

THE FRUITS OF DISOBEDIENCE : PART ONE

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God Doesn't Make Mistakes, Paul's Example Of Perseverance And Faith, Learning From The Past, Wisdom Of The Wise, Faith Without Works And Hypocrisy, Negative Fruit Of Ignoring God's Word - World Falling Apart, God Is In Control, Trust God Even If We Don't Understand, God Is Near Us, When God Forsakes Us, God's Blessings Are Conditional, Godly Fear/Reverence, Fear And Obedience Result In Mercy, God's Mercy Endures Forever, God's Mercy Revealed Through Christ, God's Mercy Revealed In Our Daily Blessings, Forsaking Mercy And Lying Vanities, The Beginning Of Sorrows, God's Protection And Provision, Wonder Of God's Word, Treasures Of God's Word, Spiritual Blindness, Faith To Believe, Reward Of Diligence, Defining Faith, Peace

If there is one important lesson that I have learned over the years, it is that God does not make mistakes. Everything that He says and does is for a very specific reason and purpose. This is particularly true when it concerns His own children, whom He loves dearly. The Apostle Paul, who suffered many things for the sake of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, was very well aware of this fact, and emphasized this point when he penned the following oft-repeated words to the Disciples at Rome:

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

Romans 8:28, KJV

What a bold statement of faith, and what a shining example of utter trust in the Lord! "All things work together for good", Paul wrote, and not just some things. In spite of the fact that Paul was hounded and persecuted by his Jewish enemies everywhere that he went -- please refer to the article "Biblical Cafeteria Or the Whole Course? -- the Bible makes it clear that he maintained his faith, in word, as well as in deed, up until the very end of his life, when

he became another martyr for the Cause of Jesus Christ. Just prior to Paul's martyrdom, we find him writing these final words to Timothy, his beloved son in the faith:

"For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."
2 Timothy 4:6-8, KJV

Just as Paul viewed the events in his own life as having been ordained by the Lord, he apparently held the same view when it came to the many historical events which are described in what we Christians today refer to as the Old Testament. Paul viewed these events as a source of enlightenment, admonition instruction and edification, not only for himself, but for those to whom he ministered as well; particularly his Jewish brethren. Thus it is that in discussing the many complaints of the Children of Israel during their forty-year-long trek through the wilderness of the Sinai, Paul used those events of bygone years to teach an important lesson about murmuring, and other sins, to the brethren at the Church of Corinth. He wrote thusly:

"But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand. Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents. Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer. Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."
1 Corinthians 10:5-12, KJV

So as Paul plainly states, we can learn from the example of the ancient Israelites, what to do, as well as what not to do. Not only can we learn from their successes and obedience to the Lord, but we can also learn from their failures and

disobediences as well. As the old adage states, "A wise man learns from his own mistakes, but a wiser man learns from the mistakes of others". In this case, as always, the Lord was one step ahead of the philosophers and wise men of this world; because this kind of wisdom has been recorded in His Word for literally thousands of years. For example, in the Book of Proverbs we find verses such as the following:

"A wise man will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels:"

Proverbs 1:5, KJV

"Reprove not a scorner, lest he hate thee: rebuke a wise man, and he will love thee. Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be yet wiser: teach a just man, and he will increase in learning."

Proverbs 9:8-9, KJV

In the New Testament, Jesus offered similar advice when He said the following to His Disciples concerning the hypocrisy of the Scribes and the Pharisees. Notice also how in the final verse, the Apostle James echoes the words of our Lord:

"All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not."

Matthew 23:3, KJV

"And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?"

Luke 6:46, KJV

"This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me."

Matthew 15:8, KJV

"For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also."

James 2:26, KJV

In other words, Jesus was telling His followers to not only take heed to the wisdom of the Scribes and the Pharisees, but He was also cautioning them to learn from their hypocritical example as well. Thus, James wrote that faith without works is dead; because our faith should be made manifest through our works; that is, through the way in which we act and live.

Sadly, as I point out in the article "Selfishness: A Sign of the Endtime?", it seems that in this modern age of stubborn, rebellious men, where so many people have become lovers of their own selves more than lovers of God -- 2 Timothy 3:2-4 -- many individuals fail to follow the wise counsel found in the Holy Scriptures. Because of this, modern civilization has begun to fall apart at the seams. From the personal level, to the family level, to the community level, to the national level, to the international level, society has been deteriorating at an accelerated pace.

From unprecedented acts of terrorism which have resulted in people being killed in the thousands; to illegal, unjustified wars to achieve national agendas; to a foolish rush to obtain biological, chemical and nuclear weapons; to the oppression of the poor through global trade wars; to the destruction of the environment due to greed and a desire for greater profit; to unbridled sexual immorality; to the alarming decay of the God-ordained marriage relationship; to the heartless murder of millions of babies through abortion; to worldwide drug trafficking and abuse; to the misuse of political power and corruption in our governments; to financial scandals and collapse; to deadly epidemics such as AIDS, SARS, ebola and the West Nile Virus; to an increasingly godless educational system; to demonic music on the radio, television set, etc., to improper morals being taught to the younger generation in movies, videos, etc.; to an alarming rise in paganism and satanic worship; the world is truly being shaken to its very foundation. Satan, the destroyer of God's Creation, and the king of chaos and confusion, certainly seems to be having his day.

The lesson we can learn from all of this is clear. When we as individuals, or as a nation, willingly choose to ignore and abandon the precepts of God's Holy Word, we must also expect to pay the dire consequences for our rebellious and foolish actions. This is something which I also discuss in articles such as "The Plight of the Children", "Love and Light, or Rod and Wrath?", "Free Will and Personal Choice", and "Beholding the Evil and the Good". I encourage you to read them.

But what we must also remember, is that no matter how many bad things may happen in the world, and no matter how many "bad" things may occur in our personal lives as well, even in all of this, God is still in control; and as the Apostle

Paul so wisely wrote, "All things work together for good to them that love God". In short, in the end, even our mistakes can be good things if we learn valuable lessons from them.

On a more personal level, it is precisely because of the way I have seen the Lord work over the years in my own life, that I have reached a point where it is easier for me to trust in Him. I am not suggesting that I have arrived at some point of perfection, and never fret anymore, but I now recognize and accept all things in my life as coming from His Hand; even if I don't understand them at the time. If we need to understand something, the Lord will give us the understanding if we are patient. But even if He chooses not to explain things to us right away, or even if He never lets us know why something has happened to us, we still need to place our trust fully in Him; for as it is written:

"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee."

Isaiah 26:3, KJV

"Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths."

Proverbs 3:5-6, KJV

As His children, we all need to know that God loves us, that He is concerned about us, and that He promises to take care of us, as long as we remain close to Him, on the right path, not deviating either to the right hand, or to the left hand, in humble submission to His Will, and obedient to His Word. Consider the following comforting verses:

"The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them."

Psalms 34:7, KJV

"The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit."

Psalms 34:18, KJV

"Cast thy burden upon the LORD, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved."

Psalms 55:22, KJV

"Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art

there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me."

Psalms 139:7-10, KJV

"The LORD is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth."

Psalms 145:18, KJV

"Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness . . . For I the LORD thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee."

Isaiah 41:10, 13, KJV

"Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God? But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows."

Luke 12:6-7, KJV

"For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Romans 8:38-39, KJV

"Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."

Hebrews 13:5, KJV

"Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you."

1 Peter 5:7, KJV

So as I explain in the aforementioned article "Beholding the Evil and the Good", even when it seems that the Lord is far from us due to our sins and disobediences, nevertheless, He does not forsake us completely. He may allow us to suffer for a while until we have learned our lesson; He may even let us think that He has abandoned us; but He is also always there ready to receive us with loving arms, once we have come to our senses; just like the story of the Prodigal Son which is found in Luke chapter fifteen. I am reminded again of these

comforting verses which were spoken by the Lord through the Prophet Isaiah, to the backslidden Israelites:

"For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the LORD thy Redeemer."

Isaiah 54:7-8, KJV

I discuss this topic of submission to God's Will in greater depth in articles such as the series "So You Really Think You Are So Humble?", as well as in "What is God's Will for My Life?". I hope that you will take the time to read them, as I am sure that you will be greatly blessed and encouraged by them.

The Bible is literally full of wonderful promises concerning the Lord's Blessings, such as Protection and Provision. As we delve deeper into this series, and dig into the ancient past, you will begin to understand that these Blessings are not automatically bestowed upon His children, as some people seem to believe. Neither are they necessarily eternal; at least not in the way that some people understand this word. The Scriptures make it very clear that God's Blessings are conditional; that is, they can be granted, or they can be removed, in direct proportion to our obedience to His Will. I discuss this very same point in other articles, such as "The Children of God and Politics". The truth of the matter is that God bestows His Blessings upon those who fear Him. Exactly what does this mean? As I point out in the article "Dracula: Fighting Fear with the Word, Faith and Love", the Bible speaks of different kinds of fear. The kind of fear I am referring to is Godly Reverence; that is, it is fatherly fear which causes us to depart from evil, as we see by the following verses:

"And unto man he said, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding."

Job 28:28, KJV

"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do his commandments: his praise endureth for ever."

Psalms 111:10, KJV

"Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil."

Proverbs 3:7, KJV

"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding."

Proverbs 9:10, KJV

"By mercy and truth iniquity is purged: and by the fear of the LORD men depart from evil."

Proverbs 16:6, KJV

It is this kind of fear, or reverence, which is the key to receiving the Lord's Blessings in our lives; because it is this kind of fear which results in obedience to God's Will. When Mary visited her cousin Elisabeth after being informed by the Angel Gabriel of her cousin's pregnancy, one of the things that Mary told Elisabeth in her moment of Divine Inspiration was the following:

"And his mercy is on them that fear him from generation to generation."

Luke 1:50, KJV

Please notice the relationship between Mercy and Godly Fear. Without Godly Fear, there can be no Mercy; yet at the same time, if we do fear the Lord, God's Mercy is present. Why is this? Quite simply, because obedience to the Lord and His Word is a by-product of Godly Fear and Reverence; and it is our obedience which automatically results in the Lord's Mercy being showered upon our lives. Thus, Mary tells us that "his mercy is on them that fear him". But notice what Mary also states. She says "from generation to generation". What could that possibly mean? When I read those words, what came to me is that Mary is speaking of an on-going relationship with the Lord. In other words, each generation must fear and obey the Lord if they expect to be recipients of His Mercy and other Blessings. We can't count on the past obediences of our parents, or our grandparents, or our great grandparents, in order to receive God's Blessings. We can't even depend on our own past obediences. Obedience to the Lord is something which we must practice every single day of our lives if we expect to be continual partakers of the Lord's Blessings.

It is interesting to note that we are repeatedly told in the Old Testament, that God's Mercy endures forever. The vast majority of times, these words were uttered by King David, who also wrote the beautiful Psalm of repentance, Psalm 51. In Psalm 118, the phrase "His mercy endureth for ever" is

mentioned five times. Likewise, in Psalm 136 it is mentioned in every single verse, for a total of twenty-six times. In addition, you will find the phrase used ten more times in other books of the Old Testament, for a total of forty-one times in the entire Bible. Oddly enough, it isn't found a single time in the New Testament. Perhaps this is because the way God ultimately chose to manifest His Mercy, and His Love, to us, is clearly revealed in the New Testament, by the Sacrifice of His own dear Son, who died for the sins of the world. As the Apostles Paul and John each wrote in their Epistles:

"For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

Romans 5:6-8, KJV

"Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he [Jesus] laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren."

1 John 3:16, KJV

A second manner in which God reveals His Mercy to us, is through the way in which He cares for His children on a daily basis. In fact, as Jesus Himself said in the New Testament, God the Father reveals His Mercy to both the righteous and the unrighteous, to both the evil and the good, as we see here:

"But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust."

Matthew 5:44-45, KJV

Despite this fact, even though in His Love, in His Mercy, and in His Wisdom, the Lord pours out His Blessings upon the wicked children of the world in His attempt to bring them to Salvation, many of them still reject His existence, and His Love, as manifested through the Sacrifice of His dear Son. Unlike the Prodigal Son, who finally came to his senses, and repented of his foolishness and sins, and humbly returned to the house of his father, these people stubbornly turn away

from God's Light, Love and Mercy, as we see here:

"Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon."

Isaiah 55:7, KJV

"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

2 Peter 3:9, KJV

"Let favour be shewed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness: in the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly, and will not behold the majesty of the LORD."

Isaiah 26:10, KJV

"And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved."

John 3:19-20, KJV

"If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloke for their sin."

John 15:22, KJV

It is when such people have experienced the Lord's Love, and have been beneficiaries of His Blessings, and have heard the Truth of His Word, and then still remain rebellious, that as the Prophet Jonah cried out, they knowingly, and consciously forsake the Mercy which God wishes to have upon them; which is exactly what Jesus is saying in the previous verses from the Gospel of John. As the worldly proverb also states, you can throw a drowning man a life preserver, but you can't force him to take it. Thus it is that Jonah said in his own moment of desperation:

"They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy."

Jonah 2:8, KJV

Surely, these people who reject God's Love and Mercy through His daily Blessings in their lives, as well as through the Sacrifice of His Son, will be held accountable on the Day of

Judgment. In fact, it may be that the Lord has already begun to withdraw His Mercy, as the world becomes more evil, more rebellious, and more antichrist, everyday. Perhaps this is why, as the Lord Himself clearly prophesied so long ago, we are currently witnessing such a dramatic increase in deadly earthquakes, in long-term famines, in incurable epidemics, in devastating droughts, in destructive floods, in selfish wars, etc. God is simply fed up with the rebellious nature of the children of the world. For an in-depth look at this topic, with factual evidence to support my statement, please refer to my lengthy fourteen-part series, "The Beginning of Sorrows". It is quite an eye-opener.

However, as I mentioned earlier, for those who do obey the Lord, and are thus pleasing in His sight, the Bible is full of promises of protection and provision. To share all of the verses which deal with this topic would require a great deal of space; however, allow me to share the following additional ones with you for your encouragement and edification. They are perfect companions for the verses I shared earlier:

"Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest."

Joshua 1:7, KJV

"Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart."

Psalms 37:4, KJV

"For the LORD God is a sun and shield: the LORD will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly."

Psalms 84:11, KJV

"A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee."

Psalms 91:7, KJV

"The LORD is thy keeper: the LORD is thy shade upon thy right hand."

Psalms 121:5, KJV

"Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the

LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it."

Malachi 3:10, KJV

"But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

Philippians 4:19, KJV

What truly wonderful promises from the Word of God! It is without a doubt spiritual oceans to swim in, and my daily delight! I am reminded of the following verses which show how our spiritual forefathers likewise highly esteemed the words of our Heavenly Father:

"Neither have I gone back from the commandment of his lips; I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food."

Job 23:12, KJV

"More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb."

Psalms 19:10, KJV

"But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

Matthew 4:4, KJV

"These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so."

Acts 17:11, KJV

"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

2 Timothy 2:15, KJV

Despite my personal enthusiasm for the wonderful Word of God, there are many people in the world today who simply do not understand how one can have such "odd" emotions for the Sacred Book. Neither do they understand how one can place so great a faith in the Precious Promises contained within its holy pages. For these people, if they even possess one, the Bible is just a thick, old volume which is meant to sit on

the mantle or coffee table, where it collects dust over the years, and gives the false impression that one is religious. It is indeed tragic that they are so blind to the wonderful treasures which can be extracted from the Lord's "Heavenly Gold Mine". In one of His many Parables, Jesus described it this way:

"Then said he unto them, Therefore every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old."

Matthew 13:52, KJV

As the Apostle Paul tells us, their spiritual blindness is due to the fact that Satan, who is the false god of this world, has blinded their spiritual eyes, and hardened their hearts, so that they are unable to receive the wonderful things of the Spirit. The truth found in God's Holy Word is totally alien to them. It is like an unknown language which they can't even begin to understand. Notice what Paul wrote to the Corinthians:

"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

1 Corinthians 2:14, KJV

"In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."

2 Corinthians 4:4, KJV

I will be the first to admit that it requires real faith to accept the Bible as the inspired Word of God. Not only does it require faith to accept the Divine Inspiration of the Scriptures, but before one can even do that, he must first have faith in the One who inspired it in the first place; for without faith, it is impossible to please God. This is precisely what the Apostle Paul wrote in his Epistle to the Hebrews. He says:

"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."

Hebrews 11:6, KJV

Notice the very end of the previous verse. It says that "He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him". If you lose something of great personal value, and if you persevere long enough, if you search diligently, backtracking in your steps, there is a good possibility that you will eventually find the lost item. In similar manner, if you happen to be one who is not absolutely certain that God exists, I must tell you that if you humbly, sincerely and truly want to know, the Lord will reveal Himself to you; but you must have an open mind and an open heart. If your mind is already made up, then nothing that the Lord does will probably convince you of the reality of His existence.

At this point, you might be asking yourself, "Well, exactly what is meant by the word "faith"?". In the New Testament, the word "faith" is derived from the Greek word "pistis", which itself is derived from another Greek word, "peitho". Collectively, these words mean to have trust, confidence, or personal conviction regarding something; or to be persuaded of something. In other words, it is a certain knowing which one feels deep in his heart. It is this assurance and strong conviction that God truly does exist, and that He does love and care for us, which gives us Christians a wonderful peace in our hearts. Sadly, many people in the world never come to experience this wonderful peace, simply because they have foolishly rejected the Giver of this peace; God Himself. Consider the following verses:

"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee."
Isaiah 26:3, KJV

"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."
John 14:27, KJV

"And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."
Philippians 4:7, KJV

As we continue this series in part two, we will look at such topics as Godly peace and fear, obtaining faith through the Word, the lies of the Urantia Book and the Encyclopedia Of Biblical Errancy, deceivers of the Endtime, the intervention of the Holy Spirit, the importance of giving God the glory, God's vessels, pride, humility and God's breaking process,

the transformation of Peter and James, false accusers, and Satan, a liar and accuser of the Saints. I trust that you will join me.

Please go to part two for the continuation of this series.

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THE FRUITS OF DISOBEDIENCE : PART TWO

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Godly Peace And Fear, Faith Through The Word, Wonderful Word Of God, Urantia Book, Atheists, The Encyclopedia Of Biblical Errancy, God Does Not Lie, Endtime Deceivers, Witness Of The Spirit, Intervention Of Holy Spirit, Give All Glory To God, God's Vessels, Pride And Humility, God's Breaking Process, James and John Humbled, Peter's Humiliation And Transformation Ungodly False Accusers, Satan Liar And Accuser Of The Saints

It is precisely because many people have rejected God the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, that in the Gospels, the Lord also prophesied that many people's hearts would fail them because of great fear in the Last Days. In other words, when God's Judgments begin to fall heavily upon the Earth, because they won't have faith in God; and because they won't have faith in His Word; and thus won't be able to trust in His promises of protection, or even understand what is going on around them, many people will suffer from heart attacks, brought on by their fear of the unknown. Concerning this time of uncertainty, the Lord very clearly said:

"Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken."

Luke 21:26, KJV

If you doubt that this is what the verse means, consider the fact that the word "failing" is derived from the Greek word "apopsucho", pronounced ap-ops-oo'-kho, which the lexicon defines as to breathe out life, to expire, to faint or to swoon away. We all know that heart attacks are one of the leading killers in our modern day. While many of these are the direct result of problems related to obesity and clogged arteries, let me tell you folks, we haven't begun to see anything yet! When the Lord's Judgments begin to fall upon the Earth, the whole world will be filled with fear! In the Book of Hebrews it is written:

"It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God . . . For our God is a consuming fire."

Hebrews 10:31, 12:29, KJV

If you are interested in learning more about this topic of peace and fear, I encourage you to read a few of my other articles, such as "Dracula: Fighting Fear With The Word, Faith And Love!", which I mentioned earlier.

This brings us to our next point. What some people may find odd, and a bit difficult to understand, is that the way we are told to acquire faith in the Bible, and in fact, in God Himself, is by actually reading His Word. Obviously, some skeptical people will be astounded by such a statement, and will undoubtedly say, "Wait a minute! Didn't I just tell you that I don't believe in the Bible? And now you are telling me that I have to read it in order to believe in it? Isn't that circular reasoning?". Well, I am sorry, but I didn't make the rules. If God's wonderful Creation isn't enough to convince you of His existence, then you will just have to read it in black and white. You just might be surprised by the wonderful effect that God's Written Word will have on your being. The Apostle Paul said it quite well when he wrote:

"So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

Romans 10:17, KJV

I have quoted that same verse many times before in order to emphasize this point; and I will keep on quoting it, if it motivates some of you to finally become curious enough, to start reading your Bibles. Believe me; if you start reading

it with an honest, sincere heart, and with a real desire to know if it is true or not, God will not disappoint you. He will indeed reveal His wonderful Truth to you. Believe me; I know; because He does it with me by His Spirit all the time. I live for this! I am not ashamed to admit that I am totally hooked on the Word of God! It inspires and excites me! In similar fashion, if you begin to earnestly study the Word of God, the Seed of Faith will be born in your heart. You might not even realize when it happens; it just does; and it will be such a thrill to you! Just pick up that Holy Book, and start reading it; you'll see! Hopefully, you too will begin to say:

"Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law."

Psalms 119:18, KJV

"Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it."

Psalms 139:6, KJV

"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!"

Romans 11:33, KJV

". . . For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven."

Psalms 119:89, KJV

". . . Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."

Psalms 119:105, KJV

"Thy word is very pure: therefore thy servant loveth it."

Psalms 119:140, KJV

"Thy word is true from the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments endureth for ever."

Psalms 119:160, KJV

". . . thy word is truth."

John 17:17b, KJV

Sadly, there is another side to this issue. You see, there are some blind people, like those who follow the teachings of the demon-inspired Urantia Book -- which I prefer to refer to as the "Unbelief Book" in order to show my utter disdain for

it -- as well as some atheists, who do in fact read the Bible; but they read it for the wrong reasons. Some of them read it along with their "real" bible sitting next to them. I am referring to another Satan-inspired tome known as "The Encyclopedia Of Biblical Errancy". The basic premise of this latter volume is that God is a liar; and thus His Word, that is, the Bible, is also a lie, and full of contradictions. As I explain in a few other articles, anyone with a half-decent knowledge of God's real Word, will be able to see how utterly ridiculous "The Encyclopedia Of Biblical Errancy" really is. The Urantians, atheists and other antichrists who foolishly use that volume, totally deny the truth of the following verses:

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:"

2 Timothy 3:16, KJV

"For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

2 Peter 1:21, KJV

Now, as Christians, either we believe those verses, or else we don't. The truth of the matter, is that by their very own words, these deceived people reveal what liars and deceivers they are, when they dare to claim that the Almighty God is a liar. Consider also the following verses:

"God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?"

Numbers 23:19, KJV

"God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged."

Romans 3:4, KJV

"In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;"

Titus 1:2, KJV

"Ye [Jesus speaking to unbelieving Jews] are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth,

because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it."

John 8:44, KJV

"Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son."

1 John 2:22, KJV

"He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son."

1 John 5:10, KJV

"If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us."

1 John 1:10, KJV

As I point out in "The Blood Atonement: In Jesus' Own Words", the advocates of the Urantia Book even have the audacity to deny the necessity of Jesus' Blood Atonement on the Cross. They claim that Jesus' Sacrifice was barbaric, and not even necessary for our Salvation. Once again, I am reminded of some of the warnings which are found in the New Testament, regarding the conditions which will exist during the Endtime, as we see here:

"And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many . . . And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many . . . For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect."

Matthew 24:4-5, 11, 24, KJV

"Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;"

1 Timothy 4:1-2, KJV

"But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived."

2 Timothy 3:13, KJV

"Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day [Christ's Return] shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition . . . And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:"

2 Thessalonians 2:3, 8-11, KJV

In fact, as I have pointed out a number of times before, these workers of darkness and deception, who feign to be workers of light, have been in operation since the First Century, as we see here:

"For I [Paul] know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock."
Acts 20:29, KJV

"For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works."
2 Corinthians 11:13-15, KJV

Personally, I don't doubt the Divine Inspiration of the Bible for a moment. Do you know why? Well, there are actually two reasons. First of all, when I read the Word of God, I feel that very same Spirit with which the Prophets and Disciples wrote those words so long ago; and second, I believe that the Lord is using that very same Spirit, that is, His Holy Spirit, to speak to my heart as well today. Furthermore, not only is He speaking to my heart, but He is also speaking to the hearts of many of His other children as well, who also seek to understand the hidden mysteries of His Word. Isn't this precisely what Jesus promised His followers, prior to His glorious return to the Heavenly Realm of His Father? Consider the following verses taken from the New Testament:

"But when they shall lead you, and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye

premeditate: but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost."

Mark 13:11, KJV

"But before all these, they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake. And it shall turn to you for a testimony. Settle it therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before what ye shall answer: For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist."

Luke 21:12-15, KJV

"But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."

John 14:26, KJV

"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

Acts 1:8, KJV

"But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us."

2 Corinthians 4:7, KJV

I firmly believe that the volume of articles I have written over the years, and continue to write, is a clear testimony to the awesome intervention of God's Holy Spirit in my life. While my readers may not agree with every single word that I write, I believe that there are very few people within the Christian body who fail to recognize the Spirit of the Lord speaking to them in at least some of my articles. I will be quite candid and humbly admit that not every word I write is "Thus saith the Lord", as some preachers with very inflated egos would have you to believe; so please don't erroneously assume that this is some attempt on my part to take credit to myself. God forbid that I should ever do such a thing! The Bible makes it very clear to whom belongs all of the glory, and all of the credit. Consider these verses:

"But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to

confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."

1 Corinthians 1:27-31, KJV

"Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are yours;"

1 Corinthians 3:21, KJV

"And these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos for your sakes; that ye might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another. For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?"

1 Corinthians 4:6-7, KJV

"For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!"

1 Corinthians 9:16, KJV

"But he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth . . . Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."

1 Corinthians 10:17-18, 31, KJV

"For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake."

2 Corinthians 4:5, KJV

"But he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."

2 Corinthians 10:17, KJV

"Of such an one will I glory: yet of myself I will not glory, but in mine infirmities. For though I would desire to glory, I shall not be a fool; for I will say the truth: but now I forbear, lest any man should think of me above that which he seeth me to be, or that he heareth of me."

2 Corinthians 12:5-6, KJV

"Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another."

Galatians 5:26, KJV

"But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."

Galatians 6:14, KJV

"Nor of men sought we glory, neither of you, nor yet of others, when we might have been burdensome, as the apostles of Christ."

1 Thessalonians 2:6, KJV

"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."

James 1:17, KJV

"How much less man, that is a worm? and the son of man, which is a worm?"

Job 25:6, KJV

"But I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people."

Psalms 22:6, KJV

So again, I am simply trying to bear witness of the Power of God's Holy Spirit, and know full well that it is not due to anything that I have done. As I have said many times before, I am simply one of His vessels; just like the Lord has many other vessels which He uses throughout the world in order to accomplish His Divine Will and Purpose. As the above verses state, in reality, I am just a lowly worm. I don't say this to simply appear humble; I know it for a fact. Like all of you, I have my share of personal sins and shortcomings. I have made my share of mistakes in life. But you see, as I also explain in the series "So You Really Think You Are So Humble?", that is exactly what it takes in order for God to finally be able to use us. He has to pound our pride and self-confidence out of us first; and we will be taking a look at the lives of several men of God down through the ages in just a minute.

Oh, believe me folks; I used to be one proud, self-righteous

fellow; especially when I was a young Christian teenager. At that age, we all think we are so good, and that we know so much; especially if we happen to be Christians. Well, I am sure that some people probably still think that I am proud; but believe me; it is nothing like the way I used to be many years ago. The Lord had to break and humble me many times in order to bring me to the end of myself; and He continues to work on me to this day. I am still no picture of so-called "sinless perfection". Being remade in Christ's image is a never-ending process. From what we read in the Gospels, it is clear that James also went through similar experiences in his own life. On one particular occasion, Jesus sent James and John to prepare the way before Him in a certain village of the Samaritans. When the Samaritans refused to accept the Lord, consider what happened next:

"And they did not receive him, because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem. And when his disciples James and John saw this, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did? But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them. And they went to another village."

Luke 9:53-56, KJV

What a blow that must have been to their pride! James must have eventually understood that being self-righteous and proud are simply not assets when it comes to doing God's Work. Perhaps that is why he later wrote in his Epistle:

"But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble . . . Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up."

James 4:6, 10, KJV

The Apostle John, who became a true Disciple of the Kingdom, as opposed to being a child of the world, offers us a hint that he too later understood the dangers of pride, when he wrote:

"For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world."

1 John 2:16, KJV

The Old Testament also contains many verses which deal with the sharp contrast between pride and humility. Allow me to share the following with you for your consideration:

"The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God: God is not in all his thoughts."

Psalms 10:4, KJV

"The fear of the LORD is to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate."

Proverbs 8:13, KJV

"When pride cometh, then cometh shame: but with the lowly is wisdom."

Proverbs 11:2, KJV

"Only by pride cometh contention: but with the well advised is wisdom."

Proverbs 13:10, KJV

"In the mouth of the foolish is a rod of pride: but the lips of the wise shall preserve them."

Proverbs 14:3, KJV

"The fear of the LORD is the instruction of wisdom; and before honour is humility."

Proverbs 15:33, KJV

"Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall. Better it is to be of an humble spirit with the lowly, than to divide the spoil with the proud."

Proverbs 16:18-19, KJV

"A man's pride shall bring him low: but honour shall uphold the humble in spirit."

Proverbs 29:23, KJV

Consider also, what Jesus, the most humble Servant of all, said regarding this important matter:

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

Matthew 11:28-30, KJV

"At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven."

Matthew 18:1-4, KJV

"And he put forth a parable to those which were bidden, when he marked how they chose out the chief rooms; saying unto them, When thou art bidden of any man to a wedding, sit not down in the highest room; lest a more honourable man than thou be bidden of him; And he that bade thee and him come and say to thee, Give this man place; and thou begin with shame to take the lowest room. But when thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest room; that when he that bade thee cometh, he may say unto thee, Friend, go up higher: then shalt thou have worship in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee. For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

Luke 14:7-11, KJV

If you would like a more in-depth explanation of what Jesus actually meant when He described Himself as being "meek and lowly in heart", I would once again like to encourage you to read the series "So You Really Think You Are So Humble?". I am sure that it will be a blessing in your life. If you read the four Gospels, you will quickly notice that the Apostle Peter was also an extremely proud man before the Lord began to work on him. Peter was full of self-confidence until the Lord purposely allowed him to commit some major errors in his life. On one occasion, the Lord had to rebuke Peter directly, telling him that he was yielded to Satan. Notice how Mark recorded the incident:

"But when he had turned about and looked on his disciples, he rebuked Peter, saying, Get thee behind me, Satan: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men."

Mark 8:33, KJV

What a crash course in humility! The Lord didn't waste any time when His immediate followers were not yielded to the Spirit. On another occasion, in his own zeal to "save" the Lord from His coming Crucifixion, Peter chopped off the ear

of Malchus, the servant of the high priest. Probably to his own amazement, Jesus not only healed the servant, but He then turned around and rebuked Peter again; and this time before many people, as we see here:

"And, behold, one of them which were with Jesus stretched out his hand, and drew his sword, and struck a servant of the high priest's, and smote off his ear. Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword."

Matthew 26:51-52, KJV

"Then Simon Peter having a sword drew it, and smote the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus. Then said Jesus unto Peter, Put up thy sword into the sheath: the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?"

John 18:10-11, KJV

As a final example of the Lord's dealings with proud Peter, it was shortly after the above incident that, motivated by his own ego again, Peter proudly proclaimed that he would never deny knowing the Lord or being one of His followers, Again, here are the verses:

"Peter said unto him, Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee. Likewise also said all the disciples."

Matthew 26:35, KJV

"But he spake the more vehemently, If I should die with thee, I will not deny thee in any wise. Likewise also said they all."

Mark 14:31, KJV

Of course, we all know what Peter did later. As I point out in other articles, such as "Peter: Faith Tried in the Fire", not only did Peter deny knowing the Lord, but we are also told that at the time of the Lord's betrayal by Judas in the Garden of Gethsemane, all of His Disciples fled in fear, in order to save their own lives. As with James, it wasn't until after Peter had been sufficiently humbled by the mistakes he had made, and had been filled with the Holy Spirit, that the Lord was able to mightily use him as one of His "vessels of honor". Consider the remarkable change in Peter's attitude in the following verses:

"And when Peter saw it, he answered unto the people, Ye men

of Israel, why marvel ye at this? or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk?"

Acts 3:12, KJV

"Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time:"

1 Peter 5:5-6, KJV

These are but a few examples of how the Lord has to first humble His servants, before He is able to use them for His Glory. He did it with Moses, who killed an Egyptian when he tried to be the deliverer in his own strength. He likewise did it with King David, who committed second-degree murder and adultery. He did it with the pharisaical Saul, later to be known as the Apostle Paul, who persecuted and killed the Christians. He has done it with many others throughout the ages, and He continues to do it today with His children of the Endtime.

It is because of this very same pride, which results in a lack of Godly reverence and humility, that some people, such as the atheists and the adherents of the Urantia Book, read the Bible, not to find Faith, Truth or Salvation within its pages, but rather to find what they perceive to be "obvious" errors, inaccuracies and contradictions. As I mentioned a moment ago, their entire objective is to find a justifiable reason to accuse God of being a liar, which in turn casts doubt upon His Word; regardless of whether or not their accusation is actually true. There should be absolutely no doubt then, that they that do such things, are inspired by none other than Satan himself, the "father of lies"; just as we saw earlier in the Gospel of John, when the Lord rebuked the unbelieving Jews of His day. Let us also not forget that in the Book of Revelation, we are told that Satan, or the Devil, is the Accuser of the Saints:

"And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and

night."

Revelation 12:9-10, KJV

As we continue our discussion in part three of this series, we will begin to address the key issue which inspired this series; and that is, what can happen when we proudly refuse to take heed to the Lord's wise counsel, and resist bowing to His Will. Following the advice of the Apostle Paul, we will be discussing some of the events of the distant past. This will include a look at the term "El Shaddai", Judah's defeat, Jacob's sojourn into Egypt and the reasons for the Egyptian bondage, the Israelites' sin of Egyptian idolatry, God's fiery furnace and the purpose of Divine Chastisements, the Golden Calf in the wilderness, the true geographical size of the Promised Land, and much more. I hope that you will join me.

Please go to part three for the continuation of this series.

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THE FRUITS OF DISOBEDIENCE : PART THREE

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Blind Unbelievers, El Shaddai, Judah's Defeat, Jacob's Death And Burial, Where God Guides He Also Provides, Reasons For Egyptian Bondage, Jacob's Sojourn In Egypt, God's Greatness In Smallness, Egyptian Idolatry, Egyptian Iron Furnace, God Purges Our Faith Like Gold, Purpose Of Divine Chastisements, Golden Calf In The Wilderness, Land Promised To Abram, Iraq Fallacy, River of Egypt And Euphrates River, Greater Israel Israeli Agenda, Strategic Golan Heights, Solomon And Hiram

The Apostle Paul also wrote some very strong words regarding

this matter of rebelling against the Lord due to one's pride. In his Epistle to the Ephesians, Paul described these proud unbelievers as ignorantly walking "in the vanity of their mind . . . because of the blindness of their heart", as we see here:

"This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart:"
Ephesians 4:17-18, KJV

While these antichrist people attempt to prove that God is a liar, as we have already seen, the Lord is already one step ahead of them; and He has let us know in no uncertain terms, that whenever any doubt arises concerning His Word, the sin lies on the part of the accusers.

Now that we have established the absolute authority of God's Word, and demonstrated the positive fruits which can result in our lives if we are obedient to it, through unwavering faith and humble submission to God's Will, we will now begin to address the key issue which actually inspired this current series; and that is, what can happen when we proudly refuse to take heed to the Lord's wise counsel, and resist bowing ourselves to His Will. About six years ago, when I wrote the original version of this article, another Christian wrote to me regarding a problem he was having with understanding a few verses of Scripture found in the Old Testament. One of the verses with which my friend was having some difficulty, was the following one found in the Book of Judges:

"And the LORD was with Judah; and he drave out the inhabitants of the mountain; but could not drive out the inhabitants of the valley, because they had chariots of iron."
Judges 1:19, KJV

Prior to sharing the above verse with me, my friend quoted a number of Scriptures which describe the might and power of the Lord. For example, one Hebrew phrase which is used in the Old Testament as a name for God is "El Shaddai" -- also written as "Shadday" -- which is translated into English as the Almighty God, or God Almighty. The word "El" means "god", the plural of which is "elohim". The word "shaddai" means "almighty" or "most powerful". What a wonderful name indeed,

and what a statement of truth! When my friend came across the above verse from the Book of Judges, it made him stop and wonder "If the Lord is so mighty and powerful, and if He was with Judah that day, why were they unable to drive out the people of the valley? Was it simply because the enemies of the Israelites possessed iron chariots?". Obviously, this cannot be so, and something is apparently being overlooked here.

As I stated at the beginning of part one of this series, God has a purpose and a plan for everything that He does; even if it isn't always apparent to us. As I began to look deeper into this matter, the Lord was faithful to begin revealing the answer to me. In the article "The Children of God and Politics", I discuss the fact that when Jacob died after having lived in Egypt for seventeen years, in obedience to their father's wishes, Joseph and his brethren took Jacob's body to bury him in the plain of Mamre in the land of Canaan where were also buried Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah, and Leah, one of Jacob's wives. We find this related in the final chapters of the Book of Genesis, as we see here:

"And Jacob lived in the land of Egypt seventeen years: so the whole age of Jacob was an hundred forty and seven years . . . And he charged them, and said unto them, I am to be gathered unto my people: bury me with my fathers in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite, In the cave that is in the field of Machpelah, which is before Mamre, in the land of Canaan, which Abraham bought with the field of Ephron the Hittite for a possession of a buryingplace. There they buried Abraham and Sarah his wife; there they buried Isaac and Rebekah his wife; and there I buried Leah. The purchase of the field and of the cave that is therein was from the children of Heth. And when Jacob had made an end of commanding his sons, he gathered up his feet into the bed, and yielded up the ghost, and was gathered unto his people." Genesis 47:28, 49:29-33, KJV

After burying their father in Mamre, have you ever stopped to consider why Joseph and his brethren didn't just remain there? Imagine; they could have avoided part of the four hundred and thirty years of sojourning and Egyptian bondage. Was it a mistake on their part to go back into Egypt? Was it simply due to their lack of faith, and their unwillingness to give up the comfortable lifestyle they had come to know in Goshen? This may have been a part of the reason, but as we saw in part one, where God guides, He will also provide

for His children. If the Lord is not providing for us in a certain situation, either we are not being desperate enough in our prayers, or perhaps He is simply testing our faith, or maybe we are really moving in the wrong direction without Him.

From the verses I have found on this topic, I have formed the opinion that in His Wisdom, and in His Foresight, the Lord purposely had Joseph and his brethren return to Egypt, so that they would have a chance to thrive and prosper, and become a great and powerful nation under the protective hand of the Pharaoh. In fact, it appears that once Jacob had been informed that Joseph was still alive, and after he had begun his journey to go down into Egypt to join him there, Jacob may have had a moment of vacillation. He may have paused and thought to himself "Lord, am I really doing the right thing here? Am I really supposed to take my entire family down to Egypt? Didn't you promise my grandfather Abraham, my father Isaac, and I, that you would give us the land of Canaan for an inheritance?". It may possibly be for this reason that we find the Lord encouraging Jacob in the forty-sixth chapter of the Book of Genesis, as we see here:

"And God spake unto Israel in the visions of the night, and said, Jacob, Jacob. And he said, Here am I. And he said, I am God, the God of thy father: fear not to go down into Egypt; for I will there make of thee a great nation: I will go down with thee into Egypt; and I will also surely bring thee up again: and Joseph shall put his hand upon thine eyes."

Genesis 46:2-4, KJV

This idea is further strengthened when we realize that when Jacob went down into Egypt with his family, they were only about seventy souls. In other words, Jacob's immediate flesh family consisted of only seventy persons, excluding any man and maid servants and other workers they may have had at the time. I discuss this same topic in the controversial series "The International Jew and the Protocols of Zion". In the same chapter of the Book of Genesis we also read:

"All the souls that came with Jacob into Egypt, which came out of his loins, besides Jacob's sons' wives, all the souls were threescore and six; And the sons of Joseph, which were born him in Egypt, were two souls: all the souls of the house of Jacob, which came into Egypt, were threescore and ten."

Genesis 46:26-27, KJV

It was precisely because of their small number when Jacob and his family first went down into Egypt, that after the Lord had liberated their descendants from the same several hundred years later, the Prophet Moses said the following in the Book of Deuteronomy, in order to remind them of God's true greatness, as opposed to man's presumed "greatness" in the flesh:

"The LORD did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people:"

Deuteronomy 7:7, KJV

After living in the eastern area of the fertile Nile Delta for seventeen years, perhaps Jacob's family had multiplied to a few hundred people. If those few hundred had remained in Canaan after Jacob's burial, it is quite possible that they would have been totally destroyed by the Canaanites, and the other devil-worshipping inhabitants of the land. Thus, it was indeed God's Will for them to return to Egypt. I am reminded of the words of the Prophet Isaiah, when the Lord spoke through him saying:

"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."

Isaiah 55:8-9, KJV

There is additional Scriptural proof which confirms that it was indeed God's Will for Joseph and his brethren to return to Egypt, following Jacob's burial in Canaan. What may be a little-known fact to some of my readers, is that some seven hundred years prior to their freedom from Egyptian bondage, when the Lord first made His Covenant with Abraham, He told Abraham that his descendants would serve the Egyptians for four hundred years; and that when they would finally leave that country, they would do so "with great substance". In the fifteenth chapter of Genesis we read the following:

"And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance."

Genesis 15:13-14, KJV

Another interesting fact which I discovered while doing this study, is that one possible reason why the Lord may have left the Israelites in Egyptian bondage as long as He did, is because they had fallen even deeper into idolatry, and He was simply dealing with them about it. You may recall that in my article "The Children of God and Politics", I explain that from the moment Abram first left Haran, he and his descendants continued to have problems with their families falling into idol worship. Such was the case regarding the story of Jacob and Laban, when Jacob's second wife, Rachel, stole the idols of her father, Laban. This resulted in a confrontation between Jacob and Laban. From the Book of Joshua, we discover that the incident involving the golden calf in the wilderness at the base of Mount Sinai, was not the first time that the Israelites had worshipped Egyptian gods and goddesses. This practice had actually begun while they were still in Egypt, as we see by this verse:

"Now therefore fear the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in truth: and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt; and serve ye the LORD."

Joshua 24:14, KJV

Notice that Joshua uses the phrase "in Egypt". For the sake of clarification, let me also add that when Joshua says "the other side of the flood", he is more than likely referring to the Jordan River, which, as you know, they had to cross over on their way into the land of Canaan, coming from the mountains in the east, which are located in what is now the nation of Jordan. The word "flood" is translated from the Hebrew word "nahar", pronounced naw-hawr', which means river or stream. And as we also know, Abraham's ancestors did in fact worship false gods and goddesses in Padanaram, as well as in ancient Babylonia; that is, in Ur, in the land of the Chaldees.

In the Book of Jeremiah, we also find a clue which seems to indicate that the time in Egypt was not only meant to serve as an opportunity for the nation of Israel to grow in size and strength, but that it was also meant to purge them of their sins. In the following verse, notice how Jeremiah refers to Egypt as an "iron furnace":

"Which I commanded your fathers in the day that I brought

them forth out of the land of Egypt, from the iron furnace, saying, Obey my voice, and do them, according to all which I command you: so shall ye be my people, and I will be your God:"

Jeremiah 11:4, KJV

As we know from many other verses in the Bible, the Lord often compares our faith, and our obedience to Him, to metal which must be purged and purified in the hot furnace of His loving chastisements, in order to remove the dross; that is, the base metals, which represent our sins and disobediences. Consider the following verses:

"But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold."

Job 23:10, KJV

"Therefore saith the Lord, the LORD of hosts, the mighty One of Israel, Ah, I will ease me of mine adversaries, and avenge me of mine enemies: And I will turn my hand upon thee, and purely purge away thy dross, and take away all thy tin: And I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counsellors as at the beginning: afterward thou shalt be called, The city of righteousness, the faithful city."

Isaiah 1:24-26, KJV

"And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son of man, the house of Israel is to me become dross: all they are brass, and tin, and iron, and lead, in the midst of the furnace; they are even the dross of silver. Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Because ye are all become dross, behold, therefore I will gather you into the midst of Jerusalem. As they gather silver, and brass, and iron, and lead, and tin, into the midst of the furnace, to blow the fire upon it, to melt it; so will I gather you in mine anger and in my fury, and I will leave you there, and melt you. Yea, I will gather you, and blow upon you in the fire of my wrath, and ye shall be melted in the midst thereof. As silver is melted in the midst of the furnace, so shall ye be melted in the midst thereof; and ye shall know that I the LORD have poured out my fury upon you."

Ezekiel 22:17-22, KJV

"And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The LORD is

my God."

Zechariah 13:9, KJV

"My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing."

James 1:2-4, KJV

"That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:"

1 Peter 1:7, KJV

"Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified."

1 Peter 4:12-14, KJV

"I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see."
Revelation 3:18, KJV

Notice that in the previous verse from the Book of Jeremiah, the Prophet specifically states that when the Lord finally did deliver the Israelites from the Egyptian "iron furnace", it was so that they would "Obey my voice". Had they not been ready to obey the Lord's Voice, it is likely that they would have had to remain in Egypt even longer. Notice also that in the verses from the Book of Isaiah, we are clearly told that the purpose of God's chastisements is to remove the dross, in order to once again make them righteous and faithful. Thus it is that the Apostle Paul would later write:

"For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth . . . Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby."

Sadly, despite the fact that the Lord gave the Israelites the benefit of the doubt, and raised up Moses to free them from their bondage in Egypt, as we already know, it wasn't before long that those foolish Hebrews were murmuring and complaining, and once again practicing Egyptian idolatry. In fact, it was only three months later, as we see here:

"In the third month, when the children of Israel were gone forth out of the land of Egypt, the same day came they into the wilderness of Sinai. For they were departed from Rephidim, and were come to the desert of Sinai, and had pitched in the wilderness; and there Israel camped before the mount. And Moses went up unto God . . . And when the people saw that Moses delayed to come down out of the mount, the people gathered themselves together unto Aaron, and said unto him, Up, make us gods, which shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him. And Aaron said unto them, Break off the golden earrings, which are in the ears of your wives, of your sons, and of your daughters, and bring them unto me. And all the people brake off the golden earrings which were in their ears, and brought them unto Aaron. And he received them at their hand, and fashioned it with a graving tool, after he had made it a molten calf: and they said, These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. And when Aaron saw it, he built an altar before it; and Aaron made proclamation, and said, To morrow is a feast to the LORD. And they rose up early on the morrow, and offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings; and the people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play. And the LORD said unto Moses, Go, get thee down; for thy people, which thou broughtest out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves: They have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them: they have made them a molten calf, and have worshipped it, and have sacrificed thereunto, and said, These be thy gods, O Israel, which have brought thee up out of the land of Egypt."

Exodus 19:1-3a, 32:1-8, KJV

In light of the Scriptural evidence, it seems then that the purpose for the Egyptian bondage was twofold. First; it was to allow Jacob's small seed to prosper and grow into a great and powerful nation; and second; it was also to purge and purify the Israelites of some of their sins; and to make of them a more obedient people. If you are wondering which god

of the Egyptians the Israelites may have been worshipping in the desert, allow me to suggest that you read my series "Our Pagan World: The Easter Myth Exposed". It offers a rather interesting possibility, which ties in directly to modern pagan worship.

What is also interesting to note, is the actual dimensions of the land that God had promised to Abraham. Consider the following verses:

"In the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates: The Kenites, and the Kenizzites, and the Kadmonites, And the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Rephaims, And the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Girgashites, and the Jebusites."

Genesis 15:18-21, KJV

"Now after the death of Moses the servant of the LORD it came to pass, that the LORD spake unto Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' minister, saying, Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel. Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses. From the wilderness and this Lebanon even unto the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and unto the great sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your coast."

Joshua 1:1-4, KJV

According to the previous verses, the southern border of the land promised to Abram was to be "the river of Egypt"; which according to my research, may possibly be a reference to the Wadi el-Arish, or al-Arish, which is located on the northern edge of the Sinai Peninsula. There is some debate regarding the true identity of "the river of Egypt" mentioned in the Scriptures; however, it doesn't appear to be the Nile River.

Concerning the northernmost border of the Promised Land, it is my understanding that it was to be the Euphrates River as it passes through the northeastern corner of Syria. I'll go into more detail regarding this point in a moment.

From the previous verses, it is also easy to see that the eastern border of the Israelites' inheritance was to be the

Jordan River. Thus, the Lord says to Joshua, "now therefore arise, go over this Jordan . . . unto the land which I do give to them". So the Lord is making it clear to Joshua that He is going to give them everything that is located to the west of the Jordan River. They have to cross the Jordan River to get to the land which God is going to give to them.

In similar fashion, it is also rather obvious that the phrase "great sea toward the going down of the sun" is referring to the Mediterranean Sea. Just as Moses had stood a short time earlier on the summit of Mount Nebo -- located in current-day Jordan -- when the Lord showed him the Land of Promise, in my mind, it is also rather easy to imagine Joshua and Caleb, as they stood on a high bluff overlooking the eastern shore of the Jordan River, looking westward, across the Jordan River, towards the direction of the Mediterranean Sea. Following are the verses which describe Moses' view of the Promised Land:

"And Moses went up from the plains of Moab unto the mountain of Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, that is over against Jericho. And the LORD shewed him all the land of Gilead, unto Dan, And all Naphtali, and the land of Ephraim, and Manasseh, and all the land of Judah, unto the utmost sea, And the south, and the plain of the valley of Jericho, the city of palm trees, unto Zoar. And the LORD said unto him, This is the land which I sware unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, saying, I will give it unto thy seed: I have caused thee to see it with thine eyes, but thou shalt not go over thither." Deuteronomy 34:1-4, KJV

Concerning my statement regarding the Euphrates River, there is some debate revolving around this issue. I have heard some Bible teachers erroneously state that God's promise to Abram actually included all of the land which extended as far east as the Euphrates River which flows through modern-day Iraq. I don't know if this is simply due to a lack of proper study on their part, or if maybe they are just pro-Israel; but I for one do not believe for a minute that God's promise was to include all of Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and half of Iraq. In the previous Scriptures, what is being described for us are the northern and the southern borders of Israel, and not the eastern and western borders.

As I noted a moment ago, at the time that this promise was made to them by the Lord, they had not yet crossed the Jordan River. Anyone who possesses even a casual understanding of

Biblical history, knows that Joshua and Caleb crossed from east to west towards Jericho, and not west to east towards modern-day Jordan. They were already in what constitutes a part of modern-day Jordan, so they were obviously looking to the west, and not eastward towards Saudi Arabia and Iraq. It is ridiculous to think that the Lord was promising them land which was behind their backs, when they were looking at the land which stretched for some fifty miles westward in front of them. Furthermore, as I also note in such articles as "Job and the Land of Uz: A Biblical Mystery?", the land where Moses, Joshua and Caleb were standing at the time that the Lord spoke to them, had been promised to Ishmael, Esau, the sons of Keturah, and their descendants; although those descendants would later fight against the Israelites.

As further proof that the Lord was referring to the northern area of the Euphrates River in northeastern Syria, and not to its greater length in Iraq to the east, notice that right after the Lord states "even unto the great river, the river Euphrates", He adds "all the land of the Hittites". As I point out in other articles, that is clearly referring to Syria, and definitely not to Iraq, being as that area was a stronghold of the Hittites, who were the descendants of Heth.

If we consider the following three verses, it is also easy to see that they are clearly describing the northern and the southern borders of Israel. Please note that "Hamath" is a reference to Syria, because Hamath was the principle city of upper Syria, and was located in the valley of the Orontes. The phrase "sea of the Philistines" is a reference to the Mediterranean Sea, because the Philistines occupied the coastal areas of ancient Palestine, particularly around the Gaza Strip area:

"And at that time Solomon held a feast, and all Israel with him, a great congregation, from the entering in of Hamath unto the river of Egypt, before the LORD our God, seven days and seven days, even fourteen days."

1 Kings 8:65, KJV

"And the king of Egypt came not again any more out of his land: for the king of Babylon had taken from the river of Egypt unto the river Euphrates all that pertained to the king of Egypt."

2 Kings 24:7, KJV

"And I will set thy bounds from the Red sea even unto the sea of the Philistines, and from the desert unto the river: for I will deliver the inhabitants of the land into your hand; and thou shalt drive them out before thee."

Exodus 23:31, KJV

In essence then, the phrase "from the entering in of Hamath unto the river of Egypt", is more or less synonymous with the phrase "from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates", which we read in the earlier verses. Both of these phrases are describing the northern and the southern borders of Israel, and have nothing to do with the lower length of the Euphrates River, which flows through modern-day Iraq. In similar fashion, the phrase "from the Red sea even unto the sea of the Philistines" is setting the entire length of the southern border of their inheritance, by drawing an imaginary line from the southeast, which would be the Gulf of Aqaba, to the northwest, which would be the Mediterranean coast on the northern edge of the Sinai Peninsula.

As a final point for your consideration, allow me to ask you a simple question: If God truly promised Abraham all of the land which stretched as far east as the Euphrates River in Iraq, why is it then, that even at the height of the kingdom, during the reign of King David and his son, King Solomon, the Israelites never possessed that land? Isn't the answer rather obvious? God simply never promised that to them. He plainly said everything west of the Jordan River. Period.

According to certain maps I have studied, at the pinnacle of his power, excluding Lebanon, or Phoenicia as it has also been known, King Solomon controlled the land area described in the previous verses. In fact, it appears that he may have controlled part of modern-day Jordan on the east side of the Jordan River as well, even though that land was included in the promise made to Abraham.

As I explain in "The International Jew and the Protocols of Zion", according to the Scriptures, a deep friendship existed between King David and King Hiram of Lebanon -- which was also known as Phoenicia -- and Hiram helped both David and Solomon with some of their construction projects, such as King David's house, the first temple some years later, and other projects which required the cedar trees from Lebanon. Concerning the parentage of Hiram, we read the following in the first book of the Kings:

"And king Solomon sent and fetched Hiram out of Tyre. He was a widow's son of the tribe of Naphtali, and his father was a man of Tyre, a worker in brass: and he was filled with wisdom, and understanding, and cunning to work all works in brass. And he came to king Solomon, and wrought all his work."

1 Kings 7:13-14, KJV

From the previous verse, there is an indication that perhaps Hiram was part Israelite, and part Phoenician. While he was the king of Tyre, the following verse does seem to indicate that he may have been subservient to Solomon, as I also mention in my lengthy "The International Jew and the Protocols of Zion" series:

"And all the cities of store that Solomon had, and cities for his chariots, and cities for his horsemen, and that which Solomon desired to build in Jerusalem, and in Lebanon, and in all the land of his dominion."

1 Kings 9:19, KJV

At any rate, as a part of their arrangement, King Solomon gave King Hiram a yearly ration of wheat and oil. When the Temple, and the King's house, were finally completed some twenty years later, Solomon also gave Hiram twenty cities in northern Israel in the region of Galilee; however, Hiram was not too happy about the quality of the cities he was given, as we see here:

"(Now Hiram the king of Tyre had furnished Solomon with cedar trees and fir trees, and with gold, according to all his desire,) that then king Solomon gave Hiram twenty cities in the land of Galilee. And Hiram came out from Tyre to see the cities which Solomon had given him; and they pleased him not. And he said, What cities are these which thou hast given me, my brother? And he called them the land of Cabul unto this day."

1 Kings 9:11-13, KJV

While King Solomon and King Hiram continued their amiable relationship despite Hiram's displeasure, as we discover in later prophecies, the situation did eventually deteriorate between Israel and Lebanon, or Phoenicia; so much so that the Lord prophesied the destruction of Tyre, or Tyrus, through the mouth of the Prophet Ezekiel, as we see here:

"And it came to pass in the eleventh year, in the first day of the month, that the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son of man, because that Tyrus hath said against Jerusalem, Aha, she is broken that was the gates of the people: she is turned unto me: I shall be replenished, now she is laid waste: Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I am against thee, O Tyrus, and will cause many nations to come up against thee, as the sea causeth his waves to come up. And they shall destroy the walls of Tyrus, and break down her towers: I will also scrape her dust from her, and make her like the top of a rock. It shall be a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea: for I have spoken it, saith the Lord GOD: and it shall become a spoil to the nations."

Ezekiel 26:1-5, KJV

This topic is discussed more in depth in the series "Satan: King of Tyrus, King of Empires!".

Returning to the Euphrates River issue for a moment, in my view, to even promote the Iraq doctrine is rather dangerous; because many Arab nations have already become convinced that the real Israeli policy, is what they refer to as "Greater Israel"; that is, a super-powerful militarized Israel which will stretch from the Nile River in Egypt, to the Euphrates River in Iraq. Let us not forget that during the 1973 war, Israel did in fact grab the Sinai Peninsula from Egypt, but was later forced to give it back. We are also familiar with the years of border skirmishes with Lebanon, as well as the problems involving the Golan Heights; the strategic plateau which is located on the northeastern border between Israel and Syria, which has been contested by both countries for several decades; and which has also been a flash point in recent years, such as in the Shabaa Farms area.

If memory serves me correctly, it was in the early part of 1998, that an Israeli delegation went to the shores of the Euphrates River, in order to perform a symbolic act. Quite frankly, I think that it served an even greater purpose. I suspect that it may have been a serious political statement concerning Israeli intentions for the future; and this may have something to do with the wars between the kings of the north and the south. Again, please read the aforementioned articles for more details. If we add to these developments the USA's current attempt to take over Iraq, is it really any wonder that some of the Muslims nations, particularly Syria and Iran, are very alarmed and feel quite threatened

at this time? The US has done all it can to apply pressure to Iran via the International Atomic Energy Agency, and has staunchly sided with Israel in the recent incident where the Israeli jets crossed over into Syrian air space, in order to attack an alleged terrorist training camp near Damascus.

As we continue this series in part four, we shall further discuss God's promises to Abraham, as well as look at such topics as Jacob's controversial blessing; British Israelism and Abraham's Legacy; the true Biblical meaning of the word "nation"; forty years of wandering in the wilderness due to disobedience; the conditional nature of God's blessings; God's right to break His promises; Christian Identity and Aryan Nations; faith, vision, courage, perseverance and obedience as necessary requirements for obtaining victory; God's ability to deliver His children; the true spiritual nature of our warfare; the danger of fainting in our minds; ethnic cleansing; and a sure formula for defeat. I trust that you will join me.

Please go to part four for the continuation of this series.

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THE FRUITS OF DISOBEDIENCE : PART FOUR

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Abraham's Seed Multiplied, Jacob's Controversial Blessing, Joseph Manasseh And Ephraim, British Israelism And Abraham's Legacy, Nation And Goyim, Forty Years In The Desert, Joshua And Caleb, Conditional Blessing Of Canaan, God Can Break His Promises, Christian Identity, Aryan Nations, Victory Through Faith, Vision, Courage, Perseverance And Obedience, God Can And Will Deliver His Children, Spiritual Warfare, Fainting In Our Minds, Ethnic Cleansing, Disobedience Leads To Defeat

Having now explained these things to you, let's backtrack a little in our lesson, as we still haven't discussed why Judah was unable to achieve a victory that day over the people of the plains. As we know from Biblical history, and as we have already seen earlier in this series, once ancient Israel had grown into a great nation in the land of Egypt, the Lord put the pressure on them through slavery, in order to make them long for deliverance; and He eventually drove them out of the land of their former hosts. It was only in this way that they would obey Him, and migrate to the land promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. According to the Scriptures, two years after their deliverance from Egypt, when Moses performed a census of the people, we are told that excluding the Levites, the women, the young children and the old men, there were over six hundred and three thousand fighting men of twenty years of age or older, as we see here:

"So were all those that were numbered of the children of Israel, by the house of their fathers, from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war in Israel; Even all they that were numbered were six hundred thousand and three thousand and five hundred and fifty. But the Levites after the tribe of their fathers were not numbered among them."

Numbers 1:45-47, KJV

From Abraham's small family, his descendants had indeed multiplied as the stars of the heavens. Not only did it now include the liberated nation of Israel, but it also included the twelve Arab nations on Ishmael's side of the family, as well as the children of Abraham's other sons by his second wife, Keturah; none of whom went into captivity. As I noted earlier, I also discuss this topic in articles such as "Job and the Land of Uz: A Biblical Mystery?". In fact, there is a promise which was made to Jacob which has been a source of debate for many years. In the thirty-fifth chapter of the Book of Genesis, we discover the following verse:

"And God said unto him, I am God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee, and kings shall come out of thy loins;"

Genesis 35:11, KJV

When Jacob was on his death bed in the land of Goshen in Egypt, his son Joseph, now called Zaphnath-paa-neah, came to

him with his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim, who were born to Joseph of his Egyptian wife, Asenath, as we see here:

"And Pharaoh called Joseph's name Zaphnath-paa-neah; and he gave him to wife Asenath the daughter of Potipherah priest of On. And Joseph went out over all the land of Egypt . . . And unto Joseph were born two sons before the years of famine came, which Asenath the daughter of Potipherah priest of On bare unto him. And Joseph called the name of the firstborn Manasseh: For God, said he, hath made me forget all my toil, and all my father's house. And the name of the second called he Ephraim: For God hath caused me to be fruitful in the land of my affliction."

Genesis 41:45, 50-52, KJV

It was at this time that Jacob shared the above promise with Joseph, and proceeded to bless Joseph's two sons; however, to Joseph's surprise, and although he protested, his father gave the greater blessing to Joseph's younger son, Ephraim, in the following words. I have added names in brackets for the sake of clarification:

"And his father [Jacob] refused, and said, I know it, my son, I know it: he [Manasseh] also shall become a people, and he also shall be great: but truly his younger brother [Ephraim] shall be greater than he, and his seed shall become a multitude of nations. And he blessed them that day, saying, In thee shall Israel bless, saying, God make thee as Ephraim and as Manasseh: and he set Ephraim before Manasseh."

Genesis 48:19-20, KJV

According to certain Christian teachers, the above reference to "a nation" and "shall be great", is supposedly a prophecy concerning the United States of America; while the reference to "a company of nations" and "a multitude of nations", is said to be speaking of the British Commonwealth. These two doctrines have acquired the names of "British Israelism" and "Abraham's Legacy", and there may be other names for them as well. They appear to be particularly popular with those who belong to so-called "white supremacist" groups. I have read quite a bit of material concerning this interpretation; and while it is quite awe-inspiring, currently, I am by no means convinced that it is correct, due to my study of the final chapters of the Book of Jeremiah. I believe that part of the problem is due to a poor understanding of the word "nation". When we hear the word "nation" today, we normally think of

different countries of the world; however, in Biblical times, the word had a variety of meanings.

According to my Hebrew lexicon, the word "nation" is derived from the Hebrew word "gowy" or "goy", the plural of which is "goyim". It is variably translated into English as nation, heathen, Gentiles, or people. This is why, in part, the Jews refer to we Gentiles as "goyim". For a fuller understanding of this word, please refer to the controversial series "The International Jew and the Protocols of Zion". As you will see shortly, while Canaan was one land, it was inhabited by seven different "great nations", or ethnic groups, according to the words of Moses. Earlier in this study, I explained the exact land area which was promised to the descendants of Abraham; therefore, I am more inclined to believe that the promises made to Jacob, and the blessings he gave to Ephraim and Manasseh, were fulfilled within the same confines of that land area. A further explanation of the errors found in the "Abraham's Legacy" and "British Israelism" doctrines will be discussed in a separate upcoming article on this topic.

To continue, as I mention in other articles, because of their sins of rebellion and unbelief, the Lord caused the liberated children of Israel to wander in the wilderness, that is, in the desert areas of the Sinai Peninsula, for a total of forty years, until the discontent older generation had died off. According to the word of the Lord, the only two people from that generation who survived the ordeal of the desert, were Joshua the son of Nun, and Caleb the son of Jehunneh, as we see by these verses:

"And the LORD spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying, How long shall I bear with this evil congregation, which murmur against me? I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel, which they murmur against me. Say unto them, As truly as I live, saith the LORD, as ye have spoken in mine ears, so will I do to you: Your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness; and all that were numbered of you, according to your whole number, from twenty years old and upward, which have murmured against me, Doubtless ye shall not come into the land, concerning which I sware to make you dwell therein, save Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua the son of Nun. But your little ones, which ye said should be a prey, them will I bring in, and they shall know the land which ye have despised. But as for you, your carcasses, they shall fall in this wilderness. And your children shall wander in the wilderness forty years, and bear your

whoredoms, until your carcasses be wasted in the wilderness. After the number of the days in which ye searched the land, even forty days, each day for a year, shall ye bear your iniquities, even forty years, and ye shall know my breach of promise. I the LORD have said, I will surely do it unto all this evil congregation, that are gathered together against me: in this wilderness they shall be consumed, and there they shall die. And the men, which Moses sent to search the land, who returned, and made all the congregation to murmur against him, by bringing up a slander upon the land, Even those men that did bring up the evil report upon the land, died by the plague before the LORD. But Joshua the son of Nun, and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, which were of the men that went to search the land, lived still."

Numbers 14:26-38, KJV

As the previous Scriptures state, all of the six hundred thousand men of war died of old age or other causes without having ever reached the Promised Land. This is why the Lord told Joshua to perform a second circumcision following the forty-year ordeal, as we see here:

"And this is the cause why Joshua did circumcise: All the people that came out of Egypt, that were males, even all the men of war, died in the wilderness by the way, after they came out of Egypt. Now all the people that came out were circumcised: but all the people that were born in the wilderness by the way as they came forth out of Egypt, them they had not circumcised. For the children of Israel walked forty years in the wilderness, till all the people that were men of war, which came out of Egypt, were consumed, because they obeyed not the voice of the LORD: unto whom the LORD sware that he would not shew them the land, which the LORD sware unto their fathers that he would give us, a land that floweth with milk and honey."

Joshua 5:4-6, KJV

As I explained in part one, God's blessings of protection and provision are conditional. They can be given, or they can be taken away, according to our belief in, and our obedience to, the Word of the Lord. Some people erroneously teach that God cannot break His promises once He has made them, and that for Him to do so would make Him a liar; however, this is not true whatsoever. The previous verses are a clear example that God can indeed break His Word if He so desires, if it suits His Divine Purposes. Who are we humans to tell Him that He can't? Please take note of that phrase "ye shall know my breach of

promise". In other words, the Lord was saying "You failed to keep my word; you failed to have the faith to enter the land of promise; therefore, I am withdrawing my promised blessing from you". Of course, we know that the Lord later restored the blessing following the forty-year chastisement; but the point is, God did break His promise to them, and He gave it to their children instead. Technically-speaking, you can say that He still kept His promise, but He did not keep it with those to whom He had originally made it, because they all died in the wilderness; so it was a "breach of promise".

That God should choose to operate in this fashion should not really surprise us in the least. Allow me to ask you a simple question: As responsible parents, don't we also do the same thing with our own children? If we promise them a particular thing, and then they do something which displeases us, is it not within our right and power as parents to take back our word, and to withhold, either temporarily, or perhaps even permanently, that which we had promised them? Why then, do some people insist that God, the Creator of the Universe, cannot do the very same thing? Who are we to set limits on what God can or cannot do? Who are we to say that God can't break His promises, for whatever His reasons? Would this not be placing ourselves above God, by dictating what He can and cannot do? Be it far from us to do such a thing!

One of the conditions which the Lord set before the children of Israel in regards to their inheriting the land of Canaan, was the following one spoken by Moses in the seventh chapter of the Book of Deuteronomy:

"When the LORD thy God shall bring thee into the land whither thou goest to possess it, and hath cast out many nations before thee, the Hittites, and the Girgashites, and the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and mightier than thou; And when the LORD thy God shall deliver them before thee; thou shalt smite them, and utterly destroy them; thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor shew mercy unto them: Neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son. For they will turn away thy son from following me, that they may serve other gods: so will the anger of the LORD be kindled against you, and destroy thee suddenly. But thus shall ye deal with them; ye shall destroy their altars, and break down their images, and cut down their groves, and burn their graven images with

fire."

Deuteronomy 7:1-5, KJV

Before getting to my main point, please notice, as I stated earlier, that in the previous verses, Moses referred to the ethnic groups which lived within the confines of Canaan, as "seven nations greater and mightier than thou". This clearly proves that our modern understanding of the word "nation" cannot always be applied to the ancient Biblical texts; and this is one of the main flaws with the "British Israelism" and "Abraham's Legacy" doctrines, which I mentioned earlier. So again, I remain convinced that God's promise to Jacob concerning a great nation, and a company of nations, was fulfilled through Ephraim and Manasseh, within the physical confines of the land of Israel, and has nothing whatsoever to do with the United States of America, or the British Commonwealth, as some Christian extremist groups, such as Christian Identity, Aryan Nations, etc., claim. They are deceived in my view, and are in fact corrupting the meaning of the Scriptures, in order to achieve a political agenda, through a campaign of hate and discrimination against anyone who is not of the white race.

Contrary to the above commandment found in Deuteronomy, we know that instead of having the faith and the conviction to obey the Lord, by utterly destroying their enemies in the land of Canaan, which in reality was a clear-cut example of ethnic cleansing by the way, the Israelites compromised with them, by allowing some of them to remain alive. It is at this point in our lesson that we return to the story of the tribe of Judah and their fight against the valley people. In my view, the problem wasn't that the Lord was unable to give them the victory that day; it was that they simply did not have the faith, vision and courage to persevere and obey until the battle was won, as they had been instructed to do by the Lord, through Joshua, in the very first chapter of the book named after him. Consider the following verses:

"Be strong and of a good courage: for unto this people shalt thou divide for an inheritance the land, which I swore unto their fathers to give them. Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest. This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to

all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success. Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest."

Joshua 1:6-9, KJV

Obviously, the Lord knew what lay ahead for the children of Israel. He knew that victory would not come easy for them. He realized that they would face many temptations, and have many hard battles to fight; thus He had Joshua encourage them that day. Not only did Joshua exhort them to remain faithful and true to God's Word, as had been delivered to them by Moses, but he also encouraged them to be strong in battle as well. While the children of Israel fought many battles in the flesh against their enemies, what we need to remember, is that the main battle was really in the spirit; because they had to constantly demonstrate faith and belief in God's promises to them; even though in the coming years, they would be fighting against a total of seven nations of people, who Moses had clearly told them were greater than themselves. So not only were the Israelites fighting wars against physical enemies, they were fighting spiritual wars as well. They were fighting against their own doubts and fears; and they were fighting against the demonic forces which controlled the peoples and lands they were told to conquer.

While there were indeed giants in the land of Canaan, as the spies had reported back to their commander-in-chief, Moses, the Lord was more than able to give the Israelites victory over them, by delivering all of the Canaanite nations into their hands; if they were only willing to display the same level of faith, obedience and valour as King David and his mighty men of war, who would later defeat the Philistine giant, Goliath, and his brethren. As the Lord had clearly promised them earlier through Moses:

"And I will set thy bounds from the Red sea even unto the sea of the Philistines, and from the desert unto the river: for I will deliver the inhabitants of the land into your hand; and thou shalt drive them out before thee."

Exodus 23:31, KJV

In the New Testament, we find another kind of deliverance, which the Lord wrought for those men who were faithful to boldly share the Gospel of Salvation. For example, we are

told that when the Apostle Paul and his companions faced persecution and the threat of death in Asia, they trusted utterly in the Lord to deliver them from the same; and He did, as we see here:

"For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life: But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead: Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us;"
2 Corinthians 1:8-10, KJV

So whether we are talking about the Israelites of old, or the children of God today who preach the Gospel in foreign lands, the Lord is more than able to deliver His children from any circumstance and give them victory; and He will; if we will simply place our faith and trust utterly in Him. A few more verses on this topic of deliverance through faith in, and obedience to the Lord, are the following:

"The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them."
Psalm 34:7, KJV

"But the salvation of the righteous is of the LORD: he is their strength in the time of trouble. And the LORD shall help them, and deliver them: he shall deliver them from the wicked, and save them, because they trust in him."
Psalm 37:39-40, KJV

"Offer unto God thanksgiving; and pay thy vows unto the most High: And call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me."
Psalm 50:14-15, KJV

"And they shall fight against thee; but they shall not prevail against thee; for I am with thee, saith the LORD, to deliver thee."
Jeremiah 1:19, KJV

"And I will make thee unto this people a fenced brasen wall: and they shall fight against thee, but they shall not prevail against thee: for I am with thee to save thee and to deliver thee, saith the LORD."
Jeremiah 15:20, KJV

"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."

Hebrews 11:6, KJV

"For with God nothing shall be impossible."

Luke 1:37, KJV

Psalm 91 in its entirety is another good example of God's wonderful promise to deliver His children from their trouble.

Returning to the Israelites and their initial survey of the land of Canaan, perhaps part of their problem was that they were trusting too much in themselves, and in the physical size, strength and experience of their own army; which by the outward appearance, may indeed have seemed like no match against the giant inhabitants of the land of Canaan, which were numbered as the grasshoppers. God was purposely placing them in a situation where they were going to have to utterly depend on Him, and not in the strength of their own army. As King David would later write:

"Now know I that the LORD saveth his anointed; he will hear him from his holy heaven with the saving strength of his right hand. Some trust in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the name of the LORD our God."

Psalm 20:6-7, KJV

So as I stated earlier, their battle was really a double one. Not only were the Israelites going to have to fight against a powerful physical army, but first they were going to have to conquer the doubts and fears in their own hearts, and truly become warriors of the spirit; because that is where the real battle begins; in our minds. Consider the following verses:

"For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;"

2 Corinthians 10:3-5, KJV

"Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses."

1 Timothy 6:12, KJV

"Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier."

2 Timothy 2:3-4, KJV

"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:"

2 Timothy 4:7, KJV

"Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."

Ephesians 6:10-12, KJV

"For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

Hebrews 4:12, KJV

As I point out in some of my other articles which deal with the spiritual nature of our warfare, once we lose faith, faint in our minds, and surrender in the spirit, physical defeat may soon follow as well. If we lose the vision for why we are fighting, we will eventually give up, lose the battle, and perish. As we are told in the Book of Proverbs:

"Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he."

Proverbs 29:18, KJV

God had given the Israelites the Heavenly Vision through Moses, Joshua, Caleb and others. He had given them His Law, as well as His promise that all of Canaan would eventually be theirs; but perhaps they were beginning to lose faith, as well as the vision. Concerning fainting in our minds, Paul had this to say to the persecuted Christians of the First Century:

"Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin."
Hebrews 12:1-4, KJV

Perhaps the children of Israel were also becoming weary of battle; not only in a physical sense, but in their minds as well. Perhaps they were even beginning to wonder if all of the violence and killing was worth it all. I mean, if you stop and think about it, the task which the Lord gave them to do was not an easy one, much less a pretty one. Let me remind you again, that the Lord told them to kill everyone, both men, women and children, without mercy. As I stated earlier, what the Lord commanded them to do, was in reality a form of ethnic cleansing. Ironically, what the Israelis are attempting to do today with the controversial barrier wall, and other measures, basically amounts to the same thing; and there are some radical Jews who do in fact want every single Palestinian removed from the State of Israel. There are statements made by certain Israeli politicians which verify this very point. But concerning the ethnic cleansing of the Promised Land thousands of years ago, consider the following verses:

"And when the LORD thy God shall deliver them before thee; thou shalt smite them, and utterly destroy them; thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor shew mercy unto them . . . And thou shalt consume all the people which the LORD thy God shall deliver thee; thine eye shall have no pity upon them: neither shalt thou serve their gods; for that will be a snare unto thee . . . But the LORD thy God shall deliver them unto thee, and shall destroy them with a mighty destruction, until they be destroyed. And he shall deliver their kings into thine hand, and thou shalt destroy their name from under heaven: there shall no man be able to stand before thee, until thou have destroyed them."
Deuteronomy 7:2, 16, 23-24, KJV

We honestly don't know what might have been going through their minds, but it does seem that they were starting to

lose the vision, and growing battle weary. Consider these facts. Moses had already died; Joshua had already died; and Caleb was already an old man, as were the other elders of the people. In short, the fiery leaders of their original liberation movement from Egypt were slowly dying off, and were no longer there to inspire and lead them on; and the miracles of Egypt and the Red Sea were now decades behind them. As you will see in the next part of this series, these factors contributed directly to their lack of willingness to fully obey the Lord's command. Thus, not only did they fail to destroy all of their enemies as they had been ordered to do by the Lord, but they compromised by placing them under bondage instead, and made them pay a tribute. Consider the following verses. The chapter begins with some wonderful victories being wrought by the Lord; but then the last half of the chapter is full of compromise and defeat:

"And the LORD was with Judah; and he drave out the inhabitants of the mountain; but could not drive out the inhabitants of the valley, because they had chariots of iron . . . And the children of Benjamin did not drive out the Jebusites that inhabited Jerusalem; but the Jebusites dwell with the children of Benjamin in Jerusalem unto this day . . . And the spies saw a man come forth out of the city, and they said unto him, Shew us, we pray thee, the entrance into the city, and we will shew thee mercy. And when he shewed them the entrance into the city, they smote the city with the edge of the sword; but they let go the man and all his family. And the man went into the land of the Hittites, and built a city, and called the name thereof Luz: which is the name thereof unto this day. Neither did Manasseh drive out the inhabitants of Bethshean and her towns, nor Taanach and her towns, nor the inhabitants of Dor and her towns, nor the inhabitants of Ibleam and her towns, nor the inhabitants of Megiddo and her towns: but the Canaanites would dwell in that land. And it came to pass, when Israel was strong, that they put the Canaanites to tribute, and did not utterly drive them out. Neither did Ephraim drive out the Canaanites that dwelt in Gezer; but the Canaanites dwelt in Gezer among them. Neither did Zebulun drive out the inhabitants of Kitron, nor the inhabitants of Nahalol; but the Canaanites dwelt among them, and became tributaries. Neither did Asher drive out the inhabitants of Accho, nor the inhabitants of Zidon, nor of Ahlab, nor of Achzib, nor of Helbah, nor of Aphik, nor of Rehob: But the Asherites dwelt among the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land: for they did not drive them out. Neither did Naphtali drive out the

inhabitants of Bethshemesh, nor the inhabitants of Bethanath; but he dwelt among the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land: nevertheless the inhabitants of Bethshemesh and of Bethanath became tributaries unto them. And the Amorites forced the children of Dan into the mountain: for they would not suffer them to come down to the valley: But the Amorites would dwell in mount Heres in Aijalon, and in Shaalbim: yet the hand of the house of Joseph prevailed, so that they became tributaries." Judges 1:19, 21, 24-35, KJV

What a sad, sad story; and what a poor example of obedience to the Word of the Lord. It is evident that the Israelites were obviously losing their will to fight, and had begun to compromise with their enemies. This was not what the Lord had instructed them to do whatsoever. They were supposed to utterly destroy them, and not spare their lives and place them under tribute. Let me repeat again: God's blessings depend upon our faith and obedience to His Word. The minute the children of Israel began to disobey the Lord, they also began to lose their battles against their enemies. In short, their lack of faith and disobedience to the Lord, along with their compromises, was a sure recipe for their defeat.

As we continue this series in part five, we'll be discussing such issues as the deepening apostasy of the Israelites; the destruction of faith by our disobedience; the Lord's ability to save; the strong delusion of the Endtime; being separated from God through sin; how God will sometimes turn away from our prayers; God's vessels of wrath; kings Saul, David and Solomon; nation of Israel divided; the apostasy of the Jewish kings; the Assyrian and Babylonian invasions; seventy years of Babylonian captivity; the rebuilding of the Temple; inter-racial marriages in Israel; Ezra's intercessory prayer; a list of the heathen nations which influenced the Israelites; Canaan's curse; the migration of the Hamites; the possible origin of the negroid race and the mystery of the Shulamite. Once again, I trust that you will join me.

Please go to part five for the continuation of this series.

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THE FRUITS OF DISOBEDIENCE : PART FIVE

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Death Of Joshua, Israelites Backslide And Fall Into Sin,
Disobedience Destroys Faith, Lord's Hand Is Not Shortened
That It Cannot Save, Willful Strong Delusion, Apostasy, Sin
Separates Us From God, God Turns Away From Prayers, Vessels
Of Wrath, Saul, David And Solomon, Israel Divided, Apostasy
Of Jewish Kings, Assyrian And Babylonian Invasions, Seventy
Years Of Captivity In Babylon, Temple Rebuilt, Interracial
Marriages, Ezra's Intercessory Prayer, List Of Heathen Which
Influenced Israelites, Curse Of Canaan, Migration Of Hamites
Possible Origin Of Negroids, Mystery Of The Shulamite Woman

Following the defeat and compromises of the Israelites which are discussed in the final half of Joshua chapter one, we find the following interesting account in the opening verses of the second chapter:

"And an angel of the LORD came up from Gilgal to Bochim, and said, I made you to go up out of Egypt, and have brought you unto the land which I swore unto your fathers; and I said, I will never break my covenant with you. And ye shall make no league with the inhabitants of this land; ye shall throw down their altars: but ye have not obeyed my voice: why have ye done this? Wherefore I also said, I will not drive them out from before you; but they shall be as thorns in your sides, and their gods shall be a snare unto you. And it came to pass, when the angel of the LORD spake these words unto all the children of Israel, that the people lifted up their voice, and wept."

Judges 2:1-4, KJV

What a wake-up call indeed! While there was a certain degree of repentance, things apparently did not remain that way for very long. It is right after the above account, that we find a retelling of the death of Joshua from the previous book; and then the writer goes into a more detailed explanation of why the Israelites were now having trouble defeating their

enemies. As I stated in part four, one of the main problems was that their visionary leaders were all gone, and a new generation was born which had not experienced the miracles of Egypt and the Red Sea. This new generation did not have the same vision as their elders had before them, and as we saw in part four, "Where there is no vision, the people perish". Consider these verses:

"And the people served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the LORD, that he did for Israel. And Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died, being an hundred and ten years old. And they buried him in the border of his inheritance in Timnathheres, in the mount of Ephraim, on the north side of the hill Gaash. And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers: and there arose another generation after them, which knew not the LORD, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel. And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD, and served Baalim: And they forsook the LORD God of their fathers, which brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed other gods, of the gods of the people that were round about them, and bowed themselves unto them, and provoked the LORD to anger. And they forsook the LORD, and served Baal and Ashtaroath. And the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel, and he delivered them into the hands of spoilers that spoiled them, and he sold them into the hands of their enemies round about, so that they could not any longer stand before their enemies. Whithersoever they went out, the hand of the LORD was against them for evil, as the LORD had said, and as the LORD had sworn unto them: and they were greatly distressed. Nevertheless the LORD raised up judges, which delivered them out of the hand of those that spoiled them. And yet they would not hearken unto their judges, but they went a whoring after other gods, and bowed themselves unto them: they turned quickly out of the way which their fathers walked in, obeying the commandments of the LORD; but they did not so."

Judges 2:7-17, KJV

God can't bless disobedience. He spelled out point by point what He required of the children of Israel if they expected to receive His blessings. This is a very important principle which applies to the life of every single Christian. Faith and obedience work hand in hand. When a nation, or a person, is knowingly disobedient to God's Will, it is impossible to have faith for His miracles of protection and provision. As

I pointed out earlier, it is just like a young child who is very disobedient to his parents. He cannot possibly expect them to do special things for him when he knows that he has been disobedient in some way. In fact, in a situation like this, normally, a child won't even have the courage to ask, because he knows that his heart and attitude are not right with his parents. In other words, the child's disobedience has destroyed his faith to even ask for anything from his parents. Haven't we all experienced this at one time or another, either when we were small children ourselves, or now as parents of our own children?

In similar fashion, the Israelites no longer had the faith or the vision to win their battles, because they also knew that they had fallen into extreme disobedience to the Word of the Lord. Just as they had done in Egypt, and then later in the wilderness of Sinai, the Israelites fell into sinful idolatry. They worshiped the pagan gods, and they married the heathen around them. Contrary to what some atheists and God-haters might claim, the tribe of Judah's inability to defeat the people of the valley had absolutely nothing to do with any sign of weakness or limitation on God's part. God was indeed present with Judah, just as He was with all of the other tribes who fought against their enemies; but He simply could not bless them because of their disobedience. While I have already shared a number of verses with you in part four concerning God's ability to deliver His children, consider the following verses found in the Book of Isaiah as well:

"Thus saith the LORD, Where is the bill of your mother's divorcement, whom I have put away? or which of my creditors is it to whom I have sold you? Behold, for your iniquities have ye sold yourselves, and for your transgressions is your mother put away. Wherefore, when I came, was there no man? when I called, was there none to answer? Is my hand shortened at all, that it cannot redeem? or have I no power to deliver? behold, at my rebuke I dry up the sea, I make the rivers a wilderness: their fish stinketh, because there is no water, and dieth for thirst . . . Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear:"
Isaiah 50:1-2, 59:1, KJV

For atheists, God-haters and other enemies of the Bible to even suggest that God is unable to defend His own children, is simply foolishness, and exposes their spiritual blindness

and complete ignorance of the Power of God; as well as their total lack of understanding of the Scriptures. Of course, as Christians, we know that this is to be expected from them; for as the Apostle Paul so candidly wrote in his Epistle to the Corinthian brethren:

"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

1 Corinthians 2:14, KJV

As I've explained before, if people willfully and knowingly reject the Lord and His Word, and if their only purpose in reading the Bible is to find so-called faults or errors in it, so that they can seemingly justify their rebellion and unbelief, the Lord will give them exactly what they want. In fact, as we see from the following verse found in the Book of the Prophet Isaiah, He will even go so far as to choose their delusion for them:

"I also will choose their delusions, and will bring their fears upon them; because when I called, none did answer; when I spake, they did not hear: but they did evil before mine eyes, and chose that in which I delighted not."

Isaiah 66:4, KJV

As I have made quite clear in other articles concerning the Endtime, God is purposely allowing strong delusion to enter the world, due to the great sins of rebellion and unbelief, which have shrouded humanity in a sea of spiritual darkness. This age of apostasy, or falling away from the truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, is in evidence all around us, for anyone who really wants to see it. In his second Epistle to the Thessalonians, as well as in his second Epistle to his spiritual son in the faith, Timothy, the Apostle Paul wrote:

". . . for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:"

2 Thessalonians 2:10-11, KJV

"But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived."

2 Timothy 3:13, KJV

Sadly, what occurred thousands of years ago with the children of Israel, continues to happen to this very day, but to an even greater degree. If a person feels that God is far away

from him, he should ask himself "Who has moved?" Is it truly the Lord? Most certainly not! In the article "Are You Clean Every Whit?", I stress the importance of walking along the straight and narrow path in communion with the Lord. As the Prophet Isaiah also tells us, when we fail to do this, when we fall into sin, it is our very sins and disobediences which separate us from the Lord. They form an impenetrable barrier between us and our God. This is an eternal truth which has existed for thousands of years. Isaiah wrote:

"But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear."

Isaiah 59:2, KJV

Please notice that Isaiah also states "your sins have hid his face from you". I discuss this very same issue in the article "Beholding the Evil and the Good". So again, through our sins and disobediences, we literally force the Lord to turn His Face away from us, and to ignore us, and our prayers. Perhaps this is why Jesus felt so abandoned by His Father, as He hung alone upon that Cross and agonized for the sins of the world. Aside from the pain which the Father must have been suffering at that moment, maybe He just couldn't bear to gaze upon the sin which His Son bore that day for all of humanity. It may also be that Jesus had to experience what it is like to be a sinner separated from God, which would ultimately make Him a better High Priest and Intercessor for us in the Heavenly Courts. Consider the following verses:

"And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

Matthew 27:46, KJV

"Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."

Hebrews 4:14-15, KJV

In extreme cases, as Isaiah also notes, not only will God not look upon us, but He may even refuse to hear our prayers. The children of Israel were so backslidden in their hearts, and so far removed from the Lord, that about one hundred and fifty years later, during the days of the Prophet Jeremiah,

the Lord was still saying the very same thing to them, as we see here:

"Therefore pray not thou for this people, neither lift up cry nor prayer for them, neither make intercession to me: for I will not hear thee."
Jeremiah 7:16, KJV

"Therefore pray not thou for this people, neither lift up a cry or prayer for them: for I will not hear them in the time that they cry unto me for their trouble."
Jeremiah 11:14, KJV

"Thus saith the LORD unto this people, Thus have they loved to wander, they have not refrained their feet, therefore the LORD doth not accept them; he will now remember their iniquity, and visit their sins. Then said the LORD unto me, Pray not for this people for their good."
Jeremiah 14:10-11, KJV

"We have transgressed and have rebelled: thou hast not pardoned. Thou hast covered with anger, and persecuted us: thou hast slain, thou hast not pitied. Thou hast covered thyself with a cloud, that our prayer should not pass through."
Lamentations 3:42-44, KJV

As with ancient Israel, it is only when we walk in obedience to the Lord's Will, that we can expect God's blessings to be manifested in our lives. If we walk contrary to the Lord, as they did, then we must expect to feel God's displeasure; and we must expect to suffer for our sins. In his Epistle to the Hebrews, the Apostle Paul pointedly tells us:

"For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries."
Hebrews 10:26-27, KJV

As the Angel of the Lord told the Israelites in the previous verse I shared with you from the Book of the Judges, "I will not drive them out from before you; but they shall be as thorns in your sides, and their gods shall be a snare unto you". This is exactly what happened on and off during the period of the Judges, which lasted some four hundred years. God used the enemies of the Israelites, as His "vessels of

wrath" against them, to punish them for their sins; just as He had used Pharaoh for this very same purpose hundreds of years earlier.

With the election of King Saul, Israel entered solidly into what is referred to as the period of the Prophets; holy men of God who served as counselors to some of the kings, and as the Lord's tools of correction and judgement to other kings. Exactly as had occurred during the times of the Judges, some of the kings of Judah and Israel submitted themselves to the Lord's Will, while others fell deep into sin and apostasy. Following King Saul's disastrous reign, which ended with his death by his own hand after losing a battle, wise King David chose to obey the Lord. Thus, he drove the Jebusites out of Jerusalem, as Moses had commanded them to do years earlier, as we see here:

"And the king and his men went to Jerusalem unto the Jebusites, the inhabitants of the land: which spake unto David, saying, Except thou take away the blind and the lame, thou shalt not come in hither: thinking, David cannot come in hither. Nevertheless David took the strong hold of Zion: the same is the city of David. And David said on that day, Whosoever getteth up to the gutter, and smiteth the Jebusites, and the lame and the blind, that are hated of David's soul, he shall be chief and captain. Wherefore they said, The blind and the lame shall not come into the house. So David dwelt in the fort, and called it the city of David. And David built round about from Millo and inward. And David went on, and grew great, and the LORD God of hosts was with him."

2 Samuel 5:6-10, KJV

However, as had been done by his predecessors, David did not completely destroy his pagan enemies like he was supposed to. For some reason, he chose to compromise instead. This is evident by the fact that some years later, we still find many of the heathen nations, or ethnic groups, existing in Israel during the reign of King Solomon, David's son. In fact, the first Book of the Kings informs us that King Solomon chose to place them under servitude, rather than destroy them or drive them from the land as the Lord had commanded, as we see here:

"And all the people that were left of the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites, which were not of the children of Israel, Their children that were left after them in the land, whom the children of Israel also

were not able utterly to destroy, upon those did Solomon levy a tribute of bondservice unto this day."

1 Kings 9:20-21, KJV

As a result of King Solomon's deep apostasy during the later years of his life -- which we will be discussing more later -- Israel was divided into two kingdoms. The northern half was known as Israel -- also Ephraim or Samaria -- and was comprised of the ten tribes which rebelled against Rehoboam's rule, who was the son of Solomon. The southern half was comprised of Judah and Benjamin, and was referred to as Judah. During the next several hundred years, the Israelites continued to be ruled by some good kings, as well as by some evil kings. At times they obeyed the Word of the Lord, while at other times they fell deeply into apostasy and worshipped the pagan gods of the heathen within their midst. First to be chastised by the Lord was Israel in the north, when the Assyrian forces invaded Israel during the days of the Prophet Isaiah. This occurred almost three hundred years after the reign of King Solomon. The chastisement of Judah in the south followed about one hundred and fifty years later with the invasions by King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, during the days of the Prophet Jeremiah.

Following their Seventy Years of Captivity in Babylon, as had been prophesied by Jeremiah, some of the liberated Jews returned to Jerusalem where they began to rebuild Solomon's Temple under the guidance of such men as Ezra and Nehemiah; all with the blessings of the various Persian kings. Even at that time, after having endured that long period of slavery in Babylon, we discover that contrary to God's commandment to them, the Israelites were still continuing to intermarry with the women of the pagan nations, which still existed in their midst, as we see here:

"Now when these things were done, the princes came to me, saying, The people of Israel, and the priests, and the Levites, have not separated themselves from the people of the lands, doing according to their abominations, even of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Egyptians, and the Amorites. For they have taken of their daughters for themselves, and for their sons: so that the holy seed have mingled themselves with the people of those lands: yea, the hand of the princes and rulers hath been chief in this trespass."

Ezra 9:1-2, KJV

When Ezra became aware of these things, he was filled with grief and sorrow, tore his clothes and cried out to the Lord confessing the sins of his people; the very same sins which they had been committing for literally hundreds and hundreds of years. They just never seemed to learn their lesson. In the Book of Ezra we read the following:

"Since the days of our fathers have we been in a great trespass unto this day; and for our iniquities have we, our kings, and our priests, been delivered into the hand of the kings of the lands, to the sword, to captivity, and to a spoil, and to confusion of face, as it is this day . . . And now, O our God, what shall we say after this? for we have forsaken thy commandments, Which thou hast commanded by thy servants the prophets, saying, The land, unto which ye go to possess it, is an unclean land with the filthiness of the people of the lands, with their abominations, which have filled it from one end to another with their uncleanness. Now therefore give not your daughters unto their sons, neither take their daughters unto your sons, nor seek their peace or their wealth for ever: that ye may be strong, and eat the good of the land, and leave it for an inheritance to your children for ever. And after all that is come upon us for our evil deeds, and for our great trespass, seeing that thou our God hast punished us less than our iniquities deserve, and hast given us such deliverance as this; Should we again break thy commandments, and join in affinity with the people of these abominations? wouldest not thou be angry with us till thou hadst consumed us, so that there should be no remnant nor escaping? O LORD God of Israel, thou art righteous: for we remain yet escaped, as it is this day: behold, we are before thee in our trespasses: for we cannot stand before thee because of this."

Ezra 9:7, 10-15, KJV

During a great meeting which was held in Jerusalem, the Jews repented of their sins, made a commitment to divorce their foreign wives, and to put away the children which they had begotten by those wives. Due to the number of Jews who had fallen into these mixed marriages, it took the judges three full months to hear all of the cases, and to purge the heathen people out of Judah.

At this point, it might be interesting to explain who some of these heathen were. Following is a partial descriptive list of those who inhabited the land of Israel, and/or who

influenced the religious worship of the Jews:

1. Amalekite - descendants of Amalek, the son of Elizphaz who was the son of Esau. The Amalekites dwelt in southern Canaan.
2. Ammonites - descendants of Benammi, (Ammon), the son of Lot by his younger daughter. They worshipped the gods Milcom, Chemosh and Molech. Ammon is part of modern-day Jordan.
3. Arkites - descendants of Canaan who inhabited Arki or Arka.
4. Arvadite - descendants of Arvad, a son of Canaan. They were Phoenicians and mariners.
5. Canaanites - descendants of Canaan, one of the four sons of Ham who was one of the three sons of Noah. Canaan was cursed by Noah in Gen 9:25.
6. Edomites - descendants of Esau, the first son of Isaac who lost both his birthright and the blessing of his father due to the deceit of his twin brother Jacob. Esau married Mahalath, the daughter of Ishmael, the father of the Arab nations and the first son of Abraham. Edom was also known as Idumea and was located to the south and southeast of Palestine. It is part of Jordan today.
7. Gergashite - descendants of Canaan who lived east of the sea of Galilee.
8. Hittites - descendants of Heth, the second son of Canaan. They originally inhabited what was once known as central Anatolia, which is modern Turkey. Later they migrated into northern Lebanon. David's wife Bathsheba was previously married to Uriah the Hittite.
9. Hivites - the sixth generation of the descendants of Canaan who were living near Mount Hermon at the time of the conquest. Possibly named after Havilah, the son of Cush, and also a son of Raamah, Cush's grandson.

10. Jebusites - descendants of Jebus, the third son of Canaan who may have founded Jebus which later became known as Jerusalem.
11. Mizraim - Descendants of Mizraim, one of the four sons of Ham, also known as the Egyptians.
12. Moabites - descendants of Moab, the son of Lot by his older daughter. They worshipped the god Chemosh. Moab is a part of Jordan today.
13. Perizzite - little is known about these people except for the fact that they inhabited southern Canaan prior to the conquest by the Israelites.
14. Philistine- descendants of Mizraim, a son of Ham, who migrated from Caphtor (Crete?) to the western seacoast of Canaan known as Philistia.
15. Sinite - a tribe of the Canaanites descended from Canaan inhabiting the northern part of the Lebanon district.
16. Zemarite - one of the Hamite tribes descended from Canaan who probably inhabited Zemaraim in northern Benjamin near Bethel.
17. Zidonians - descendants of Zidon, the first son of Canaan, and inhabitants of Zidon, (Sidon), also known as the Phoenicians. They worshipped Ashtoreth and Molech.

As you can see by the previous list, the majority of the enemies of the Israelites were descended from the sons of Ham -- one of Noah's three sons -- particularly, from Canaan and Mizraim. It was Canaan who was cursed into slavery by his grandfather, Noah, as a result of his sin against Noah. I explain the following account in much more detail in the controversial series "The International Jew and the Protocols of Zion":

"And Noah began to be an husbandman, and he planted a vineyard: And he drank of the wine, and was drunken; and he was uncovered within his tent. And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two

brethren without. And Shem and Japheth took a garment, and laid it upon both their shoulders, and went backward, and covered the nakedness of their father; and their faces were backward, and they saw not their father's nakedness. And Noah awoke from his wine, and knew what his younger son had done unto him. And he said, Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren. And he said, Blessed be the LORD God of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant. God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant."

Genesis 9:20-27, KJV

While the Israelites were fair-skinned Semites, it appears that the Hamites were the negroid nations which migrated down into Africa. You will notice that in the above list, "Mizraim" was the Hebrew word which was used to denote the Egyptians. While many Bible-oriented movies portray the ancient Egyptians as being a fair-skinned race, based upon the evidence which is actually contained in the Scriptures, it seems that they may actually have been a lot darker in complexion. In fact, I recall reading many years ago about the discovery of a drawing of a black woman, which was found in one of the pyramids built in either Mexico or possibly in Central America. This drawing seems to confirm the migration of the Blacks in the ancient past; not only down into Africa, but also into Latin America as well. This was many centuries before the days of European slavery.

We also know from the Scriptures that Pharaoh of Egypt gave his daughter to King Solomon to be his wife. Perhaps it was this marriage which eventually contributed to King Solomon's wayward fall into pagan devil worship. If you re-read the verses I shared a moment ago from the Book of Ezra, you will notice that the Egyptians were included in the list of those heathen with whom the Israelites were expressly forbidden to mingle themselves. Concerning King Solomon's marriage to this woman, consider the following verses:

"And Solomon made affinity with Pharaoh king of Egypt, and took Pharaoh's daughter, and brought her into the city of David, until he had made an end of building his own house, and the house of the LORD, and the wall of Jerusalem round about . . . And his house where he dwelt had another court within the porch, which was of the like work. Solomon made also an house for Pharaoh's daughter, whom he had taken to wife, like unto this porch."

1 Kings 3:1, 7:8, KJV

Exactly how the negroid races came into being is really a matter of speculation. Some people claim that it was a result of Noah's curse upon his grandson, Canaan; however, there is another remote possibility. In describing herself in the Songs of Solomon, the Shulamite, who was one of King Solomon's dark-skinned wives, seems to indicate that her darker skin pigmentation may have been due, not just to a higher level of melanin, but also due to extended exposure to the sun, as a result of being forced to labour in the family vineyards. Consider the following two verses:

"I am black, but comely, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon. Look not upon me, because I am black, because the sun hath looked upon me: my mother's children were angry with me; they made me the keeper of the vineyards; but mine own vineyard have I not kept."

Song of Solomon 1:5-6, KJV

Notice that she says "I am black, because the sun hath looked upon me". Is she just talking about a dark sun tan; or is it possible that over an undetermined period of years, the skin of these people who lived in the tropical climate of Africa, simply adapted to the more direct rays of the sun by creating more melanin? If you view my theory as being too far-fetched, believe me; if you happen to be of negroid descent, you will find it much more acceptable than the view which is espoused by certain Orthodox Jews who follow the perverted teachings of the true Jewish Bible, the Babylonian Talmud. Please refer to the series "The International Jew and the Protocols of Zion" if you are interested in more details regarding this issue; but allow me to warn you that it is very strong meat which you might find extremely offensive.

The idea that the ancient Egyptians may have been black, also appears to be supported by some scientific evidence as well. Part of this evidence is provided by an Egyptologist by the name of Cheikh Anta Diop. While I was conducting my research for this article, I discovered the following information on the melanet.com website. Please note that being as I am not trained in this area, I cannot vouch for the accuracy or the veracity of this material, so please read it with discretion:

----- Begin Quote -----

1. Evidence from Physical Anthropology

The skeletons and skulls of the Ancient Egyptians clearly reflect that they were a Negroid people with features very similar to those of modern Black Nubians and other people of the Upper Nile and of East Africa.

2. Melanin Dosage Test

Egyptologist Cheikh Anta Diop invented a method for determining the level of melanin in the skin of human beings. When conducted on Egyptian mummies in the Museum of Man in Paris, this test indicated that these remains were of Black people.

3. Osteological Evidence

"Lepsius canon," which distinguishes the bodily proportions of various racial groups categories the "ideal Egyptian" as "short-armed and of Negroid or Negrito physical type."

4. Evidence From Blood Types

Diop notes that even after hundreds of years of inter-mixture with foreign invaders, the blood type of modern Egyptians is the "same group B as the populations of western Africa on the Atlantic seaboard and not the A2 Group characteristic of the white race prior to any crossbreeding."

5. The Egyptians as They Saw Themselves

"The Egyptians had only one term to designate themselves =kmt= the negroes (literally). This is the strongest term existing in the Pharaonic tongue to indicate blackness; it is accordingly written with a hieroglyph representing a length of wood charred at the end and not crocodile scales," singular. 'Kmt' from the adjective =kmt= black; it therefore means strictly negroes or at the very least black men. The term is a collective noun which thus described the whole people of pharaonic Egypt as a black people."

6. Divine Epithets

Diop demonstrates that "black or negro" is the divine epithet invariably used for the chief beneficent gods of Egypt, while the evil spirits were depicted as red.

7. Evidence From the Bible

The Bible states that ". . . [t]he sons of Ham [were] Cush and Mizraim [i.e. Egypt], and Phut, and Canaan. And the sons of Cush; Seba, and Havilah, and Sabtah, and Raamah and Sabtechah." According to Biblical tradition, Ham, of course, was the father of the Black race. "Generally speaking all semitic tradition (Jewish and Arab) class ancient Egypt with the countries of the black."

8. Cultural unity of Egypt With The Rest of Africa

Through a study of circumcision and totemism, Diop gives detailed data showing cultural unity between Egypt and the rest of Africa.

9. Linguistic Unity With Southern and Western Africa

In a detailed study of languages, Diop clearly demonstrates that Ancient Egyptian, modern Coptic of Egypt and Walaf of West Africa are related, with the latter two having their origin in the former.

10. Testimony of Classical Greek and Roman Authors

Virtually all of the early Latin eyewitnesses described the Ancient Egyptians as Black skinned with wooly hair.

----- End Quote -----

As we continue our series in part six, in addition to solving the mystery of the Shulamite woman, we will also take a look at such topics as the Queen Of Sheba, the story of Sheba and Beersheba, the kings of the north and the south, the apostasy of King Solomon and the division of Israel into two kingdoms, the corruption of the Jewish gene pool, the descendants of Canaan, the pagan gods and goddesses of the heathen, Israel's backslidden condition, enslavement in Assyria, the perversion of Samaria by the Assyrians, child sacrifices in Jerusalem, and the Egyptian gods destroyed by King Nebuchadnezzar. I trust that you will join me.

Please go to part six for the continuation of this series.

Written by Bill Kochman

THE FRUITS OF DISOBEDIENCE : PART SIX

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Mystery Of The Shulamite Woman, Queen Of Sheba, Sheba And Beersheba, Kings Of The North And The South, King Solomon's Fall And Apostasy, Kingdom Divided, Corrupt Jewish Gene Pool True Jews, The Descendants Of Canaan, List Of Pagan Gods And Goddesses Of The Heathen, Depth Of Israelite's Backslidden State, Carried To Assyria, Perversion Of Samaria By Assyria, More On Israelites' Apostasy, Child Sacrifices In Jerusalem, Egyptian Gods Destroyed By Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar

Returning to Solomon's wife, I also find it interesting that in the previous verses, the Shulamite compares her skin color to the tents of Kedar. Apparently, she must have been quite familiar with the tents of Kedar. But exactly who was Kedar? He was a son of Ishmael, who in turn was the son of Hagar the Egyptian, by the Patriarch Abraham. The Bible also tells us that Hagar obtained an Egyptian wife for her son, Ishmael, as we see here:

"And he dwelt in the wilderness of Paran: and his mother took him a wife out of the land of Egypt."
Genesis 21:21, KJV

The word "kedar" happens to mean "dark", which may be another indication that the Egyptians, or Mizraim, were dark-skinned people. After all, if Kedar was dark, assuming that it means dark-skinned, then it only stands to reason that it may have been a result of the genes he had inherited from one of his parents. If his mother was from Egypt, and his grandmother, Hagar, was as Egyptian as well, it would seem to add a lot of weight to the possibility that they were in fact dark-skinned. Consider the following analysis:

Abraham (Semite) + Hagar (Hamite) = Ishmael (half and half)

Ishmael (half and half) + his wife (Hamite) = Kedar (3/4 Hamite)

If the above is accurate, then it is easy to see why Kedar would be considerably darker than his grandfather Abraham; because he would be three quarters Hamite, and only one quarter Shemite, whereas Abraham, we assume, was purely a Shemite.

There is a certain historical irony to all of this. You see, if the Egyptians were black as I have proposed, that means that the fair-skinned Israelites -- who were Semites -- were in fact enslaved by the black Hamites, millennia before the Semites would turn around and enslave the Hamites; which, as you know, is how black slaves would eventually arrive on the shores of Europe and North America. Could the fact that the Hamites enslaved the Shemite Israelites in Egypt, be one of the reasons why some Jews still have a deep hatred for the Blacks, as is taught in their own holy book, the Babylonian Talmud?

Returning to the Shulamite, a few verses later, she compares her husband, Solomon, to "a company of horses in Pharaoh's chariots", as we see here:

"I have compared thee, O my love, to a company of horses in Pharaoh's chariots."

Song of Solomon 1:9, KJV

Here again, the Shulamite woman reveals her familiarity with things Egyptian; which offers another tantalizing clue which may point to her place of origin and possible identity. Until now, I was under the impression that she was a descendant of someone by the name of Shula; however, additional research revealed something entirely different to me. According to my Hebrew lexicon, the word "Shulamite" means "the perfect" or "the peaceful". Other than this, there are no genealogical names associated with it. In other words, her ancestors are not listed. However, the lexicon also states that the word "Shulamite" is derived from the word "shalam", which just so happens to mean "to be in a covenant of peace, be at peace, to make peace with". With that definition, I have just told you exactly who I think she was.

So, exactly who was the mysterious Shulamite woman mentioned in the Songs of Solomon? Earlier, we read that Solomon made

affinity with Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, and took Pharaoh's daughter to be his wife. The word "affinity" is derived from the Hebrew "chathan", which means to become a son-in-law. In other words, it seems to me that what we are actually being told through these various verses, is that being a rather wise king, Solomon entered into an alliance with Pharaoh of Egypt; he made a peace agreement with him; and married into his family, by taking his daughter for a wife. By doing so, Solomon obviously hoped to extend the size of his kingdom, and secure the southern border of the same as well. So my guess is that the Shulamite woman, that is, the "peaceful one", from the Hebrew "shalam", may have been none other than the daughter of Pharaoh, who Solomon married. She may be the mystery woman of the Songs of Solomon. Pharaoh gave her to King Solomon as his "token of peace" between their two nations, and she was obviously black. It is just my personal theory, but it seems to make a lot of sense to me.

There is additional evidence which may support my conclusion. Consider also the following points, which I also discuss in the series "The Kings of the North and the South". Only seven chapters after this marriage arrangement is mentioned, we are told how the Queen of Sheba likewise visited Solomon, after she had heard of his wisdom, as we see here:

"And when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon concerning the name of the LORD, she came to prove him with hard questions . . . And when the queen of Sheba had seen all Solomon's wisdom, and the house that he had built . . . And she gave the king an hundred and twenty talents of gold, and of spices very great store, and precious stones: there came no more such abundance of spices as these which the queen of Sheba gave to king Solomon . . . And king Solomon gave unto the queen of Sheba all her desire, whatsoever she asked, beside that which Solomon gave her of his royal bounty. So she turned and went to her own country, she and her servants."

1 Kings 10:1, 4, 10, 13, KJV

In discussing these famous encounters between King Solomon and this obviously very rich Queen of Sheba, Jesus had the following to say in the New Testament:

"The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here."

Matthew 12:42, KJV

As you can see, Jesus equated the queen of the south with the Queen of Sheba, which obviously indicates that they are one and the same person. That phrase "uttermost parts of the earth" is also very interesting, because it offers us a hint regarding the place of origin of this Queen of Sheba, or Queen of the South. The word "uttermost" is translated from the Greek word "peras" which means extremity, end, boundary or frontier. The word translated here as "earth", that is, the Greek "ge", also means "a country, land enclosed within fixed boundaries". So what we are being told here is that the Queen of Sheba, the Queen of the South, originated in a country which was located at the southern border of Israel. This then leaves us with one question: where or what is Sheba? As I have pointed out before, the Bible is for the most part self-interpreting, and it provides us with an answer in the Book of Genesis, as we see here:

"And the sons of Cush; Seba, and Havilah, and Sabtah, and Raamah, and Sabtechah: and the sons of Raamah; Sheba, and Dedan."

Genesis 10:7, KJV

The above verse demonstrates that Sheba was the grandson of Cush, and the great grandson of Ham, who as we saw earlier, was one of the three sons of Noah. In essence then, Sheba belonged to the dark races which eventually settled in north Africa; he was a Hamite. In the twenty-first chapter of the Book of Genesis, we find the story of Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Hagar and Ishmael, which we discussed earlier. At Sarah's insistence, Abraham sent away Hagar and her son Ishmael, after Ishmael had mocked them, as we see here:

"And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, which she had born unto Abraham, mocking. Wherefore she said unto Abraham, Cast out this bondwoman and her son: for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac . . . And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and took bread, and a bottle of water, and gave it unto Hagar, putting it on her shoulder, and the child, and sent her away: and she departed, and wandered in the wilderness of Beersheba."

Genesis 21:9-10, 14, KJV

It is in this very same chapter that Abraham experiences some problems with Abimelech, the king of the Philistines, when Abimelech's servants steal a water well which had been

dug by Abraham's servants. The two men come to an agreement concerning the issue, and Abraham calls the place Beersheba. The name Beersheba, pronounced be-ayr' sheh'-bah, actually means "well of the sevenfold oath". Abraham first named it this because of the precise agreement he had made with Abimelech, as we see in these verses:

"And Abraham set seven ewe lambs of the flock by themselves. And Abimelech said unto Abraham, What mean these seven ewe lambs which thou hast set by themselves? And he said, For these seven ewe lambs shalt thou take of my hand, that they may be a witness unto me, that I have digged this well. Wherefore he called that place Beersheba; because there they sware both of them."

Genesis 21:28-31, KJV

Some of these wells were eventually filled in with dirt by the trouble-making Philistines, until the servants of Isaac re-discovered them, as we see here:

"For all the wells which his father's servants had digged in the days of Abraham his father, the Philistines had stopped them, and filled them with earth . . . And it came to pass the same day, that Isaac's servants came, and told him concerning the well which they had digged, and said unto him, We have found water. And he called it Shebah: therefore the name of the city is Beersheba unto this day."

Genesis 26:15, 32-33, KJV

In the following verse found in the Book of Joshua, we make another important discovery concerning Sheba and Beersheba:

"And they had in their inheritance Beersheba, or Sheba, and Moladah,"

Joshua 19:2, KJV

So what we see then, is that Beersheba and Sheba are one and the same place, and that it was re-named this by Isaac after his servants had re-discovered the well first dug there by his father Abraham. Looking at any ancient map of the area found in many Bibles, will quickly confirm that Beersheba is located in a region which was formerly the northern border of the Egyptian Empire, or the southern border of Israel if you prefer, at the time that King David was in power. About four hundred years prior to this, around 1450 BC, the entire land of Canaan was under the dominion of Thutmose III; but with the arrival of the Israelites, as well as due to the

invading armies coming from the north and east, the northern border of the Egyptian Empire slowly receded southward over the years. However, the simple fact remains that being as this woman was called the Queen of Sheba, it does seem to indicate that at the time of Solomon's reign, Beersheba was still not under the full control of the Israelites. Perhaps it was Solomon's marriage to the Pharaoh's daughter which changed this. Today, Beersheba, or Be'er Sheva, as it is also spelled, is a city located on the northwestern edge of the Negev Desert, which runs into the Sinai Desert of Egypt. It seems very possible then, and even likely, that the Queen of Sheba who went to visit Solomon, was none other than the Queen of Egypt, also known as the Queen of the South.

As a final closing argument to prove what I have just stated, consider that in the prophecies of Daniel, we are informed of the various wars which occur between the "king of the north", and the "king of the south". While the Authorized King James Version of the Bible uses these two phrases, certain other translations of the Scriptures actually use the phrases "the king of Syria -- north -- and "the king of Egypt" -- south -- and after doing some Biblical research of my own, I came to the exact same conclusions, as I explain in my article "The Kings of the North and the South". Finally, as if it is icing on the cake, the word "south" is derived from the Hebrew word "negeb", which today is written as "negev"; the name of the very desert which borders with Egypt. So who knows; maybe the Queen of Sheba, the Queen of the South, the Queen of the Negev, was even the mother of the Shulamite who Solomon married; but I cannot conclusively prove this point. It is merely a speculation on my part. I just don't see how the king of the south can be Pharaoh of Egypt, while the queen of the south cannot be the Queen of Egypt; do you?

Whatever the case may be, given how King Solomon eventually fell into deep apostasy in his old age, I wonder if his peace agreement with the Hamites of Egypt, and marrying Pharaoh's daughter -- the Shulamite? -- was a wise move after all. Let us not forget that the Lord specifically told the Israelites to not marry foreign women; and while Moses' commandment did not include the Egyptians by name, as we saw in part five by the verses found in the Book of Ezra, they were included in the ban. Furthermore, my research has shown that these ethnic groups were dependent upon Egypt, and in fact paid tribute to the Egyptians. Finally, it was their worship of Egyptian gods and goddesses which got the children of Israel in trouble in the first place; and it seems that King Solomon fell into the

very same trap again. What was the Lord's reasoning behind this commandment? As we saw earlier, Moses said:

"Neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son. For they will turn away thy son from following me, that they may serve other gods: so will the anger of the LORD be kindled against you, and destroy thee suddenly."

Deuteronomy 7:3-4, KJV

In spite of this admonition from the Lord, in the first Book of the Kings, we read the following sad account concerning Solomon's many foreign wives, and his backslidden condition. Please notice that Pharaoh's daughter is mentioned first, as if to suggest that not only was she Solomon's main wife, but she may have also been the first one, as well as the most influential one, to lead him astray in his old age:

"But king Solomon loved many strange women, together with the daughter of Pharaoh, women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Zidonians, and Hittites; Of the nations concerning which the LORD said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall not go in to them, neither shall they come in unto you: for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods: Solomon clave unto these in love. And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines: and his wives turned away his heart. For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods: and his heart was not perfect with the LORD his God, as was the heart of David his father. For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites. And Solomon did evil in the sight of the LORD, and went not fully after the LORD, as did David his father. Then did Solomon build an high place for Chemosh, the abomination of Moab, in the hill that is before Jerusalem, and for Molech, the abomination of the children of Ammon. And likewise did he for all his strange wives, which burnt incense and sacrificed unto their gods. And the LORD was angry with Solomon, because his heart was turned from the LORD God of Israel, which had appeared unto him twice, And had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods: but he kept not that which the LORD commanded."

1 Kings 11:1-10, KJV

As we saw in part five, because of King Solomon's sins of

idolatry and pagan devil worship, the Lord lifted up enemies all round him; however, as I have already explained, it was not until his son Rehoboam sat on the throne, that ten of the tribes of Israel were taken from him by the Lord, and given to his enemy, Jeroboam, who had fled years earlier to Egypt, in order to escape the wrath of Solomon. That must have been one time when the close relationship with Egypt was appreciated. As I noted before, the only tribes left to the house of David were Judah and Benjamin. This all came about as a result of Rehoboam's refusal to listen to the wise counsel of the old men, who had likewise served as advisers to his father, King Solomon. Please note that while these verses say one tribe, we are later told that the tribe of Benjamin clung to Judah, and remained faithful to the king:

"Wherefore the LORD said unto Solomon, Forasmuch as this is done of thee, and thou hast not kept my covenant and my statutes, which I have commanded thee, I will surely rend the kingdom from thee, and will give it to thy servant. Notwithstanding in thy days I will not do it for David thy father's sake: but I will rend it out of the hand of thy son. Howbeit I will not rend away all the kingdom; but will give one tribe to thy son for David my servant's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake which I have chosen."

1 Kings 11:11-13, KJV

Thus began the long history of the wars between the kingdoms of Judah, ruled from Jerusalem in the south, and Israel, or Ephraim, ruled from Samaria in the north. As a result of the foreign blood which was particularly prevalent in Samaria and northern Israel, even at the time of Christ, there were still hostile feelings between the Jews of Judah, and the Israelites of Samaria, known as the Samaritans. As should now be seen, all of these serious problems with idolatry and mixed marriages were a result of the children of Israel not obeying the commandments first given to Moses to destroy the devil-worshipping pagans which dwelt in the land of Canaan. Their compromises with the enemy, and sins against the Lord, had devastating effects on the land and people of ancient Israel.

Ethnically-speaking, due to the mixed marriages with those of Assyrian, Babylonian, Egyptian and Canaanite blood, the gene pool of the true Israelite became polluted with that of the darker-skinned Arabs and negroid races of Africa. In a religious sense, we have already seen the dire effects that pagan worship had on the ancient Israelite religious system.

Thus, it appears that the people who claim to be the Jews of modern Israel may not really be true Jews at all; neither in the flesh, nor in the Spirit. Genetically-speaking, I wonder how many of them are really pure; and spiritually-speaking, because of their rejection of Jesus Christ, most of them are not true Jews either. For more details regarding this issue of the true spiritual Israel, please refer to my series "Is God a Racist?".

Moving on, if you compare the names in the following verses with the nations and peoples I listed previously, you will see the direct relationship between them and Canaan; the father of the enemies of ancient Israel:

"And the sons of Ham; Cush, and Mizraim, and Phut, and Canaan. And the sons of Cush; Seba, and Havilah, and Sabtah, and Raamah, and Sabtecha: and the sons of Raamah; Sheba, and Dedan. And Cush begat Nimrod: he began to be a mighty one in the earth. He was a mighty hunter before the LORD: wherefore it is said, Even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before the LORD. And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar. Out of that land went forth Asshur, and builded Nineveh, and the city Rehoboth, and Calah, And Resen between Nineveh and Calah: the same is a great city. And Mizraim begat Ludim, and Anamim, and Lehabim, and Naphtuhim, And Pathrusim, and Casluhim, (out of whom came Philistim,) and Caphtorim. And Canaan begat Sidon his firstborn, and Heth, And the Jebusite, and the Amorite, and the Girgasite, And the Hivite, and the Arkite, and the Sinite, And the Arvadite, and the Zemarite, and the Hamathite: and afterward were the families of the Canaanites spread abroad. And the border of the Canaanites was from Sidon, as thou comest to Gerar, unto Gaza; as thou goest, unto Sodom, and Gomorrah, and Admah, and Zeboim, even unto Lasha. These are the sons of Ham, after their families, after their tongues, in their countries, and in their nations."

Genesis 10:6-20, KJV

Notice that these "countries" and "nations" were all located within the borders of Canaan; which again shows that our understanding of the word "nation" is not the same as it is used in the Bible. It simply meant a certain ethnic group. Following below is a list of some of the various gods and goddesses which were worshipped by these pagan nations and other foreign invaders; all of which were later idolized by the Israelites. All of these names can be found in the 1611

Authorized King James Bible. This list may not be complete:

1. Adrammelech - god of the Sepharvites of Sepharvaim, Syria introduced to Israel by Shalmanesser the fifth. Children were offered to this idol. It means "honour the king".

2. Anammelech - false god of the Assyrians introduced to Israel during the monarchy. Worshipped with rites resembling those of Molech. The companion god of Adrammelech. It means "image of the king".

3. Ashima - god worshipped by the men of Hamath in upper Syria. It means "guiltiness: I will make desolate".

4. Ashtoreth - supreme goddess -- of war and fertility -- of the Canaanites and Phoenicians known as Ishtar to the Assyrians, and as Astarte to the Greeks and Romans. It's also written as Ashtaroth or Astaroth. It may have also been Isis of the Egyptians. It means "star".

5. Baal - supreme god of the Canaanites and Phoenicians. Also known as Baalim. It means "lord".

6. Baal-peor - god worshipped at Peor with probable licentious rites. Means "lord of the gap".

7. Baal-zebub - god of the Philistines worshipped at Ekron. It means "lord of the flies".

9. Baalberith - god of the Philistines which means "lord of the covenant".

10. Bel - a chief Babylonian god. Possibly the same as Baal since it also means "lord".

11. Chemosh - the national deity of the Moabites and a god of the Ammonites, also identified with Baal-peor, Baal-zebub, Mars and Saturn. It means "subduer".

12. Chiun - probably a statue of the Assyrian and Babylonian god of the planet Saturn. It means "an image" or "pillar".

13. Dagon - god of fertility of the Philistines which had the face and hands of a man, and the tail of a fish. It means "a fish".

14. Merodach - the chief deity of the Babylonians in the

time of Nebuchadnezzar. It means "thy rebellion". It is also spelled as AMAR.UTU, Martuk, Marduk and Merōdak.

15. Milcom - believed to be an alternate name for Molech. Also Malcham. It means "great king".

16. Molech - god of the Ammonites and Phoenicians. It means "great king".

17. Nehushtan - name given to the serpent of brass made by Moses which the children of Israel idolized until it was destroyed by King Hezekiah. It means "a thing of brass".

18. Nergal - A chief deity of Assyria and Babylon which was worshipped by the men of Cuth northeast of Babylon. It means "hero".

19. Nibhaz - god of the Avites in the shape of a dog, which they introduced into Samaria in the time of Shalmanesser. Means "the barker".

20. Nisroch - a god of Nineveh worshipped by Assyrian king Sennacherib. It had a human body with an eagle's head. It means "the great eagle".

21. Remphan - name of an idol worshipped secretly by the Israelites in the wilderness. It may be associated with Chiun. It means "the shrunken" as in lifeless.

22. Shach - Babylonian goddess

23. Succoth - Assyrian or Babylonian deity worshipped by the Babylonians in Samaria. It means "the daughter's booth".

24. Tartak - god of the Avites of Samaria with the form of an ass. It means "prince of darkness".

As can be easily seen, when the children of Israel decided to backslide into paganism, they did it with full abandon. Can there be any doubt then as to why the Lord decided to remove His blessings from them? In the second Book of the Kings, we read the following account of their backslidings, which leaves no doubt concerning why the Lord allowed them to be carried away captive by the king of Assyria:

"For so it was, that the children of Israel had sinned against the LORD their God, which had brought them up out of

the land of Egypt, from under the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and had feared other gods, And walked in the statutes of the heathen, whom the LORD cast out from before the children of Israel, and of the kings of Israel, which they had made. And the children of Israel did secretly those things that were not right against the LORD their God, and they built them high places in all their cities, from the tower of the watchmen to the fenced city. And they set them up images and groves in every high hill, and under every green tree: And there they burnt incense in all the high places, as did the heathen whom the LORD carried away before them; and wrought wicked things to provoke the LORD to anger: For they served idols, whereof the LORD had said unto them, Ye shall not do this thing."

2 Kings 17:7-12, KJV

"Notwithstanding they would not hear, but hardened their necks, like to the neck of their fathers, that did not believe in the LORD their God. And they rejected his statutes, and his covenant that he made with their fathers, and his testimonies which he testified against them; and they followed vanity, and became vain, and went after the heathen that were round about them, concerning whom the LORD had charged them, that they should not do like them. And they left all the commandments of the LORD their God, and made them molten images, even two calves, and made a grove, and worshipped all the host of heaven, and served Baal. And they caused their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire, and used divination and enchantments, and sold themselves to do evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger. Therefore the LORD was very angry with Israel, and removed them out of his sight: there was none left but the tribe of Judah only. Also Judah kept not the commandments of the LORD their God, but walked in the statutes of Israel which they made. And the LORD rejected all the seed of Israel, and afflicted them, and delivered them into the hand of spoilers, until he had cast them out of his sight. For he rent Israel from the house of David; and they made Jeroboam the son of Nebat king: and Jeroboam drave Israel from following the LORD, and made them sin a great sin. For the children of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam which he did; they departed not from them; Until the LORD removed Israel out of his sight, as he had said by all his servants the prophets. So was Israel carried away out of their own land to Assyria unto this day."

2 Kings 17:14-23, KJV

Not only did the Lord allow the inhabitants of the northern kingdom of Israel to be carried away captive into Assyria and lands beyond, but we are also told that Esar-haddon, the king of Assyria at the time, brought idol-worshipping people from Babylon, Assyria and Syria, to replace those whom he had carried away captive out of Samaria, the capital of Israel, as we see by these verses:

"And the king of Assyria brought men from Babylon, and from Cuthah, and from Ava, and from Hamath, and from Sepharvaim, and placed them in the cities of Samaria instead of the children of Israel: and they possessed Samaria, and dwelt in the cities thereof . . . Howbeit every nation made gods of their own, and put them in the houses of the high places which the Samaritans had made, every nation in their cities wherein they dwelt. And the men of Babylon made Succothbenoth, and the men of Cuth made Nergal, and the men of Hamath made Ashima, And the Avites made Nibhaz and Tartak, and the Sepharvites burnt their children in fire to Adrammelech and Anammelech, the gods of Sepharvaim. So they feared the LORD, and made unto themselves of the lowest of them priests of the high places, which sacrificed for them in the houses of the high places. They feared the LORD, and served their own gods, after the manner of the nations whom they carried away from thence. Unto this day they do after the former manners: they fear not the LORD, neither do they after their statutes, or after their ordinances, or after the law and commandment which the LORD commanded the children of Jacob, whom he named Israel;"

2 Kings 17:24, 29-34, KJV

The Book of the Judges is also very revealing concerning the depth of the pagan worship into which the children of Israel had fallen; even before the appointment of their very first king, Saul. In the tenth chapter we read the following:

"And the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the LORD, and served Baalim, and Ashtaroth, and the gods of Syria, and the gods of Zidon, and the gods of Moab, and the gods of the children of Ammon, and the gods of the Philistines, and forsook the LORD, and served not him."

Judges 10:6, KJV

According to the young Prophet Jeremiah, just prior to the Babylonian invasions by King Nebuchadnezzar, there were so many false gods and goddesses in Judah, that they numbered as many as the cities therein; and the altars numbered as

many as the streets of Jerusalem. Jeremiah wrote:

"For according to the number of thy cities were thy gods, O Judah; and according to the number of the streets of Jerusalem have ye set up altars to that shameful thing, even altars to burn incense unto Baal."

Jeremiah 11:13, KJV

Jeremiah also spoke of how the people of Jerusalem offered their children upon the altars of Molech in the Valley of Hinnom; which was a steep gorge running east to west, just south of Jerusalem. It was later used to burn garbage and the dead bodies of criminals. Jesus used Hinnom, or Gehenna, as an example of hellfire, as I point out in the series entitled "Hell, the Lake of Fire and Universal Atonement". Jeremiah again wrote:

"And they built the high places of Baal, which are in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to cause their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire unto Molech; which I commanded them not, neither came it into my mind, that they should do this abomination, to cause Judah to sin."

Jeremiah 32:35, KJV

After Johanan, the son of Kareah, and all of the captains of the forces had taken the remnant of Judah, including all of the men, women and children, plus Jeremiah the Prophet and Baruch the son of Neriah, down to Taphanhes in Egypt, where they hoped to escape further wrath from King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, the Lord rebuked Johanan via Jeremiah by saying:

"Take great stones in thine hand, and hide them in the clay in the brickkiln, which is at the entry of Pharaoh's house in Tahpanhes, in the sight of the men of Judah; And say unto them, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will send and take Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and will set his throne upon these stones that I have hid; and he shall spread his royal pavilion over them. And when he cometh, he shall smite the land of Egypt, and deliver such as are for death to death; and such as are for captivity to captivity; and such as are for the sword to the sword. And I will kindle a fire in the houses of the gods of Egypt; and he shall burn them, and carry them away captives: and he shall array himself with the land of Egypt, as a shepherd putteth on his garment; and he shall go forth from thence in peace. He shall break also the images of Bethshemesh, that is in the land of Egypt; and

the houses of the gods of the Egyptians shall be burn with fire."

Jeremiah 43:9-13, KJV

In the previous verses, "Bethshemesh" means "the house of the sun", or "sun-temple". Tahpanhes is currently known as "Tel Defenneh", or "Tel Defneh", and is located about eighteen miles east southeast of Tanis, Egypt. In the Book of Psalms, King David also wrote very descriptively concerning the grave disobediences, the bloody sacrifice of children, and the spiritual whoredoms of Israel in the following verses:

"They joined themselves also unto Baalpeor, and ate the sacrifices of the dead . . . They did not destroy the nations, concerning whom the LORD commanded them: But were mingled among the heathen, and learned their works. And they served their idols: which were a snare unto them. Yea, they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils, And shed innocent blood, even the blood of their sons and of their daughters, whom they sacrificed unto the idols of Canaan: and the land was polluted with blood. Thus were they defiled with their own works, and went a whoring with their own inventions."

Psalms 106:28, 34-39, KJV

As we conclude this series in part seven, we will look at such topics as the importance of tempering chastisement with hope and mercy, the promised return to Israel, God's desire for us to repent, our sins made as white as snow, the danger of becoming numb to the conviction of God's Spirit due to sin, the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D., the danger of forsaking God's Mercy, the coming Arab invasion of Israel, the Battle of Armageddon, the definition of an antichrist, and God's Wrath. I trust that you will join me.

Please go to part seven for the conclusion of this series.

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THE FRUITS OF DISOBEDIENCE : PART SEVEN

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Lessons Recap And Learning From The Past, Chastisement Is Tempered With Hope And Followed By Mercy, Promised Return, God Pleads With Us To Repent, Our Sins Made White As Snow, Past Feeling Due To Sin, Destruction Of Jerusalem By Titus Forsaking God's Mercy, The Arab Invasion Of Israel, Battle Of Armageddon, Who Is An Antichrist?, Ungodly Hypocritical America, Who Will Escape God's Wrath?, Closing Remarks

Through this lengthy, and hopefully interesting, discussion, we have now gained a better understanding of the depth of the Israelites' apostasy, from the time that they were in Egypt, up until the time of the three Babylonian invasions during the 6th Century B.C. We have seen how the Lord was repeatedly forced to deal with them, to such a degree that literally thousands of Israelites were eventually carried away as slaves into Assyria, Babylonia, Media, etc. We have also gained some historical insights regarding the conquest of the Promised Land, met a few of the leaders and kings who ruled during that time period, and studied the events which resulted in the kingdom of Israel being divided in half. We have also come to understand the spiritual factors which led to this apostasy, and have seen how we can apply the lessons learned to our own lives today, as Christians who must fight a similar battle of faith and perseverance in this ungodly modern world. As we saw in part one, the Apostle Paul wrote:

"But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand. Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents. Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer. Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.

Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."

1 Corinthians 10:5-12, KJV

While we have concentrated on the sins, disobediences and failures of the children of Israel in this series, it is also important that we remember that their periods of chastisement were also followed by periods of Divine Mercy. In short, as I explained earlier, just as we human parents may become upset with our children, and may be forced to punish them in order to help them to see the error of their ways, but will in the end grant them forgiveness and shower them with love again, so too, the Lord will eventually show His Mercy, and will end the punishment. It is for this very reason that in warning the Israelites of the coming chastisement by the Assyrians, the Lord doesn't want them to lose hope altogether, or to doubt His love for them; thus, Isaiah writes the following:

"Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD of hosts, O my people that dwellest in Zion, be not afraid of the Assyrian: he shall smite thee with a rod, and shall lift up his staff against thee, after the manner of Egypt. For yet a very little while, and the indignation shall cease, and mine anger in their destruction. And the LORD of hosts shall stir up a scourge for him according to the slaughter of Midian at the rock of Oreb: and as his rod was upon the sea, so shall he lift it up after the manner of Egypt. And it shall come to pass in that day, that his burden shall be taken away from off thy shoulder, and his yoke from off thy neck, and the yoke shall be destroyed because of the anointing."

Isaiah 10:24-27, KJV

You may recall that in part one, I also shared the following verses with you, which are likewise found in the prophecies of Isaiah:

"For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the LORD thy Redeemer."

Isaiah 54:7-8, KJV

So, even though the Lord was going to chastise them severely due to their waywardness, there is the promise of redemption; and Isaiah tells them that after the Assyrian has done God's Will as one of His "vessels of wrath", he too shall meet his end. As I explain in other articles, this is precisely what

occurred too. The Assyrians were eventually overcome by their sister empire to the south, the Babylonians. Many years later the Lord would do the very same thing through Jeremiah. Like his predecessor, Isaiah, Jeremiah would warn the backslidden people of Judah of the coming Babylonian invasions; but the Lord would have Jeremiah temper his words of chastisement with hope and mercy as well, as we see by these verses:

"Behold, I will gather them out of all countries, whither I have driven them in mine anger, and in my fury, and in great wrath; and I will bring them again unto this place, and I will cause them to dwell safely: And they shall be my people, and I will be their God: And I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after them: And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me. Yea, I will rejoice over them to do them good, and I will plant them in this land assuredly with my whole heart and with my whole soul. For thus saith the LORD; Like as I have brought all this great evil upon this people, so will I bring upon them all the good that I have promised them. And fields shall be bought in this land, whereof ye say, It is desolate without man or beast; it is given into the hand of the Chaldeans. Men shall buy fields for money, and subscribe evidences, and seal them, and take witnesses in the land of Benjamin, and in the places about Jerusalem, and in the cities of Judah, and in the cities of the mountains, and in the cities of the valley, and in the cities of the south: for I will cause their captivity to return, saith the LORD." Jeremiah 32:37-44, KJV

There are other verses as well in Jeremiah's writings where the Lord promises to show the Jews mercy, by allowing them to return to the land of Israel, once the seventy years of captivity have been fulfilled. The Prophet Ezekiel, who was a contemporary of the Prophet Daniel, also wrote of God's promise to return the children of Israel to their own land once they had served out their punishment. Again, following are some example verses for your personal consideration:

"Therefore say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; I will even gather you from the people, and assemble you out of the countries where ye have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel. And they shall come thither, and they shall take away all the detestable things thereof and all the

abominations thereof from thence. And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh: That they may walk in my statutes, and keep mine ordinances, and do them: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God."

Ezekiel 11:17-20, KJV

"I will accept you with your sweet savour, when I bring you out from the people, and gather you out of the countries wherein ye have been scattered; and I will be sanctified in you before the heathen. And ye shall know that I am the LORD, when I shall bring you into the land of Israel, into the country for the which I lifted up mine hand to give it to your fathers. And there shall ye remember your ways, and all your doings, wherein ye have been defiled; and ye shall lothe yourselves in your own sight for all your evils that ye have committed."

Ezekiel 20:41-43, KJV

"For thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I, even I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out. As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day. And I will bring them out from the people, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land, and feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the rivers, and in all the inhabited places of the country. I will feed them in a good pasture, and upon the high mountains of Israel shall their fold be: there shall they lie in a good fold, and in a fat pasture shall they feed upon the mountains of Israel. I will feed my flock, and I will cause them to lie down, saith the Lord GOD. I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick: but I will destroy the fat and the strong; I will feed them with judgment."

Ezekiel 34:11-16, KJV

So the lesson here is that no matter how bad we have been, if we truly repent from our hearts, in His Divine Mercy, God will not only forgive us for our sins, but He will restore us to fellowship with Him. Isn't that what Jesus' Sacrifice is all about? In the very first chapter of his book, the Lord pleads with all of us through Isaiah when he writes:

"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD:
though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as
snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as
wool."

Isaiah 1:18, KJV

Some eight hundred years later, the Apostle Peter would also
write in his second Epistle:

"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men
count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not
willing that any should perish, but that all should come to
repentance."

2 Peter 3:9, KJV

From the time that Isaiah and Peter wrote those words until
today, in His Mercy, God has continued to call His children
to repent of their sins. We may have to first experience the
fruits of our disobedience to Him, but like the story of the
Prodigal Son, the Father is always patiently waiting for us
to come to our senses and return to Him. As I fully explain
in "The Blood Atonement: In Jesus' Own Words", through the
atoning Blood of Jesus Christ, who died for the sins of the
world, we have all been offered the opportunity to have our
sins made as white as snow. The question is, do we really
want God's forgiveness? Are we even willing to recognize the
sins in our lives? Are we willing to confess our need for a
Savior? Or is our pride so great, that we prefer to live in
a state of delusion, thinking that we are okay with the Lord,
when we most certainly are not?

We all need to remember that just one small sin in our lives,
one seemingly-innocent disobedience, or one small complaint,
can lead to another, until Satan has totally destroyed our
effectiveness for the Lord, and separated us from our Father
in Heaven. It is kind of interesting the way sin works its
way into our lives. With each disobedience, we become bolder
and bolder, and more rebellious against the Lord, until we
finally no longer even feel the conviction of His Spirit in
our hearts. As the Apostle Paul wrote, we reach a point of
being "past feeling", as we see here:

"This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye
henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of
their mind, Having the understanding darkened, being
alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is
in them, because of the blindness of their heart: Who being

past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness."

Ephesians 4:17-19, KJV

Sadly, this is precisely what happened to the Israelites of old, and it is what is continuing to happen throughout the world today as well. Even though the Lord repeatedly showed the Jews His Mercy, by allowing them to escape out of Egypt, by defeating their enemies time and time again, and by even allowing them to return to Israel a second time following the Assyrian and the Babylonian invasions, yet they did not learn their lesson for very long. By the time of the First Century, their sins had once again led them to be victims of the Roman occupation. As we all know, during that time, the Jewish leadership filled their cup of iniquity, when they rejected God's offer of Forgiveness and Salvation, and made themselves responsible for the Crucifixion of the very Son of God. Thus, as I point out in other articles, in the year 70 A.D., Jerusalem, and the rebuilt temple of Solomon, were leveled to the ground by General Titus -- the son of Emperor Vespasian -- and his Roman legions; precisely as Jesus had prophesied some forty years earlier in Matthew chapter twenty-four, as we see here:

"And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to him for to shew him the buildings of the temple. And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down."

Matthew 24:1-2, KJV

According to some historical records, as many as one million Israelites were slaughtered, as a result of three years of Roman carnage. In light of those catastrophic events which occurred during the First Century, the period of repentance which had transpired five hundred years earlier following Cyrus' decree to return to Jerusalem, which is described in the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah, seems so useless now, and such a waste of time. But, as we have already seen, these alternating periods of chastisement and repentance, seem to be the pattern which the Jews have followed since the time of their deliverance out of Egyptian bondage. Let me remind you again of a verse I shared with you in part one, which was written by the Prophet Isaiah. Please note that while it is translated here as "favor", in sixteen other places in the Old Testament, the Hebrew word "chanan" is translated as "mercy":

"Let favour be shewed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness: in the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly, and will not behold the majesty of the LORD."
Isaiah 26:10, KJV

You may also recall that in part one, I mentioned that during his time of distress and personal tribulation, when he was in the belly of the great fish, the Prophet Jonah also uttered some words of wisdom, which reveal the utter foolishness of forsaking God's mercy for a lie. Jonah wrote:

"They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy."
Jonah 2:8, KJV

Today, two thousand years later, the obstinacy of the Jews continues unabated; and the vast majority of them are still so blind, that they reject the Messiahship of Jesus Christ. It is for this reason, that as I explain in articles such as "Oh Israel, Why Will Ye Die?" and "The Great Tribulation and the Rapture", I believe that the Lord may soon harshly judge them once again. It seems that history is repeating itself. Just as the Angel of the Lord prophesied so long ago, as a result of her sins against God, Israel's enemies continue to be thorns in her side; and one day soon, in God's appointed time, they are going to attack her again. Only then will her pride finally be broken; and a remnant of her people will finally accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.

While nations such as Egypt and Jordan have signed peace treaties with Israel, when the final showdown comes between the Arabs and the Jews, I suspect that these two countries will choose to side with their Muslim brethren. If I am correct in my understanding of Endtime prophecy, this final confrontation will be the prophesied Battle of Armageddon, which will occur in the plain of Megiddo, which is located in northern Israel. For more information regarding this topic, please refer to articles such as "From Armageddon to the New Earth". In the Book of Revelation, or Apocalypse, we read the following:

"And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty . . . And he

gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon."

Revelation 16:13-14, 16, KJV

In all fairness, as I have already pointed out, we need to realize that the sins of rebellion and unbelief are by no means limited to the modern Jews alone. While God has chosen to use them as His example in the Scriptures -- which is why I write about them so much -- precisely as Paul explained in the verse I shared earlier, they are not the only antichrists in the world today. There are many ungodly individuals within the Gentile world as well. In fact, the Gentile antichrists way outnumber the Jewish antichrists, due to the simple fact that there only about fourteen million Jews in the world, as opposed to some six billion Gentiles. The truth of the matter is that any person who knowingly rejects Jesus Christ as his Lord and Savior, is in fact an antichrist, regardless of his ethnicity. As the Apostle John plainly tells us:

"Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son."

1 John 2:22, KJV

"And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world."

1 John 4:3, KJV

"For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist."

2 John 1:7, KJV

So, many people the world over, and not just the Jews, have hardened their hearts to the Voice of God, and have totally blocked Him out of their lives; even in such places as the so-called "Christian" United States of America. It is very heart-breaking to realize that this country, which claims to be the most Christian nation upon Earth, is in reality one of the most violent, oppressive, blood-thirsty, vengeful, selfish, materialistic, wasteful, sexually-immoral nations upon the face of the Earth. The United States has waged more wars, economically oppressed more people, killed more babies, exported more sexual filth, and polluted the environment more than any other nation in modern history. While America claims to be blessed and favored by God, she has nullified many of

His Laws, and turned her heart, eyes and ears away from Him, as she becomes drunker and drunker on her own foolish pride and vanity. As Jesus said of the ungodly Jewish leadership of His own day:

"This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me."

Matthew 15:8, KJV

A primary example of this occurred just two days ago when the Episcopal Church USA, in total defiance of its mother church, the worldwide Anglican Church Communion, consecrated its first openly-gay bishop, the Reverend Gene Robinson, in the state of New Hampshire. How can God possibly turn away His anger and judgments, when even His own children defy Him, and mock His Word? Tell me; if the Israelites of old did not escape God's Wrath, who is anyone else today to think that they will escape it either? Furthermore, if God's own children barely survive His loving chastisements, as Peter questions, where does that leave the rest of the unbelieving world, or even backslidden, compromising, worldly Christendom?:

"For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?"

1 Peter 4:17-18, KJV

So the overall lesson of this series is this: We must each endeavor to do our best to stay close to the Lord, to remain obedient to His Word, and to walk in humility and lowliness of heart before Him. We must not permit the evil fruits of disobedience to fill our lives, as they filled the lives of the Israelites of old. If we do these things, if we choose to obey Him out of a pure heart, then we can look forward to receiving His Divine Blessings, such as His Protection, as well as His Provision. On the other hand, if we fail to do these things, and walk contrary to Him, then consider this:

"For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye,

shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? . . . It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God . . . For our God is a consuming fire."

Hebrews 10:26-29, 31, 12:29, KJV

God will soon begin His "house-cleaning". How many of us will be left standing by the time He has finished the job? With these profound thoughts, I will bring this series to its conclusion. I hope that you have found it informative, and I pray that it has been a blessing and an inspiration in your life.

If you have enjoyed reading this series, please consider sharing its URL with your online friends. If you have an account with Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr or with any other social network, I would also appreciate if you would take the time to click on the corresponding link that is found on this page. Thanks so much, and may God bless you abundantly!

For additional information, you may want to refer to the list of reading resources below which were also mentioned in this series, or which are related to this series, and which are likewise located on the Bill's Bible Basics web server:

Are You Clean Every Whit?

Beholding the Evil and the Good

Biblical Cafeteria Or the Whole Course?

Dracula: Fighting Fear with the Word, Faith and Love

Free Will and Personal Choice

From Armageddon to the New Earth

Greater Israel Doctrine: Exposed!

Hell, the Lake of Fire and Universal Atonement

Is God a Racist?

Job and the Land of Uz: A Biblical Mystery?

Love and Light, or Rod and Wrath?

Oh Israel, Why Will Ye Die?

Our Pagan World: The Easter Myth Exposed

Peter: Faith Tried in the Fire

Satan: King of Tyrus, King of Empires!

Selfishness: A Sign of the Endtime?

So You Really Think You Are So Humble?

The Beginning of Sorrows

The Children of God and Politics
The Great Tribulation and the Rapture
The International Jew and the Protocols of Zion
The Kings of the North and the South
The Plight of the Children
The Seven Heads
What Is God's Will For My Life?

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