, lusts, emotions, etc.). Our thoughts direct our behaviour. Jesus therefore desires purity of <u>both</u> mind and conduct, not only conduct.*

MF-9. Incest (sexual relations with a family member) is forbidden in the Bible (Lev 18:6). See 1 Cor 5:1-5.

MF-10. Homosexuality is condemned in Scripture (Lev 18:22). See Rom 1:27. *It is important to note that we should not have a judgmental attitude toward people trapped in homosexuality (or any other sin for that matter). No behaviour is beyond the reach of God's saving grace. We should be like God who hates sin but loves the sinner.*

MF-11. Divorce was never God's intention. Marriage was supposed to be permanent (Matt 19:3-6)

MF-12. God only gave ONE ground for divorce, viz., sexual unfaithfulness (Matt 19:9*). The word in Matt 19:9 translated as 'marital unfaithfulness' (NIV) or 'sexual immorality' (NKJV) is a broad term used for the sexual sins as found in Lev 18, viz., incest, bestiality, adultery, homosexuality, prostitution, etc. – i.e. all sexual relations outside marriage.*

There are times when a legal separation (or even a divorce, depending on the laws of a country) becomes necessary because of physical abuse to spouse or child. Since that separation or divorce is not because of sexual unfaithfulness (Matt 19:9), either of the partners are scripturally not allowed to remarry (unless in the meantime one party has remarried, committed adultery, or died).

MF-13. God warns against marrying unbelievers since it has a diluting effect on a believer (Deut 7:2-4). See 2 Cor 6:14-16

MF-14. If a person has an unbelieving spouse or becomes a believer during their marriage (while their spouse remains unbelieving), it is not grounds for a divorce (1 Cor 7:12-14). *If however the unbelieving spouse decides to leave, they should be allowed to do so. The believer however cannot get remarried (because there was no sexual unfaithfulness involved), unless the spouse remarried, committed adultery or died.*

MF-15. The husband/father is the head and priest of the home (Gen 18:19). *The example of Abraham is quoted here. Fathers are to take the lead in spiritual activities, like morning and evening family worship. Among other things he is also the provider (1 Tim 5:8) and protector (see Gen 33:13-14)*

MF-16. The role of the wife/mother, among other things, is: childbearer / nurturer (see 1 Sam 1:21-28) and homemaker (Prov 31:13, 15, 21, 22, 27)

MF-17. Parents are to dedicate their children at the earliest possible moment of life, similar to what Joseph and Mary did (Luke 2:22). *This dedication is a way of thanking God for the miracle of birth, to covenant the parents to raise the child in a godly way, and to dedicate the child to the service of God.*

MF-18. Children are a heritage from God (Ps 127:3). *This means that children are a gift from God and should be loved and cared for - both physically and emotionally.*

MF-19. Children are to be obedient to their parents (Ex 20:12). *This is the first commandment with a promise (cf. Eph 6:2). Children may not always agree with their parents, but parents still deserve their love, respect, loyalty and obedience.*

MF-20. A child needs to be taught obedience (Prov 22:6). *See Deut 6:6-7. Training is not just speaking about punishment, but also about discipline. Discipline is a discipling process that teaches children principles like loyalty, truth, fairness, generosity, hard work, etc. God wants us to raise godly children, which is one of the most solemn tasks on earth.*

MF-21. Joshua said that he and his household would serve the Lord (Josh 24:15, last part) (End). *There is no greater joy than to be saved as families. May God help us to do everything in our power to win our families for Him.*

<u>24 True Church (TC)</u>

TC-0. *Title text:* Jesus has a church (Matt 16:18). *Notice In the verse that Jesus speaks of 'My church.' God has a group of organised, faithful believers. Incidentally this verse is NOT saying that Christ will build His church on Peter. The Greek clarifies what Jesus is saying: You are Peter (Greek: <u>petros</u> – a little stone) and on this rock (Greek: <u>petra</u> – a massive rock) I will build my church. By 'this rock' Christ was speaking of Himself. Some symbolic uses of <u>petra</u> are found in 1 Pet 2:7-8; Rom 9:33; 1 Cor 10:4 - all references to Christ. Christ would not build his church on a fallible human being like Peter; instead He is the true foundation (1 Cor 3:11) on which the church can safely be built.*

TC-1. Jesus will gather all His followers into ONE fold (Jhn 10:16). *Jesus has many sheep scattered in different denominations, but He intends to gather them into one fold.*

TC-2. A woman is used as a symbol for the people of God in both Old and New Testaments (Jer 6:2). *Other supporting verses are: Old Testament - Isa 54:5-6; Jer 3:20; Eze 16:8-14; New Testament - 1 Cor 11:2; Eph 5:25-32.*

TC-3. In the book of Revelation, which contains God's end time message to the world, we are shown a pure woman clothed with the sun (Rev 12:1-6). *Rev 12 symbolises the people of God, initially Israel but later the church. The woman is clothed with the sun (light is a symbol of God – Ps 104:2, Mal 4:2), has the moon under her feet and has a crown with 12 stars (which calls to mind the 12 tribes of Israel and the 12 apostles of the New Testament church). She is pregnant but a dragon (Satan, who indirectly works through various powers) stands in front of her to devour her male child (Christ). The child is later caught up to heaven (Christ's ascension), which unleashes Satan's attacks against the church. This*

causes her to flee into the wilderness for safety for 1260 days or years. Incidentally there is another woman in Rev 17 – a prostitute – who symbolises the false church. Thus the woman of Rev 12, although initially a representation of Israel, is a symbol of God's pure church.

TC-4. The earth helped the woman while fleeing from the serpent (Rev 12:6). *The earth represents a sparsely populated region, in contrast to the sea which represents vast populations (Rev 17:15). North America (and the Protestant Christianity it espoused) served to protect the truth and provide a safe haven for those persecuted. Note also that there were other sparsely populated regions in the world, but they did not help the woman as America did.*

TC-5. The remnant church appears after the 1 260 days (Rev 12:17). *As mentioned, the woman of Rev 12 flees from the serpent's persecution for 1 260 days or years. Then in vs 17 we are told that the dragon 'went to make war' against the 'remnant of her seed,' or 'her remaining offspring.' The fact that the remnant is mentioned after the 1 260 year persecution of vs 14 indicates that the war on the remnant is carried on after the 1 260 year period has expired. The remnant therefore refers to those living after 1798, the date when the prophetic 1 260 years comes to an end.*

TC-6. The identifying marks of God's remnant church: They keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus (Rev 12:17). *They keep ALL God's commandments, including the 4th one (the Sabbath), which was changed by the papal power from Saturday to Sunday. The 'testimony of Jesus' refers to the prophetic gift, but more on that in the next study.*

TC-7. The remnant preach the final message to the world (Rev 14:6-12). *Rev 14 is God's final message to the world just before the harvest of the world (which is mentioned in Rev 14:14-20). Rev 14:12 speaks of the 'patience of the saints,' i.e. the saints [God's faithful ones] who endure with patience the attacks from the beast. They are the very ones who being persecuted because of proclaiming the Three Angels' Messages of Rev 14. In vs 12 they are identified as 'keeping the commandments of God.' This is the same identification of the remnant in Rev 12:17. Thus they are the same group. So the remnant church is the group that proclaims the Three Angels' Messages. It also only makes sense that God's end-time movement will proclaim His end-time message to the world, preparing it for, and warning it of, His Second Coming. We will explore more of this message in the verses below:*

TC-8. God's true church preaches the everlasting gospel (Rev 14:6 – first part). *This is the same gospel preached by the apostles and foreshadowed in the Old Testament through various symbols, sacrifices and festivals. This eternal gospel is the good news about Christ, His life and teachings, His death, resurrection, ascension and ministry in heaven. It is not a different or new gospel but the same everlasting gospel as taught by both Old and Testaments. This gospel teaches us that through His power we can live transformed, obedient lives.*

TC-9. God's true church is a world wide, international, mission movement (Rev 14:6 – last part). *In order to proclaim the everlasting gospel to 'every nation, tribe, tongue and people' it has to be an international church.*

TC-10. The remnant calls men and women to give glory to God (Rev 14:7 – first part). *This is a call to honour God in everything we do, including eating and Drinking (see below).*

TC-11. We give glory to God through our lifestyles (1 Cor 6:19-20). See 1 Cor 10:31. *God's end-time church teaches healthful living.*

TC-12. God's true church announces that "The hour of His [God's] judgment has come" (Rev 14:7 - middle). *See Dan 7:9-14. God's remnant warn the world about a judgment that has come (past tense). This is a reference to the investigative judgement that has started in 1844 (see lesson on Judgment Part 2). The remnant has a judgment hour message of warning to the world.*

TC-13. God's true church calls all humanity to worship the Creator (Rev 14:7 – last part)

TC-14. The Sabbath is a weekly reminder of the Creator (Ex 20:8-11). *God's remnant church calls the world to keep God's Sabbath day holy.*

TC-15. The remnant warn about receiving the mark of the beast (Rev 14:9-10). *As we have seen in a previous study, this is the papal mark of Sunday keeping which will be enforced by civil law.*

TC-16. God's true church warns against the false doctrines and errors of spiritual Babylon (Rev 14:8)

TC-17. God's true church upholds faith in Jesus and obedience to His law (Rev 14:12) (End)

The only denomination to meet all of the above criteria is the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) church.

- *It is the only denomination to appear in the United States after 1798 (it was officially formed in 1863) that keeps ALL the Ten Commandments including the Sabbath, and has the prophetic gift in its midst.*
- *It is an international movement that preaches the pure gospel as taught in both Old and New Testaments, proclaims a judgment hour message, calls the world to healthful living, upholds all the teachings of the Bible, and warns of the false doctrines of spiritual Babylon.*

Because the SDA church is the remnant church, it does not think it is better than any other church. It is merely recognises that it is a divine movement, raised up by God, to call all people into one fold (Jhn 10:16). Its purpose is to sound a final message of salvation and warning just before Jesus comes. This grave responsibility brings with it a great deal of accountability.

<u>25 Gift of Prophecy (GP)</u>

GP-1. *Title text:* God reveals Himself through His prophets (Amos 3:7)

GP-2. God gave the gift of prophecy (as He did other spiritual gifts) to equip and build up His church (Eph 4:11-12)

GP-3. In the book of Revelation, the remnant church is described as having two characteristics: They keep God's commandments and have the testimony of Jesus (Rev 12:17). *The Greek grammar of 'testimony*

of Jesus' shows that it is speaking about the testimony that Jesus' Himself gives (through His prophets). It is therefore Jesus' testimony about Himself, not mankind's testimony about Him. Thus the remnant church has the prophetic gift in its midst.

GP-4. The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy (Rev 19:10). *The expression "spirit of prophecy" refers specifically to the "manifestation of the Spirit" in the form of a special gift of the Holy Spirit that inspires the recipient and enables him/her to speak authoritatively as a representative of God (1 Cor 12:7–10) when "moved by the Holy Ghost" to do so (2 Pet 1:21).*

GP-5. Those who have the 'testimony of Jesus' are prophets (Rev 22:6, 9). *When you compare Rev 19:10 and 22:8-9 the situation in both passages is the same. John falls at the feet of the angel to worship and the angel's response is almost identical, yet with some significant differences. In 19:10 the brethren 'hold the testimony of Jesus.' In 22:9 the brethren are called prophets. Thus the only conclusion one can come to is that the brethren who hold the testimony of Jesus are prophets.*

GP-6. The Bible says we should "test the spirits." Prophets must meet the Bible tests of a true prophet (1 Jhn 4:1). See Matt 24:5

GP-7. True prophets do not turn people away from God. Rather, they call them to obedience (Deut 13:1-4)

GP-8. The prophecies of true prophets [when they are not conditional], always come to pass (Jer 28:9). *An example of a conditional prophecy is when Jonah prophesied that Nineveh would be destroyed in 40 days. Because the Ninevites heeded the message and repented from their sin, the doom was averted. Even though Jonah's prophecy did not come to pass, he still remained a true prophet because the prophecy was conditional on obedience.*

GP-9. To the law and the testimony (a phrase referring to Scripture), if they speak not according to this word, there is no light in them (Isa 8:19-20). *Any person who claims to be a prophet and does not speak according to the Bible, is a false prophet.*

GP-10. True prophets place emphasis on the centrality of Jesus (1 Jhn 4:1-3)

GP-11. Fruits of prophets' lives reveal their divine credentials (Matt 7:15-16). *Not only by their teachings but by their life and behaviour can genuine prophets be recognised.*

GP-12. Believe His prophets so shall ye prosper (2 Chron 20:20)

GP-13. God places true prophets in His commandment keeping church to guide it through crises. He promises that His last-day commandment keeping church will be blessed by the Gift of Prophecy (1 Cor 12:27-28) (End)

Seventh-day Adventists believe that God again raised up the gift of prophecy through the life and teachings of Ellen G. White. When she was only 9 years old she had a tragic accident which brought her schooling career to an end. By then she had only completed a few grades of education. When she was a young woman God revealed Himself to her in visions and dreams. She wrote down God's messages of counsel to the church, covering areas such as spirituality, health, education, publishing, evangelism, and many more. Her writings do not in any way replace of the Bible, but were designed to point people back to the Bible. During her lifetime she wrote more than 5,000 periodical articles and 40 books; but today, including compilations from her 50,000 pages of manuscript, more than 100 titles are available in English. God gave her approximately 2,000 visions and dreams. Her writings pass the critical tests of a true prophet

26 Baptism (B)

B-0 *Title text:* Go, teach, and baptise (Matt 28:19-20). *Baptising is part of God's commission to His church.*

B-1. He that believes and is baptised shall be saved (Mark 16:16)

B-2. Except a man be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God (Jhn 3:5).

- *To be born of water is a reference to baptism. Just as a person enters this life after having been completely surrounded by water in their mother's womb, so the person who is born again starts his/her new life by being completely surrounded by water (through baptism). Not only should a person to be born of water, but also of the Spirit. In other words, the person should be completely 'surrounded' by the Holy Spirit, i.e. live a life of being completely controlled by Him. Thus without baptism and being Spirit-led a person 'cannot enter the kingdom of God.'*
- *Baptism is the official entrance into the kingdom of God.*

B-3. One Lord, one faith, one baptism (Eph 4:5). *The church has one Lord, one means of salvation (viz., through faith) and one form of baptism.*

B-4. Jesus was baptised as an adult in the Jordan River (Matt 3:13-17). *Jesus got baptised, not because He was sinful, but as an example to all believers.*

B-5. Biblical baptism takes much water (Jhn 3:23)

B-6. Jesus "came up out of the water" (Mark 1:9-10). *This means when went "down into the water." He was fully immersed*

B-7. Both Philip and the eunuch entered the water. Philip baptised the eunuch by immersion (Acts 8:38-39)

B-8. Baptism, a symbol of the resurrection, represents death and burial of the old life and emergence to new life in Jesus (Rom 6:3-6). See Col 2:12. *Note the following:*

- *A Christian, united with Christ in baptism, has died to the old nature and lives now lives a new life of dedication to God, empowered by His Spirit. This does not mean a believer will not sin after baptism, but at baptism sin's power over a believer is officially broken.*
- *At baptism we are told that the new believer is 'baptised into Christ's death' (vs 3). Christians are buried with Him by baptism, giving up their wills and dying, as it were, with Him on that day, to allow Him to live His life through them (see Gal 2:20 and 6:14).*

B-9. Repentance should accompany baptism (Acts 2:38)

B-10. After baptism a new believer should continue getting instruction and exposing him-/herself to spiritual activities (Acts 2:41-42)

B-11. Baptism is into the body of Christ [viz., the church] (1 Cor 12:13). *Baptism is a door into the church. People are not baptised and then left all on their own. They are baptised into a community of love and support, in which they grow, use their spiritual gifts and are trained for service. In the church they learn to become Christlike and are called: to love one another (Rom 13:8), to admonish one another (Rom 15:14), to serve one another (Gal 5:13), bear one another's burdens (Gal 6:2), forgive one another (Eph 4:32), to encourage one another (Heb 3:13), etc.*

B-12. Jesus gave authority to 1) make disciples of all nations 2) baptism them into the Father, Son and Holy Spirit and 3) teach them to observe all of His commands (Matt 28:18-20). *In vs 20 Jesus specifies that disciples are made by instructing believers in regard to His teachings and commands; those who have become disciples are to be baptised. Baptism is then an evidence of discipleship. Acceptance of Christ involves an intelligent act of the will. That is why there is no mention of infant baptism in the Bible.*

B-13. One can be rebaptised after having received new truths (Acts 19:1-7).

- *In this passage Paul apparently did not consider these Ephesian disciples' former baptism as valid or adequate. It seems like they lacked spiritual gifts, and perhaps a lack of the peace and joy found in those brought fully into the message of the gospel.*
- *The answers of the men (vs 2) revealed incomplete instruction, and a corresponding incomplete spiritual experience.*
- *Apparently Apollos had known only the baptism of John (Acts 18:25), but there is no mention of his rebaptism. Some of Jesus' apostles also must have received John's baptism (Jhn 1:35–40), but there is nothing to indicate they were ever rebaptised. Thus one may conclude that some of Jesus' disciples and Apollos, although baptised with the baptism of John, were in possession of two important elements: their belief in Jesus and the presence of the Holy Spirit in their lives. Because these two elements were lacking in the baptism of the Ephesians, Paul considered their baptism invalid and rebaptised them.*
- *Thus Acts 19:1-7 is an example of individuals rebaptised when receiving new truths. This however gives no warrant for frequent rebaptisings. Rebaptism should rarely be administered. Cleansing for a Christian in his daily walk with God is provided through God's forgiving grace (1 Jhn 1:9; 2:1, 2) and well as through the foot-washing ceremony, which symbolises a washing away of sin (Jhn 13:4–10).*
- *Incidentally, another reason for rebaptism, not mentioned in the text, is apostasy. One who has openly violated God's laws and been disfellowshipped from the church must enter the body again. On accepting Christ again that person will wish to signify renewed fellowship with Christ and the church by rebaptism.*

B-14. Don't delay in making a decision for baptism (Acts 22:16) (End). *Life is short and unpredictable, and it is not safe and wise to gamble with one's eternal destiny. Therefore the best time to make a decision for God is NOW.*

27 Growing as a Christian (GC)

GC-0. We are expected to grow in Jesus (2 Pet 3:18)

GC-1. We are called to die to self in order to live for God (Gal 2:20). See Rom 6:6-11 and Jhn 12:24. *A Christian's life therefore does not begin with birth, but with death. Until self dies, there is no beginning at all. Dietrich Bonhoeffer once said: 'When Christ calls a man, he bids him come and die.'*

GC-2. Unless we are born of water (baptism) and the Spirit we cannot enter the kingdom of God (Jhn 3:5). *There can be no growth in the Christian's life without the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit. That is why in Luke 11:11-13 we are told to ask for the Holy Spirit.*

GC-3. We sustain our spiritual lives through the Word of God (Matt 4:4). See 1 Pet 2:2

GC-4. Our faith increases when we listen to the Scripture (Rom 10:17). *We are told that God gives a measure of faith to every person (Rom 12:3). That faith grows as we expose ourselves to Scripture and other spiritual activities.*

GC-5. When God's Word is .stored in our mind, it protects us during temptation (Ps 119:11). Heb 4:12

GC-6. God invites us to pray (Isa 55:6). See Jer 33:3. *He always answers a sincere prayer, but often not according to our expectation or timing. He answers with a 'Yes,' 'No' or 'Wait!' He knows what is best for each of His children and answers accordingly.*

GC-7. We are to pray always (Luke 21:36). See Col 4:2. *Prayer is an absolutely necessary element in the warfare against sin and temptation (cf Eph 6:12-13). Some conditions of prayer include: perseverance (Eph 6:18), faith (James 1:6), asking according to God's will (1 Jhn 5:14), forgiving others (Mk 11:25-26), not cherishing sin (Ps 66:18) and obeying God's requirements (Prov 28:9)*

GC-8. Known and cherished sin hinders our growth in Christ (Isa 59:2). *We will make mistakes as we grow up in Christ, but the Bible warns against cherished sins - sins we love, protect and make excuses for. These can sap our Christian experience and make us ineffective for God.*

GC-9. Jesus' desire is that we live in unity (Jhn 17:20-21). *To actively seek unity is part of our Christian experience. Sin tries to divide mankind according to race, colour, caste, gender, nationality, etc., but the hallmark of genuine Christianity is unity.*

GC-10. There is an active part for a Christian to play in resisting sin (Col 3:1-10). *Verses 1-4 speak about the privileges a Christian has in Jesus. In the light of these privileges, verses 5-10 speak about what a Christian should actively do. This is not legalism or salvation by works. Some people think that God does all the overcoming, while a Christian passively sits back and 'enjoys the ride.' God will not put off your television if you are watching evil or violence, neither will He seal your mouth if you are gossipping. Those decisions are ours to make. We therefore have an active part to play in resisting sin, but cannot do it without the help of the Holy Spirit, who gives us the willpower to say No to sin. Notice*

the following words of Jesus to the man at the Pool of Bathesda: '<u>Stop sinning</u> or something worse may happen to you' (Jhn 5:14) and to the woman caught in adultery: '... neither do I condemn you. <u>Go now and leave your life of sin</u>' (Jhn 8:11). God is therefore calling us to resist sin (James 4:7; 1 Cor 9:25-27), but success can only come if we are connected to the Vine (Jhn 15:4).

GC-11. A promise that we will never get a temptation or trial that we will not be able to bear (1 Cor 10:13)

GC-12. A promise we can claim when we are too weak and the struggle seems too great (Phil 4:13)

GC-13. The focus of Christian transformation is the mind (Rom 12:2). *He who owns the mind, owns everything. That is why Paul said: 'Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus...' (Phil 2:5). Guard your mind against negative influences that will derail your Christian experience. Our minds are impacted by our senses – what we see, hear, taste, touch and smell. Ensure that your mind is protected from harmful influences. Only expose it to that which is wholesome (cf Phil 4:8).*

GC-14. In order to grow as Christians, we need to be part of a community, where we can worship, fellowship and study (Acts 2:42, 46-47). *See Heb 10:24-25. A solo Christian is like a single piece of coal taken from the fire. It soon dies out. Therefore, in order to be strong in this spiritual warfare, we need the support, guidance, love, fellowship and accountability that can be found in a church community. It is therefore important to go to church, join a small group, attend prayer meetings, etc. You will see how your Christian life flourish.*

GC-15. Spirit filled Christians become witnesses (Acts 1:8). *According to Luke 8:39, we are to witness about 'the great things God has done for us.'*

GC-16. Christ's mission on earth was the salvation of the lost (Luke 19:10). *If that was the mission of our Example Jesus Christ, then it should be our mission as well. Jesus' last words before leaving this earth were of a missionary nature (Matt 28:19-20). If we live by every word that comes from God's mouth (cf Matt 4:4), then we should surely take seriously the Great Commission of Matt 28.*

GC-17. God has equipped every believer with spiritual gifts to work for Him. This will help you grow and mature (Eph 4:11-15). *Using one's spiritual gifts is a truly satisfying and fulfilling experience. Do everything in your power to find out what your gifts are and begin using them for God's glory.*

GC-18. Jesus is the Author and Finisher of our faith (Heb 12:1-2) (End). See Phil 1:6. *This means that Christ who started His work in you, will finish it. What a promise!! The Christian life has its ups and downs, but God promises that as we cling to Him, we will finish with success. He will get us safely to the New Jerusalem.*

<u>28 The Lord's Supper (LS)</u>

LS-0. *Title text:* The Lord's Supper was instituted at Passover time (Jhn 13:1). *In fact, it is the New Testament replacement of the old covenant Passover festival. Just as the Passover commemorated deliverance from Egyptian slavery, so the Lord's Supper commemorates deliverance from the spiritual slavery to sin. The Passover lamb's blood, applied to the Israelites' doorposts, provided protection from death; and its flesh served to nourish them during their escape from Egypt. Similarly Christ's sacrifice brings liberation from death and nourishment for spiritual life – two elements which are remembered and celebrated during the Lord's Supper.*

LS-1. Christ began by washing His disciples' feet (Jhn 13:4-5). *Jesus the Master, took on the role of a servant when He washed His disciples' feet*

LS-2. Jesus' washing of His disciples' feet is an example that we should follow (Jhn 13:14-15). *Through the foot washing ceremony Jesus wants to teach us lessons in humility and service.*

LS-3. The foot washing represents a higher purification – a cleansing of the heart (Jhn 13:10-11). *In the setting of dusty Palestine, Jesus said that a person who takes a bath is clean but his/her feet may quickly get soiled from wearing sandals. This is also true in a spiritual sense. Baptism washes away our sins, but our 'feet can get soiled' by yielding to temptation from time to time. Even though the disciples were clean (baptised), they cherished pride, jealousy and evil in their hearts. Through the foot washing, Christ desired to prepare them to take part in the Lord's Supper (in which He was to make a new covenant with them). Through this selfless act, they were humbled and became teachable.*

LS-4. The foot washing service was followed by the Lord's Supper (Matt 26:19, 26). *Jhn 13 and Matt 26 are parallel accounts of the Lord's Supper. Jhn 13 gives focus to the first part of the ceremony, viz, the foot washing aspect, whereas Matt 26 the second part called the Lord's Supper (or the Communion Service). The latter service was to be a joyful experience, not a time of sorrow. The foot washing service provided an opportunity for self examination, confession of sins, reconcilation of differences and forgiveness. After having received the assurance of being cleansed by the Saviour, the disciples were now ready to enter into a special communion with their Lord. The second part of the service involved the eating of bread and drinking of wine.*

LS-5. The broken bread symbolises Christ's body that was broken for us on Calvary (1 Cor 11:24)

LS-6. The bread was unleavened (see Luke 22:1, 7). *Yeast was a symbol of sin (1 Cor 5:8; Luke 12:1) and thus only unleavened or 'unfermented' bread could symbolise the sinless body of Christ (1 Pet 1:19).*

LS-7. The red grape juice is a symbol of Christ's blood (1 Cor 11:25). *Similarly, the pure atoning blood of Jesus was symbolised by grape juice, the pure 'fruit of the vine' (cf Matt 26:29) since it was free from contamination / fermentation. Furthermore, we also know from sources outside the Bible (e.g. Josephus), that the phrase 'fruit of the vine' means 'freshly squeezed grape juice.' (Samuele Bacchiocchi, <u>Wine in the Bible</u>, p. 156)*

LS-8. The wine is called the 'cup of thanksgiving' or 'cup of blessing' (1 Cor 10:16). *This means it is an expression of gratitude for the blood of Christ.*

Where would we have been if it were not for Christ's blood!

LS-9. During the Last Supper, Jesus gave them a new commandment to love one another, as He had loved them. (Jhn 13:34-35). *This actually was not a completely new commandment (see Lev 19:18). What was new is found in the phrase 'as I have loved you.' Never had mankind seen love in action, as was seen in the life and ministry of Jesus. It was in the setting of the Lord's Supper that Jesus wanted to give His disciples a fuller understanding of His love, which He in turn wanted them to express to each other.*

LS-10. There should be self examination before the Lord's Supper (1 Cor 11:28). *Believers should prayerfully review their Christian experience, confessing known sins and restoring broken relationships, before participating in the Lord's Supper.*

LS-11. The Lord's Supper should not be eaten in an unworthy manner (1 Cor 11:27). *That is, without due reverence for the Lord. The unworthiness could also refer to unwholesome behaviour (see 1 Cor 11:21) or a lack of active faith in Christ's sacrifice for mankind.*

LS-12. By participating in the Lord's Supper, Christians publicly show that they are united and belong to one great family (1 Cor 10:17). *Using a different metaphor, this verse refers to the fact that just as there was one communion loaf of unleavened bread from which many pieces were broken, so all believers are really a part of Christ and are therefore united in Him. That means that we are all part of the same family.*

LS-13. The Communion service is a reminder of Christ's death, and is be celebrated until the Second Coming (1 Cor 11:26) (End)

Seventh-day Adventists practise open Communion, that is, any adult, from any faith, can join in the service. That is, it is not for an exclusive service for a select group of people. While it is true that open sin excludes the guilty (1 Cor 5:11), beyond this, no one is to pass judgment as to who should or should not partake in the Lord's Supper, since no one can read the heart. Infants and unbaptised children are however excluded because they are not old enough to understand the truths of their faith. Using the illustration of Jesus in Jhn 13:10, they did not have a bath yet (get baptised) and therefore the service does not apply to them.

29 Tithe / Christian Stewardship (T)

T-0. *Title text:* God grants to each the ability to get wealth (Deut 8:18). *Because our strength to produce wealth comes from God, our wealth in a sense really belongs to Him.*

T-1. The earth is the Lord's (Ps 24:1). *Since God created the earth and everything on it, it all belongs to Him.*

T-2. The silver and gold is God's (Hag 2:8). *God owns all the riches in the world. He doesn't need our money. If he however asks us to give it is that we may receive a blessing from giving and develop generous and selfless character like His.*

T-3. We rob God by withholding our tithes and offerings (Mal 3:8-11). *Tithes are holy to the Lord (Lev 27:30). We don't pay tithe, we return it because it rightfully belongs to God. Offerings on the other hand are voluntary. We really only begin giving to God when we give our offerings.*

T-4. If we honour God first, He will pour out heaven's richest blessings (Prov 3:9-10)

T-5. Put God first in all your affairs (including your money), and He will provide for you (Matt 6:33)

T-6. Abraham returned tithe to Melchizedek (Gen 14:20)

T-7. A tithe equals a tenth (Lev 27:32). See Gen 28:20-22

T-8. Tithing should be on *all* your increase (Deut 14:22)

T-9. Jesus said we should return tithe but also have mercy, justice, and compassion (Matt 23:23)

T-10. God loves a cheerful giver (2 Cor 9:7)

T-11. Preachers of the gospel should live off the gospel (1 Cor 9:13-14). See Num 18:21, 24. *In other words part of the purpose of tithing is to financially support ministers in their crucial work of soul winning.*

T-12. The labourer is worthy of his hire (1 Tim 5:18). *As a labourer for the gospel, a minister is worthy of receiving payment from the church.*

T-13. The heart which freely gives will be constantly blessed with more by our Lord (Prov 11:24-25)

T-14. Jesus warns against covetousness (Luke 12:15). *Jesus warns against having an excessive and improper love for material things. See story of rich young ruler in Mark 10:17-31*

T-15. Jesus encourages us to deposit our treasures in heaven (Matt 6:19-21) (End). *This text encourages the believer to put money, time and effort into God's work. Such treasure will last for eternity*

Note the Following:

- Can a person withhold tithe since Lev 27:31 speaks about redeeming tithe?

  Answer: In Israel tithe was paid in kind (wheat, barley, animals, etc.). If a farmer needed wheat for sowing, he would be allowed to keep the wheat and pay the equivalent tithe in silver, plus a 20% surcharge. Tithe from herds and flocks was not redeemable. The redemption of tithe mentioned here should not be confused with the erroneous practice of withholding tithe with the intention of bringing it later and adding 20% to it. There is no indication in Lev. 27 that tithe may be withheld.

- Is there a difference the way private individuals and businesses pay tithe?

  Answer: Yes there is. If you earn R1 000 (gross), the tithe is R100. In the case of a business, tithe is deducted after expenses incurred in the business have been accounted for. For e.g. if a business makes a profit of R10 000 and expenses for materials, wages, rent, electricity, etc., come to R4 000, the increase is R6 000 and therefore tithe is R600.

30 Christian Standards (CS)

CS-1. *Title text:* We are ambassadors for Christ (2 Cor 5:20). *We are official representatives of Christ to the world. People will evaluate Christ either positively or negatively based on our behaviour.*

CS-2. Do not love the world for it is passing away passes (1 Jhn 2:15-17). This principle guides us in how we use our time, money and other resources in this life.

CS-3. Do not conform to the world (Rom 12:2). *In other words, don't let the world squeeze you into its mould. Do not feel pressurised to follow worldly*

fashions, foods, entertainments, interests, etc.

CS-4. Think and meditate on that which is pure, positive and uplifting (Phil 4:7-8). *It is important to feed the mind on that which is wholesome. Ensure that what you watch on television, read or expose yourself to, conforms to these principles as found in Phil 4.*

CS-5. By beholding we become changed (2 Cor 3:18). *The NASB (as well as KJV, NKJV, ESV) puts that vs this way: "But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit." As we behold God's glory we will become transformed. This is a principle that applies to all aspects of life. What we behold changes us. A person who for instance exposes himself to pornography or violence will begin to enjoy impurity or aggression. Over time it will lead to negative behavioural changes, sinful addictions and even crime.*

CS-6. Friendship with the world is enmity toward God (James 4:4). *The main aim of the 'world' is to satisfy personal gratification [pleasure]. Living such a life is called 'enmity to God.'*

CS-7. We should dress modestly (1 Tim 2:9-10). *These verses are addressed to women, even though the principles apply to men as well. Women are to dress modestly, avoiding that which is immoral. They are to shun braided hair, gold or pearls and expensive clothes. The braided hair is not a reference to the braided hair of our day. In Paul's day, it was a particular elaborate braided hairstyle, unusually high, which was sometimes held up by wire or lacquer. It was often decorated with many small pieces of glittering material, almost entirely hiding the hair. Christians ensure that their hairstyles do not bring excessive attention to themselves. Concerning 'gold or pearls,' Paul mentions these because they were the type of jewellery used in his day for personal ornamentation. He does not include every jewellery item – so the list is not exhaustive. By mentioning gold and pearls he is not saying that only expensive ornamental jewellery is unacceptable. Ornamental jewellery is not only about expense. Ostentatious, but inexpensive jewellery is still not acceptable.*
Expensive clothes – refers to very expensive clothing. Emphasis is not necessarily on the costliness of the garment but particularly on a luxurious, ostentatious (showy) type of garment that does not reflect the nature of true beauty as understood by the Christian community.

CS-8. True adornment is not outward but inward (1 Pet 3:2-5). Peter agrees with Paul's counsel in 1 Tim 2:9-10. In addition he mentions that women should not wear gold jewellery (necklaces, earrings, bracelets, etc.) and fine clothes (very fashionable and expensive clothing). Their beauty should rather be found on the inside.

CS-9. Jacob's prepares his family to meet with God at Bethel by letting them put away their foreign gods and remove their earrings (Gen 35:2-4)

CS-10. Because of God's displeasure, the children of Israel remove their ornaments as they leave Sinai (Ex 33:3-6).

CS-11. God reveals His displeasure when His people artificially adorn themselves and lack character beauty (Isa 3:16-24). *This is one of the most scathing condemnations of jewellery.*

CS-12. Jewellery is associated with idolatry and forgetting God (Hos 2:13)

CS-13. The false church is pictured by God as being bedecked with jewels. She has left her true lover Jesus Christ (Rev 17:1-5). *Remember from a previous study that a woman in Bible prophecy represents a church. In the book of Revelation there are 2 women. By their dress and adornment alone (beside the other characteristics mentioned), can we identify who represents the true church and who the false.*

CS-14. Man's was to earn a living through hard work (Gen 3:19). *Gambling aims to achieve the opposite. It creates false hopes of 'winning big' and is very addictive. It has a massive negative impact on society: increased policing, legal costs, drugs, prostitution, family breakdown, etc. The church strongly condemns this activity.*

CS-15. We cannot run away from God (Ps 139:7-10) (End). *We should 'practise the presence of Christ,' i.e. have a continual awareness of His presence – which will keep sin at a distance.*

Note on Adornment

- *The Bible rejects ornamental jewellery, but recognises such a thing as functional jewellery.*
- *Functional jewellery was for instance worn by kings (crown, bracelet, ring) or high priests (breastplate, mitre on their heads) to indicate their positions.*
- *Ornamental jewellery includes items such as earrings, nose rings, bracelets, rings, necklaces and anklets worn to enhance the appearance of the individual.*
- *Examples of functional jewellery in the Western world are:*
  - *A watch – to help keep track of time*
  - *Wedding ring – to indicate marriage*
  - *Cufflink – to hold cuffs together*
  - *Brooch – to hold together pieces of clothing*
  - *There is nothing wrong in wearing these*
- *Obviously functional jewellery could be made in such a way that its ornamental function outshines any other useful purpose. In that case it must be considered inappropriate for a Christian to use.*
- *How does one decide on what functional jewellery is appropriate or not appropriate for personal adornment? Here are 3 important principles:*
  - *Simplicity – being unpretentious*
  - *Modesty – avoid excess or extremes of display*
  - *Economy – it is difficult to define this because it varies from person to person. It means we should not invest significant amounts of money in what the Bible regards of little value.*

31 Mark of the Beast (MB)

MB-0. *Title text:* The beast rising out of the sea is a composite beast that includes the characteristics of all four beasts from Dan 7 (Rev 13:1-2). *It combines elements of the lion, bear, leopard, and nondescript beast (called such because Daniel did not describe the beast completely as he did the others). The 7 heads are the combined heads of the 4 beasts: 1 each from the lion (Babylon), bear (Medo-Persia) and non-descript beast (Rome) and 4 from the*

leopard (Greece) = 7 heads. The nondescript beast of Dan 7:7 also had 10 horns. The sea beast of Rev 13 is therefore a mixture of all the elements of Dan 7:3-7. It is a single end time power that possesses prominent characteristics of the previous world empires.

MB-1. A beast represents a kingdom – a ruling power, civil or religious (Dan 7:17)

MB-2. The sea represents peoples, nations (Rev 17:15). *Thus this beast comes out a place where there are multitudes of people, in an environment of disturbed and stormy social and political conditions.*

MB-3. The lion, bear, leopard, and nondescript beast represent Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome (Dan 7:4-7). *These are the very same 4 world empires described in Dan 2, but with different symbols (see study on Dan 2 above).*

MB-4. The dragon gives the sea beast its power, seat and great authority (Rev 13:2). *Though primarily representing Satan (see Rev 12:3), the dragon, in a secondary sense, represents the Roman Empire, which historically gave its 'power, seat, and great authority' to papal Rome. This will be confirmed in further descriptions found in Rev 13. The 'seat' is a reference to a throne. The pope was given Caesar's throne in Rome, when it moved its headquarters to Constantinople in Asia Minor (between AD 324 and AD 330). Papal Rome was also allowed to exercise great control in political and religious matters.*

MB-5. The beast power speaks blasphemies (Rev 13:5)

MB-6. If any human being claims he has the power to forgive sins, he commits blasphemy (Luke 5:21). *The papacy claimed the right to forgive sins. Notice what a Catholic scholar says: "The claims of the Pope are the same as the claims of Christ. Christ wanted all souls saved. So does the Pope. Christ can forgive all sin. So can the Pope… The Pope is more than the representative of Christ, for he is the fruit of his divinity and of the divine institution of the church" (Extract of a sermon by Rev. Jeremiah Prendegast, S. J. reported in the Syracuse Post Standard, March 14, 1912). Another statement goes this way: "The priest does not have to ask God to forgive your sins. The priest himself has the power to do so in Christ's name. Your sins are forgiven by the priest the same as if you knelt before Jesus Christ and told them to Christ Himself" (Quoted in Lorraine Boettner, Roman Catholicism, p. 197)*

MB-7. The Bible defines blasphemy as man making himself equal to God (Jhn 10:33). *Even though Jesus was God, the Jews perceived Him to be a mere man and thought he was committing blasphemy. The pope however (a mere man) claimed to be God on earth. There are a number of such statements but note one said of the pope in 1512 by Christopher Marcellus: "For thou art the Shepherd, thou art the Physician, thou art the Director, thou art the Husbandman; finally, thou art another God on earth." (Labbe and Cossart, History of the Councils, Vol. XIV, col. 109)."*

MB-8. The beast power reigns for 42 months (Rev 13:5). *As mentioned in the study on 'The Great Historical Apostasy, the Hebrew calendar had 30 days in a month.*
In symbolical Bible prophecy a day is equal to a literal year (Num 14:34, Eze 4:6 - see explanation in the 'Judgment Part 2' lesson). So 42 x 30 = 1 260 days. Thus this beast power reigned for 1 260 years (cf Rev 12:6). This is exactly what happened historically. The papacy had religious and political control for 1 260 years from AD 538 – AD 1798. In AD 538 Emperor Justinian's army liberated Rome from the Goths. This enabled the Emperor's earlier decree (making the Pope head of all churches) to go into effect. This decree gave the Pope religious authority over the whole empire. In AD 1798 the 1 260 year prophecy came to an end when the Pope was deposed, captured and exiled by Napoleon's general (Berthier) during the French Revolution.

MB-9. One of the heads of the beast 'seemed to have had a fatal wound, but the fatal wound had been healed' (Rev 13:3). *This appears to be deadly blow that the papacy received when the French army declared an end to the papacy's rule and took the pope prisoner. The healing of the wound was a gradual process of papal restoration following the French Revolution. In 1801 Napoleon signed a treaty with a new pope. In 1870 the newly emerging nation of Italy took away the Papal States and in a huff Pope Pius IX, and all popes after him confined themselves to house arrest at Castel Gandolfo. A significant event however occurred in 1929 when Benito Mussolini signed a concordat granting the pope full authority over the State of Vatican City. Once again the pope was a monarch as well as a priest. The deadly wound was being healed. The full healing will however only take place at the end of time when 'all the inhabitants of the world will worship the beast' (Rev 13:8).*

MB-10. The sea beast persecutes the saints, God's faithful children (Rev 13:7). *The papacy believed it had the God-given right to torture and put to death heretics (those who did not believe what the church taught). Through the Inquisition and other methods of persecution, it killed millions of God's children.*

MB-11. Another key player then comes on the scene, viz., an earth beast and arises around the time the sea beast is going into captivity (Rev 13:11). *If the sea represents a populated area, then the earth should represent the opposite – an unpopulated or sparsely populated area.*
This beast has lamblike horns (vs 11). Twenty nine times in Revelation 'lamb' refers to Jesus Christ. Horns on the other hand are symbols of governmental power. Thus the earth beast was using its power in a gentle, almost Christlike manner.
This beast does not have crowns like the sea beast (Rev 13:1). Crowns indicate kingly authority; so we do know that this nation is not a monarchy.
Thus the identifying factors of this beast are:

- *It comes up around the time the sea beast is going to captivity (see Rev 13:10-11)*
- *It arises out of a relatively uninhabited area*
- *It's rule was gentle, almost Christlike*
- *It was not a monarchy*

Only one nation meets all these criteria, viz., the United States of America. It arose in the sparsely populated New World, was 'born' in the late 18th

century, around the time of the papacy's decline and captivity, its Declaration of Independence which states that all men are created equal is beautiful, almost Christlike. Its First Amendment says that people can exercise their religion freely, without state intervention. It was had a democratic form of government and not a monarchy. Sadly, this amazing power will later speak like a dragon (Rev 13:11) and 'deceive the inhabitants of the world' (Rev 13:14).

MB-12. The earth beast (USA) sets up an image to the sea beast (Rev 13:14). *An image is a replica or likeness to something. A child is the image of his dad if he looks just like his father. An image of the beast is a replica or copy of the beast. The sea beast was a persecuting union of church and state, which resulted in the oppression of those who did not accept its beliefs. Thus the setting up of this future image mentioned in Rev 13 in honour of the sea beast will therefore be a persecuting union of church and state leading to persecution of dissidents. In other words, the USA (state) will join with the papacy (church), resulting in great oppression of those who do not accept its beliefs. Many cannot see how this is possible, but the Bible is always accurate in its predictions.*

MB-13. 'Setting up an image' is drawn from Dan 3 and linked to false worship (Dan 3:2, 4-5). *In Dan 3 Nebuchadnezzar set up an image of gold (a likeness of what he saw in his dream in Dan 2) which he wanted all officials from his realm to worship. Thus the setting up of the image has to do with counterfeit worship.*

MB-14. Those who don't worship this end-time image will be killed (Rev 13:15). *Compare this to Dan 3:11, 15*

MB-15. The earth beast forces everyone to receive the mark of the (sea) beast (Rev 13:16). *The book of Revelation draws most of its imagery from the Old Testament. So when it writes about the hand and forehead in Rev 13:16, it brings to mind God's injunction to Israel to bind his commandments as a sign on their hands and foreheads (Deut 6:8). This is our first clue that the mark of the beast could be somewhat religious in nature.*

Moreover, the whole context in which Rev 13's mark of the beast is found, viz., Rev 12-14, deals with worship. The people living at the end of time will fall into one of two categories: worshippers of the true God having the seal on their foreheads OR worshippers of the satanic trinity (the Dragon, the Sea Beast & the Land Beast – Rev 13 & 14) having the mark on their right hand or forehead.
Although the issues in the final crisis are not just confined to the Sabbath, it will evidently become a litmus test of obedience. In Rev 14:6-12 we find God's final appeal to the mankind, calling them to worship the true God, the Creator. This call in Rev 14:7 is set in the context of the Sabbath commandment (Rev 14:7 is a direct quotation from Ex 20:11).
This appeal to worship the Creator God is followed by the proclamation of 2 other angels who announce the fall of Babylon and warn against worshipping the beast and receiving its mark (Rev 14:6-11). The urging of people to worship the true God in relation to the Sabbath commandment and warning them not to worship the beast and receive his mark, strongly suggests that the mark of the beast functions as the counterfeit of the Sabbath commandment.
That the receiving of the mark has something to do with the commandments of God is further confirmed with the concluding text: the worshippers of God are characterised as the ones "who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus" (Rev 14:12). The text seems to indicate that as the Sabbath will be the distinctive sign of obedience to God in keeping his commandments in the final, while the mark of the beast (the counterfeit Sabbath, viz., Sunday) will become the sign of obedience to the beast.
It is interesting to note that the papacy has often called the change of Sabbath to Sunday as its mark of authority, as the Catholic sources below show:

> *"Sunday is our mark of authority...the church is above the Bible, and this transference of Sabbath observance is proof of that fact." Catholic Record of London, Ontario, Sept 1, 1923.*

> *"Of course the Catholic Church claims that the change (Saturday Sabbath to Sunday) was her act... And the act is a mark of her ecclesiastical authority in religious things." H.F. Thomas, Chancellor of Cardinal Gibbons.*

On the other hand, the Scriptures define unequivocally the seventh day Sabbath as the distinctive sign that distinguished the people of Israel from other peoples. The Sabbath was an external sign of belonging to the true God and the special relationship between God and His covenant people (Ex 31:12-17; Eze 20:12, 20). Thus at the end of time, there will be 2 distinctive signs or marks of allegiance. It is not only about a day, but about worship.

MB-16. Those who don't have the mark cannot buy or sell (Rev 13:17). *This is a harsh measure to comply to the demands of the 'image.' Whenever church and state unite, there are always restrictions of liberties, persecutions and death. One can only imagine that those who follow Jesus will have their banks accounts frozen, ATM cards deactivated, prevented from business trade, buying property, etc.*

MB-17. The number of the (sea) beast is 666 (Rev 13:18) (End). *Rev 13:17-18 speak of about a 'beast,' 'name' and 'number.' Note that the beast has a blasphemous name on each of its heads, so its name has to be associated with blasphemy. We therefore have to look for a name or title of the papacy (beast). The language to find this in is Latin, which was the language spoken and used by the papal system since its inception. It is also the language used more commonly than any other language as a basis of numeric values. One of the official titles of the pope is 'Vicarius Filii Dei' which means 'Vicar of the Son of God.' This title is means 'a substitute in place of God,' which is a blasphemous title.*
This title was used by several popes during the

Middle Ages and has been recognised as a papal title by Catholic authorities (Kenneth Jorgensen, Prophetic Principles, Michigan Conference, 2007, p. 325). It was also incorporated into the Decretum of Gratian (a collection of Canon law) which was successfully used for hundreds of years to bolster papal power and primacy (Ibid, p. 322). In 1939 a committee set up by the General Conference president was tasked to investigate the historical sources behind 'Vicarius Filii Dei' and concluded that the name could indeed be considered as one of the official titles of the pope (Ibid, p. 323). Thus the number of the beast, which the Bible calls a 'man's number' is 666, calculated as follows:

V=5, I=1, C=100, A=0, R=0, I=1, U=5 (U=V in Latin), S=0
F=0, I=1, L=50, I=1, I=1
D=500, E=0, I=1
TOTAL = 666

Thus at the end of time, the USA & the Papacy will join hands. This will be a persecuting union of church & state ('an image to the beast') which will enforce the keeping of Sunday ('the mark of the beast') as a day of worship, contrary to the teachings of Scripture. Anyone who does not submit to the decree of this 'image,' will not be allowed to buy or sell. Eventually a death decree will be passed against all dissenters.

32 Millennium (M)

M-0. *Title text:* Jesus promised to return (Jhn 14:1-3)

M-1. At the Second Coming, the righteous dead will be resurrected, and along with the righteous living, ascend to meet Jesus in the sky (1 Thess 4:16-17)

M-2. There will be two resurrections, the resurrection of life and the resurrection of condemnation (Jhn 5:28-29)

M-3. The wicked will be destroyed when Jesus returns (2 Thess 1:7-9). See Rev 19:11-21

M-4. Satan will be bound for 1000 years by a chain of circumstance (Rev 20:1-2). *Since Satan and his angels are spiritual beings (see Eph 6:11, 12) the 'chain' likewise should be considered spiritual. At the beginning of the Millennium, all the righteous are in heaven and all the wicked are dead. Thus Satan has no one to deceive, the very work he had been actively engaged in since Creation. Now he has no one to tempt or deceived. He is bound with a chain of circumstance.*
It is also important to note that the 1 000 years spoken of in Rev 20 are literal years. According to the principle of miniature symbolisation (see the Lesson on Judgment – Part 2) found in symbolical prophecy, when a miniature object (such as a beast) represents something larger (like an empire), the time elements in that prophecy also represent something bigger (i.e. a day stands for a year). In Rev 20, the key player is Satan and since he does not stand for a larger entity or community bigger (but for ONE spiritual being called 'Devil' and 'Satan'), the time elements in that prophecy cannot stand for something bigger. The principle of miniature symbolisation therefore does not apply in Rev 20, and the time period should be regarded as a literal 1 000 years.

M-5. Satan is thrown into a 'bottomless pit' for a 1 000 years (Rev 20:3). *Some translations use the word 'Abyss,' which is the Greek word for 'bottomless pit.'*

M-6. The Hebrew equivalent of 'Abyss' is found at the time of Creation (Gen 1:2). *There it describes the dark, formless state of the earth before God started creation week (see Gen 1:2). From this we deduce that at the beginning of the Millennium the earth looks like it was in its chaotic, pre-creation state. Remember that just before the Millennium the earth is devastated by a 'severe earthquake,' which made island and mountains to disappear. There are also 50kg hailstones that do further destruction to the earth (Rev 16:17-21).*

M-7. Another reference to 'Abyss' or 'Bottomless Pit' in the Old Testament is in Jeremiah (Jer 4:23-27). *This passage describes the earth as desolate with no one inhabiting it. This is the state of the earth in Rev 20:1*

M-8. The righteous are in heaven for the 1,000 years. Sitting on thrones, they participate in judgment (Rev 20:4). *Although the text does not say that the saints are in heaven, other passages in the book of Revelation show where the saints are immediately after the Second Coming. In the first half of Rev 7, the saints are sealed (while on earth); in the second half they are located before the throne of God (vs 15). In Rev 15:2-4 the saints who had been victorious over the beast and his image while on earth, are pictured as standing on the sea of glass, singing the Song of Moses and the Lamb. Immediately after this, the temple is opened showing that the scene takes place in heaven (vss 5-7). Furthermore, other passages in Scripture tell us that the righteous are gathered from the earth at the Second Coming (1 Thess 4:16-18; Matt 24:30-31), i.e. they will not stay on earth after Christ's return.*

M-9. The saints are given authority to judge (Rev 20:4)
This verse pictures the saints sitting on thrones. They are given authority to judge / to pronounce sentence. This judgment cannot be one in which the saints determine who is will be saved and who will be lost, since the fate of all people would have already been sealed by then. What then is the purpose of this judgment? This work of judgment corresponds with the judgment Paul referred to in 1 Cor 6:2-3: "Do you now know that the saints will judge the world? … Do you not know that we are to judge angels?" Thus during the Millennium the saints will review the cases of the lost – of both man and fallen angels.
During the Millennium many people would surely wonder why a family member, pastor or friend who had served God, is not in heaven. Since humans do not have full knowledge of everything, God will allow them to review His judgments and forever settle in their minds why God could not take some people to heaven. On the other hand, the records may also help a person understand why a notorious murderer, whom one would never have expected in heaven, is actually there.
Thus God allows this careful investigation ('judgment') to convince every person of His fairness in dealing with mankind and of His justice when He

will ultimately destroy the wicked right after the Millennium.
Only two classes of saints are mentioned in Rev 20:4: martyrs (called the 'souls of those [i.e. people] who had been beheaded') and victors over the beast. This does not mean that they are the only ones to share in the millennial reign, for all the righteous dead (not only the martyrs) come forth in the first resurrection (1 Cor 15:51-52; 1 Thess 4:16-17; Rev 20:6). Perhaps the martyrs and the victors over the beast are singled out because they represent those who have suffered most.

M-10. The resurrection of the wicked, in which they receive their final reward occurs after the 1,000 years (Rev 20:5, first part). *The 'rest of the dead' can only refer to the wicked. As mentioned, the righteous dead have already been resurrected during the first resurrection (1 Thess 4:16, last part)*

M-11. Satan is loosed out of his prison to lead the resurrected wicked in a final attack against God (Rev 20:7). *The 'loosing' of Satan is a reversal of his binding at the beginning of the 1 000 years. If the chain of circumstances mentioned in Rev 20:1-3 was caused by a depopulation of the earth in which there was no one alive for Satan to tempt, then his 'loosing' must mean that the earth is repopulated, brought about by the resurrection of the wicked at the end of the 1 000 years. With the wicked alive, Satan is back in business – and again has opportunity to tempt and deceive. The wicked are figuratively called 'Gog and Magog' – a reference to nations that are rebellious against God and hostile to His people (see Eze 38-39)*

M-12. Satan and his evil hosts surround God's city in order to attack it but are completely destroyed (Rev 20:9). *This destruction of the wicked is when hell will take place. Thus hell is not currently burning. More on that in a later study.*

M-13. God creates a beautiful new world (Rev 21:1-3) (End)

<u>33 Destruction of the Wicked (DW)</u>

DW-0. *Title text:* God's character is one of love (1 Jhn 4:8)

DW-1. God is not willing that any should perish (2 Pet 3:9). See Eze 33:11

DW-2. The wages of sin is death (Rom 6:23), *not eternal torment. The death referred to here is actually the second death, which is the final punishment of the wicked (Rev 21:7-8; 20:7-9, 14)*

DW-3. Messiah's soul was not left in hell (Acts 2:27, KJV). *This verse highlights one meaning of the word 'hell.' In fact hell has 3 meanings in Scripture: 1) the grave (Ps 16:10; Acts 2:27; 1 Cor 15:55). The Hebrew word 'Sheol' and the Greek word 'Hades,' is often translated as 'hell,' but really means 'grave'*

DW-4. Both soul and body can be destroyed in hell (Matt 10:28). *This text highlights the second usage of 'hell,' viz., a place of burning (Greek: Gehenna) – Matt 5:22, 29; 18:9. <u>Gehenna</u> is a reference to the Valley of Hinnom which was a place outside Jerusalem for burning carcasses and rubbish. Jesus used the fires of Hinnom as a representation of hellfire*

DW-5. Evil angels are cast into hell (2 Pet 2:4). *This is the third usage, viz., a place of darkness (Greek: Tartarus). In this verse <u>Tartarus</u> simply refers to the place to which the evil angels are restricted until the day of judgment.*

DW-6. Sinners will be completely destroyed (Mal 4:1-3). *This passage speaks of the complete destruction of the wicked: they will be stubble (vs 1); they will be burned up (vs 1); there will left with neither 'root nor branch' (vs 1); they shall be as ashes (vs 3).*

DW-7. The wicked suffer the effects of eternal punishment (Matt 25:46). *This verse may sound contrary to Mal 4, but it is not. Jesus is here speaking of the effect of punishment, viz., it is eternal. The wicked are consumed but the effect lasts forever. The text does not say "everlasting <u>punishing</u>." This will become clearer as we go through more passages below.*

DW-8. Sodom and Gomorrah are examples of the 'punishment of eternal fire' (Jude 7). *Once again, this verse is dealing with the effects of a destruction that took place a long time ago. These cities are not burning today but lie in ruins underneath a portion of the Dead Sea.*

DW-9. Sodom and Gomorrah were turned into ashes (2 Pet 2:6)

DW-10. Jeremiah prophesies that Jerusalem would be destroyed by an unquenchable fire (Jer 17:27). *This prophecy took place in 586 BC. Jerusalem was then completely destroyed by the Babylonians. Notice that 'unquenchable fire' cannot refer to a fire that burns all the time. In that case Jerusalem would still be burning today*

DW-11. The wicked are tormented 'day and night forever' (Rev 20:10). *This is a figurative expression to denote complete destruction. As we have seen, 'eternal' and 'forever' have different meanings to how we use them today. We have to however interpret the Bible according to its own understanding, and not superimpose our modern understanding on it. 'Forever' does not mean endless but is literally translated 'age lasting,' which often refers to a limited period of time. Here are some examples:*

DW-12. A slave could choose to serve his master forever, i.e. as long as he lives (Ex 21:6)

DW-13. Hannah gave her son Samuel to 'appear before the Lord and remain there forever' (1 Sam 1:22) 28). *Notice how vs 28 of that same chapter clarifies what Hannah means: '<u>as long as he lives</u> he shall be lent to the Lord.' Thus 'forever' here means 'as long as he lives.'*

DW-14. The evil angels and all of the wicked are <u>reserved</u> for judgment (2 Pet 2:4). *That is, hell was a future event to Peter's day. It therefore shows that the wicked don't immediately go to hell. If they didn't go to hell in Peter's day, they surely don't go there now.*

DW-15. The 'smoke of [the wicked's] torment rises forever and ever.' (Rev 14:10-11). See Rev 19:3. *This figure of the 'smoke ascending forever and ever' is drawn from Isa 34:9-10, which deals with Edom's destruction. Once again even though it says Edom's smoke will ascend forever and ever, Edom is not burning today. Thus this symbolic expression cannot mean an eternal, continual burning.*

DW-16. Fire comes down from God out of heaven and devours the wicked. They are completely destroyed (Rev 20:9). *This is when hell actually takes*

place. Satan, all his wicked angels, as well as all the unrighteous receive their just punishment then.

DW-17. The wicked shall be as 'though they had never been' (Oba 16)

DW-18. The wicked will experience the undying worm and unquenchable fire (Isa 66:24). *Like with the other passages, Isaiah also uses symbolic language. Here he is describing corruption that cannot be purged. This verse is NOT speaking of a soul which cannot die. If so, how could maggots continue their work in the presence of fire? 'Worms' here describe the sure fate of the dead (cf. Isa 14:11), reminding us that the destruction of the wicked will be complete.*

DW-19. The old world shall be dissolved but God will create a new heavens and earth (2 Pet 3:12-13) (End). *The wicked will be destroyed with the destruction of the old world.*

Thus we have clearly seen that the Bible supports the idea of the complete destruction of the wicked, and rejects an eternally burning hell. The latter belief just does not measure up with a just and loving God. Why would He want to burn His children for the millions and millions of years of eternity, while their righteous relatives and friends are watching all this. Imagine what agony heaven will be for them!!

<u>34 The New Earth (NE)</u>

H-0. *Title text:* Our Lord has promised to create a new heavens and a new earth (2 Pet 3:10-13). *Our current world will be destroyed with fire before God creates a new earth.*

H-1. The New Jerusalem will descend from heaven after the Millennium (Rev 21:1-5)

H-2. God's new city has massive dimensions. Everyone can be accommodated (Rev 21:16-17)

H-3. There will be no need for the sun and moon because God will be the light of the New Jerusalem (Rev 21:23). *This also means there will be no night in which to rest. Just imagine how much more we will be able to do without sleep and fatigue.*

H-4. This spectacular city has walls whose foundations are magnificent gems, streets of gold and gates of pearl (Rev 21:18-21)

H-5. The meek shall inherit *the earth* (Matt 5:5). See Ps 37:9

H-6. God will give us immortal bodies (Phil 3:20-21) See 1 Cor 15:51-54

H-7. All physical deformities will be cured (Isa 35:5-6). *Jesus in Matt 11:2-4 uses Isa 35:5-6 to report to John the Baptist the dawn of the era of salvation. The ultimate fulfillment of these prophecies in Matthew & Isaiah will occur at the Second Coming and on the New Earth.*

H-8. We will build houses and inhabit them; plant vineyards and eat their fruit (Isa 65:21-23). *Thus we will have a city home (see Jhn 14:1-3; Rev 21:2-3) and a country home.*
<u>Side note</u>: The above verses are part of a bigger section (Isa 65:17-25) which deals with the New Earth (see note at the end of the Sabbath – Part 1 study). Here Isaiah describes this new life through things we know and experience on earth. For e.g., the saints will be totally happy (vs 19, second part), totally secure (vss 22-23) and totally at peace (vss 24-25). Vs 20, in metaphorical language, says that over the whole of life, from infancy to old age, the power of death will be destroyed. It is in this context that we are told that in the earth made new, we will build our dream homes, plant crops, and harvest and eat them.

H-9. The wolf and lamb shall feed together. God's new kingdom will be one of peace (Isa 65:25).

H-10. We will reign with Christ for ever (Rev 22:5). See Rev 5:10. *We don't exactly know the extent of this rule, but can safely assume that the redeem will serve as Christ's ambassadors to the universe, testifying to their experience of God's love.*

H-11. We will recognise friends and family (Jhn 20:11-16). *In this passage Mary recognised the resurrected Jesus, which implies that we will continue our relationships in the New Earth with those we know and love here.*

H-12. We shall fellowship with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and the greatest minds of the ages forever (Matt 8:11)

H-13. There will be no marriage in heaven (Matt 22:29-30). *In wisdom God removed marriage from the New Earth. Just imagine the complications that would be introduced if the marriage relationships of this earth were renewed in heaven. Yet the saints will not be deprived of any good thing (cf Ps 84:11). The essence of marriage is love and in the New Earth, no one will lack love or feel lonely and empty.*

H-14. God Himself shall be with us and be our God (Rev 21:3)

H-15. We shall lovingly serve our God forever and enjoy the closest fellowship with Him (Rev 21:4; 22:3-4)

H-16. Evil will be eradicated (Rev 21:7-8)

H-17. The thought of the great things God is preparing for us, is an incentive to endure our current trials and difficulties (2 Cor 4:16-18)

H-18. Accept Jesus and you will receive His glorious kingdom (Rev 22:17) (End)