

### [Is God Collecting Ancient Antiques In Heaven?](#)

John saw a vision of the "Ark of the Testimony" in the Temple in heaven (Revelation 11:19). The Ark of the Testimony is also called the Ark of the Covenant and the Ark of the Testament. It was built by ancient Israel under explicit plans given by God. It contained the Ten Commandments, written with the finger of Jehovah God. It was of the finest materials, and was decorated with overshadowing cherubim. It represented the very Throne of God, and was the most priceless national treasure of ancient Israel. If this precious ark contains only some old, musty, archaic relic which has been abolished; if it contains only an old, unworkable, unwanted, harsh law which has been done away, why does God want it to occupy such a prominent place in His temple in heaven? Does God merely want to begin a "heavenly museum" so He can display something "old"?

### [PESTILENCE!](#)

The made-for-TV thriller, Robin Cook's Virus; the recent movie starring Dustin Hoffman, Outbreak; a sensational non-fiction account titled The Hot Zone-all have focused attention on recent fears generated by Ebola virus deaths in Zaire. What should you know about Jesus' prediction of PESTILENCE in the last days?

### [Imperial Academy Begins Second Year of Full-Time Classes](#)

For several years after incorporation, Imperial Academy was able to offer only regional seminars, weekend Bible studies, and one and two-week summer classes. However, beginning in early autumn of 1994, the Academy began accepting full-time students in residence on campus. Here, in brief, is a statement of purpose and outline of the Academy. Interested full or part-time students, take notice!



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A monthly review of current events.

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Part 3

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Continuing in this issue, we present a new way of studying your Bible. Using this magazine, your own Bible, a cassette tape recorder, and a notebook, you can dramatically increase your knowledge and understanding of the Bible. Read on to see how it works.



### [What I say to, I say to everyone: Watch! \(Mark 13:37\)](#)

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## You *Can* Take It With You!

(Or: Everything You've Always Wanted To Know  
About What Happens When We Die)

Part 3

by Garner Ted Armstrong

## Gehenna Fire and the Lake of Fire

Notice that, in Revelation 20:10, the translators added the word *are* in italics following the word *prophet*. But Jesus Christ had cast the beast and the false prophet, two human beings, into the fire of Gehenna immediately after His return, one thousand years previously!

Notice it: "And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him that sat on the horse, and against His army. And the beast was taken [seized, arrested], and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he had deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone" (Revelation 19:19-20).

This causes their deaths by fire! It is possible, however, that their bodies are not immediately consumed. In Ezekiel 28 and Isaiah 14, God uses the prince of Tyre and the king of Babylon as types, or representatives, of Satan. The king of Babylon is at once a type of Satan and a type of the beast, for he was, anciently, the first of the great beasts (meaning Gentile kingdoms ruled by men with predatory, rapacious, carnal minds like animals).

Notice how type blends into antitype, and how we are perhaps given a glimpse into precisely what happens when Christ throws both of these satanic, filthy, posturing, mass murderers into Gehenna fire next to Jerusalem: "I will ascend above the heights of the clouds: I will be like the most High" says Satan, as typified by the king of Babylon (Isaiah 14:14).

But, in the next verse, both Satan and the king of Babylon, or the final beast of prophecy, are implied: "Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell [Hebrew, sheol, the exact same word as hades in the Greek, meaning "the grave"], to the sides of the pit.

"They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee [gaze intently, squint], saying, Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms; That made the world as a wilderness [destroyed massive amounts of the earth in war], and destroyed the cities thereof [probably in nuclear attacks]; that opened not the house of his prisoners? All the kings of the nations, even all of them, lie in glory, every one in his own house. But thou art cast out of thy grave like an abominable branch, and as the raiment of those that are slain, thrust through with the sword, that go down to the stones of the pit [the stony sides of the valley of Hinnom?]; as a carcass trodden under feet. Thou shalt not be joined with them in burial, because thou hast destroyed thy land, and slain thy people: the seed of evildoers shall never be renowned" (Isaiah 14:16-20).

One is reminded of Benito Mussolini, who was a modern type of the beast of prophecy. In the 1930s, after invading Ethiopia, beginning many public works projects, building freeways, apartment buildings, dams, railways, and marshalling the Italian people into a militaristic state, Mussolini would strut about, jutting out his prominent lower jaw, accepting the adulation and worship of millions.

His appearances on his balcony overlooking a major square in Rome are legendary. Hundreds of thousands would be screaming and shouting, "Il Duce! Il Duce! Il Duce!" as he postured and strutted in his military uniform complete with white cocks' feathers cascading from his hat.

Then, after Italy betrayed the Germans and formally surrendered-though still mostly occupied by Germans who were fighting a fierce delaying action against advancing American and British troops-Mussolini sought to escape into Switzerland.

He was captured, then executed by partisans.

His body, along with that of his mistress, were hoisted into the air by their feet, and thousands filed by, beating the bodies with sticks, spitting on them, defiling them.

The once proud dictator was so beaten that most of the bones of his body were smashed-his features unrecognizable, the bloating body swinging from a rope.

How quickly the adoring masses become a raging, murderous mob when their once revered leader has dashed their hopes and dreams.

If the scriptures in Isaiah 14 are to be taken literally, after Satan, the antitype, blends back into the King of Babylon, the type, it is possible the bodies of both the beast and the false prophet will jounce off the rocky sides of the "pit" that is once more to become a burning Gehenna fire during the millennial reign of Christ; that they will come to rest only partially burnt. The "Valley of Hinnom," as mentioned earlier, was like the "town dump," where perpetual, smoldering fires fed continually on the daily fuel of trash, garbage, and an occasional dead animal, or criminal denied burial.

The picture of Isaiah 14 indicates that the body of the beast, or the super military dictator who ruled over the ten kings of the beast power (Revelation 17:12-14), will come to rest among the rocks in the "sides of the pit," where his partially burnt, broken, bloating body will be visible to those who come to view this once proud, adored (Revelation 13:4) and worshipped man.

Perhaps thousands will file by, saying, "Is this the man that made the nations tremble?"

Remember then, that the Gehenna fire into which "death and hell," or the incorrigibly wicked, are cast-the Gehenna fire into which Satan himself is cast-is the Gehenna fire where the beast and the false prophet were cast over one thousand years earlier!

That Gehenna fire will grow to absorb the world itself! We have already read of this final, worldwide destruction by fire in II Peter, the second chapter.

Clearly, then, Gehenna fire will be continually burning all during the millennial reign of Jesus Christ! Why?

## **Christ's Righteous Punishments for Crime and Sin In His Kingdom**

As Jesus Christ establishes His glorious world rule on this earth, He is joined by perhaps a million or two, who constitute the "dead in Christ" and the living who are "changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," at the last trump (I Corinthians 15:50-52). (For a complete understanding of this great event, and what it means to be truly "born again," please write, or call immediately for the free booklet, *Why You Were Born.*)

God's Word tells us we are to be "co-heirs with Christ," that we are to be "like Him; for we shall see Him as He is" (Romans 8:17; I John 3:2). The "new creature in Christ" of which we read is to be born of God, given a spirit body, to become a member of God's own family!

Millions of deceived, professing Christians absolutely refuse to believe the plain, easily understood statements of God's Word about the future state of the dead in Christ—the state of being of those who are changed from flesh to spirit in the resurrection.

The Jews accused Jesus Christ of "blasphemy" because He "made Himself equal with God." To them, such a claim was preposterous.

Yet, your Bible insists that the resurrected saints will be co-heirs with Christ; that they shall be like Him, for they will see Him as He is!

Suppose you are named as a co-heir by a long lost millionaire uncle you never knew you had. His estate is worth 100 million dollars. As a co-heir with another relative, how much do you receive? Exactly the same amount as your other relative, or 50 million dollars!

A co-heir shares equally. To be "like Him" means exactly what it says. The beautiful "resurrection chapter" of I Corinthians 15 shows converted human beings will be changed from flesh to spirit, from corruptible to incorruptible, from human to divine. Millions suppose that salvation entails becoming some lesser being, perhaps slightly above the angelic realm.

The purely fictional fantasies of many professing Christian churches portray vague images of how it will be in the "last days," or in the "judgment," or when people allegedly "get to heaven." They suppose, vaguely, that the sheer joys of "gazing into the Master's face," of living in "heavenly mansions," or of playing harps and wafting about heaven on angelic wings will be the reward of the saved.

But your Bible plainly shows that God Almighty is reproducing after His own kind! Creation was not completed in Eden, it was only begun. The final, superb masterpiece of God's creation is the re-creation of His own kind, through begetting with His Spirit, growth to become like Him, and final birth into the spiritual family of God in the resurrection!

All nature shouts this truth at us. The Bible shouts this truth at us. Yet, this glorious, unimaginable reward is scornfully rejected by nearly all the professing Christian churches.

Christ is called the "Firstborn of many brethren." Notice it: "For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren" (Romans 8:29). You were "conformed to the image" of your human parents. One who is "conformed to the image" of God's own Son, Jesus Christ, is one who becomes exactly like Him, like a member of the same family!

Do you have brothers or sisters? Are you on the same level with them? Are you members of the same family? Of course!

When all the ancient patriarchs, the prophets, and the righteous men and women of old join the 144,000, the great innumerable multitude (Revelation 7), and all the living saints in the resurrection at the Second Coming of Christ, they will be born of God!

Instantaneously, "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," (I Corinthians 15:50-52), the living saints will also be born of God. It is vitally important you understand this. (Please call immediately for your free copy of *Why You Were Born.*)

Jesus Christ will begin to RULE this world with a rod of iron (Revelation 2:26; 19:15; 20:4). His rule will feature absolute, righteous justice for all. Crimes will be punished exactly proportionate to the crime, until crime becomes virtually nonexistent during most of the Millennium.

No longer will there be the necessity to preach God's Word, the gospel, as a witness. No longer will people be "invited" by preaching. No longer will the gospel fall on deaf ears, or be spurned and rejected. No, the returning Christ will force the nations to obey Him.

Notice an important example: "And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came up against Jerusalem [in the Battle of Armageddon, just prior to Christ's return] shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the ETERNAL of Hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles" (Zechariah 14:16).

The first great universal edict that Christ and His governing, ruling brothers and sisters of the divine family of Elohim will issue is that the nations of the world will keep God's annual holy days! And they will be forced to obey!

Notice: "And it shall be that, whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the Eternal of Hosts, even upon them shall be no rain. And if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not, that have no rain [if some remain stubborn, even in the face of drought, and lost harvests]; there shall be the plague [ravaging disease epidemics!], wherewith the Eternal will smite the heathen that come not up to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. This shall be the punishment of Egypt, and the

punishment of all nations [it matters not which-all nations of the earth are included] that come not up to keep the Feast of Tabernacles" (Zechariah 14:18,19).

As an example to others, thousands will die of starvation and disease if they refuse to obey the divine, conquering, King of kings and Lord of lords, now ruling from His throne in Jerusalem! This brings up an interesting question-one you can apply to yourself. Do you keep the Feast of Tabernacles now? Should you be keeping it? Most will answer no. The answer to the next question is already foreordained. Will you be keeping the Feast of Tabernacles during the Millennium? The answer from your coming King of kings is "Yes! You will!" With one exception. Those who willfully reject God's laws will simply not be in His kingdom.

God's Word gives us insight into the structure of God's government under Christ.

God says David will be the king over all the twelve tribes of Israel. He will be alive again, but now glorified, as a member of God's own family! After describing the resurrection of Israel, God says: "And David my servant shall be king over them; and they all shall have one shepherd: they shall also walk in my judgments, and observe my statutes, and do them. And they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob My servant, wherein your fathers have dwelt; and they shall dwell therein, even they, and their children, and their children's children for ever; and My servant David shall be their prince for ever" (Ezekiel 37:24,25).

David was a man after God's own heart. He was a repentant when he was convicted of sin (Psalm 51). God promised him a throne which would never fail.

Notice another clear example of David's future position as king over all Israel during the Millennium: "Alas! For that day is great [the tribulation! Daniel 12:1,2; Matthew 24:21], so that none is like it. It is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it. For it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Eternal of hosts, that I will break his yoke from off thy neck [write or call for my book, Europe and America in Prophecy], and will burst thy bonds, and strangers shall no more serve themselves of him: But they shall serve the Eternal their God, and David their king, whom I will raise up unto them" (Jeremiah 30:7-9). Today, David is "both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us..." (Acts 2:29). He is profoundly asleep, completely unaware of the passage of time.

But he will be resurrected, "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump, for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible" (I Corinthians 15:50-52).

Christ also promised His disciples that they would rule over Israel, each on a throne over a specific nation, and each under David, who would obviously be king over all: "Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations. And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as My Father hath appointed unto Me; That ye may eat and drink at My table in the kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Matthew 19:28; Luke 22:28-30).

Jesus gave three of His most trusted disciples, James, and John, a foretaste of His kingdom in the famous "transfiguration."

"And after six days, Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart. And was transfigured before them...."

The word means His entire physiognomy was changed. Suddenly, He did not appear human, but Godlike, in divine, glorious splendor!

"His face did shine as the sun, and His raiment was white as the light. And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias [Elijah] talking with Him. Then answered Peter and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here; if Thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles [booths, kiosks, small, temporary dwelling places]; one for Thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias. While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is My beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him. And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid" (Matthew 17:1-6).

Later, Jesus cautioned them, "Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of man be risen again from the dead" (verse 9).

This was a vision, not an actual resurrection of Moses and Elijah. The disciples could not have known they were seeing a vision of Moses and Elijah unless they heard their names. There were no photographs or busts of Moses and Elijah about; they had no idea what they looked like hundreds of years before, when they were alive.

Not only were they granted a glimpse into the glorious state of being of the resurrected dead in Christ's kingdom, they were also treated to an angelic messenger's voice (it was not the voice of God the Father, for no one has heard His voice at any time [John 5:37]) which so shocked and frightened them that they fell to the ground, and hid their faces.

John, in vision, saw the glorified Christ on the Isle of Patmos (Revelation 1:12-17). Again, His face shone like the sun, and His raiment was white like light, and His eyes were like a flame of fire!

Now, notice the first act of punishment Jesus Christ will mete out immediately upon His return to this earth: "And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him that sat on the horse [Christ], and against His army [angelic hosts]. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone" (Revelation 19:19,20). We covered this passage previously, but not in complete detail.

Now, who is present with Christ when He administers capital punishment-death by fire to the military dictator and the "man of sin," the false prophet?



Hopefully, YOU AND I. Present with Christ, says your Bible, will be all the resurrected saints, with all those who were changed instantaneously at His Second Coming. In that very day, His feet, and all the feet of those who accompany Him will stand upon the Mount of Olives (Zechariah 14:4; I Thessalonians 4:17). The statement, "the beast was taken," means he was seized, arrested. This arrest, and casting into Gehenna fire of the beast and false prophet will not be done privately, or in a few seconds of time! Very likely, it will be a great, world-known and witnessed event SEEN by perhaps the whole population of earth!

This will be the very first example of capital punishment carried out by the returning, conquering Christ! It will be a lesson to archcriminals, an example to the depraved, power-mad men who would exploit others for their own lusts. Others will "hear and fear" when they see the terrible punishment these two will receive. Over and over again, God's Word shows that God's righteous judgments demand "life for life, an eye for an eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe" (Exodus 21:23-25). Today, many a spineless, simpering, tremble-chinned, hair-shirted, breast-beating liberal fancies himself (or herself) more righteous than God Almighty!

NEVER would these supercilious, posturing, holier-than-thou people stoop to such "barbaric" practices as "descending to the same level" as murderers! Why, to them, it is merely vicious, bloody revenge to administer capital punishment to murderers!

One is forced to wonder what some of these weeping jelly brains would say if it were their daughter who was brutally gang raped and strangled to death, or if they themselves had been raped, grievously injured, and their loved ones murdered!

One views in disbelief the rabid liberals parading outside prisons where death sentences are finally carried out (often, after more than a decade of appeals-years and years of life for murderers, reading, gardening, watching television, playing cards, writing letters, or studying for a law degree so they can sue the police who arrested them). Their signs and placards scream against the terrible "brutality" and "injustice" of capital punishment!

Even such ghastly, bloodthirsty, satanic killers as Ted Bundy and Jeffery Dahmer, or John Gacy in Chicago-killers who left their raped, strangled or stabbed victims in a dozen states. Killers who viciously strangled, then had sex with dead bodies, or even practiced dismemberment and cannibalism, should be given LIFE as a reward for their unspeakably grisly, bestial crimes, according to our proverbial opponents of capital punishment.

But they are NOT more righteous than God the Father or Jesus Christ! They themselves, if they do not repent of their vicious, satanic attitude of judging God will receive the death penalty for their rotten, God-defying attitudes of sin and rebellion!

Whether we like it or not, the very first righteous act Jesus Christ the Savior will carry out upon His return will be casting two mass-murderers, the beast and the false prophet, into Gehenna fire! (If you have not yet read my free booklet, Crime Can Be Stopped -

Here's How! please write, or call for it immediately.) It is quite possible that the newly-ignited "Gehenna Fire" near Christ's capital city of Jerusalem will continue to burn during the entirety of the Millennium. Why? For the purpose of a powerful witness against any who would deliberately reject God's government, break God's laws, or flagrantly reject salvation! God's Word shows that capital punishment was carried out by the community, by stoning, so that others would "hear and fear." The simpering hair shirts of today weepingly argue that the death sentence does not deter crime. That is a lie. It is utter, bovine stupidity. First, the murderer who is put to death will never kill again! That certainly deters HIM, doesn't it?

Secondly, when potential murderers know that the penalty for murder is death, it makes them "hear and fear."

As an example, there are more than one and a half million potential crimes, such as robbery, burglary, assault, rape, and murder, that do not occur because potential victims were armed.

Recent studies in Florida prove that the presence of a gun, sometimes when merely displayed to a potential robber or rapist, completely changes his mind. But "crime" statistics do not include crimes not committed. Foiled attempts are not news. This shows the deterrent value of force.

Since the very first act of the returning, conquering Christ will be the act of carrying out capital punishment-death by fire for two mass murderers-it is obvious that He will decree the same punishment for any who would dare to break His righteous laws, the Ten Commandments.

## **Visible Deterrent- Visible Evidence**

During the millennial reign of Christ, the remaining human population, probably half or more of the present population of the world, will quickly expand.

God says: "Arise, shine: for thy light is come, and the glory of the Eternal is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Eternal shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light [this depicts the establishment of Christ's kingdom; and reminds us of His command to all nations to come up to Jerusalem to keep the Feast of Tabernacles (Zechariah 14)], and kings to the brightness of thy rising. Lift up thine eyes round about, and see: all they gather themselves together, they come to thee: thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side.

"Then thou shalt see, and flow together, and thine heart shall fear, and be enlarged; because the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, the forces [margin: wealth] of the Gentiles shall come unto thee...the glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee,

the fir tree, the pine tree, and the box together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary; and I will make the place of my feet glorious. The sons also of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee; and all they that despised thee shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet; and they shall call thee, The City of the Eternal, the Zion of the Holy One of Israel.

"Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, so that no man went through thee, I will make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations. Thou shalt also suck the milk of the Gentiles, and shall suck the breast of kings: and thou shalt know that I the Eternal am thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the mighty One of Jacob...violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders...thy people also shall be all righteous: they shall inherit the land forever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified. A little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation: I the Eternal will hasten it in his time" (Isaiah 60, excerpted).

In this beautiful, often poetic chapter, God uses Jerusalem as a type of His people. A time of righteousness, abundance, prosperity, and peace is portrayed. Promises of good health, long life, and a young boy becoming the progenitor of a "thousand" are made.

Notice another beautiful example:

"Thus saith the Eternal, I am returned unto Zion [Zechariah 14:4], and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and Jerusalem shall be called a city of truth; and the mountain of the Eternal of hosts, the holy mountain. Thus saith the Eternal of hosts: There shall yet old men and old women dwell in the streets of Jerusalem, and every man with his staff in his hand for very age. And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof" (Zechariah 8:3-5).

During Christ's millennial reign, He is assisted by perhaps several million brothers and sisters of His own divine family called Elohim.

These beautiful passages, portraying peace, happiness, safety, and long life are not automatically the result of His return to earth. Peace will be enforced. Obedience will be demanded, as we saw, in the case of His command to all the Gentile nations to keep the feast.

How will God's expanded divine family bring about this wondrous time?

By daily rule over the nations. Christ promised: "He that overcometh, and keepeth My works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of My Father" (Revelation 2:26).

How?

First, by swift, sure, righteous punishment for crime and sin! Notice:

"And therefore will the Eternal wait, that He may be gracious unto you, and therefore will He be exalted, that He may have mercy upon you: for the Eternal is a God of judgment: blessed are all they that wait for Him. For the people shall dwell in Zion at Jerusalem: thou shalt weep no more: for He will be very gracious unto thee at the voice of thy cry; when He shall hear it, He shall answer thee. And though the Eternal give you the bread of adversity [in the tribulation], and the water of affliction, yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a corner any more, but thine eyes shall see thy teachers: And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left" (Isaiah 30:18-21).

Clearly, when Christ and all His born-again family members are ruling this world, it will be up close, PERSONAL.

When one would assay to commit a crime, suddenly materializing right near them will be a divine member of God's own family! They will hear a voice, saying "This is the way! Walk ye in it!" This means they will be told exactly what it is they are about to do wrong, and exactly what is right. What methods can God use to teach?

Why, God has all power, so that He can do anything. Has God used vivid, realistic dreams and visions in the past?

Certainly! He has used dreams so vivid, so real, that the prophets who experienced them thought they were living the dream!

In the Millennium, the God family will no doubt use all the tools of God's vast miracle-working power to teach people the right way.

Perhaps a person who is thinking about stealing will suddenly find a member of God's family standing right there. A booming voice will say, "Wait! Let's 'consider the end of these things.'" Instantly, as if the would-be criminal were living the experience, he would see the individual or family from whom he intended stealing, working to produce the income to purchase the object of the would-be criminal's lust. He would see their labor, their planning, their hopes and dreams. He would see their joy when they had finally, by dint of labor and sacrifice, earned the item.

He would see their hurt, bewildered faces when they realized this precious object had been stolen from them. He would see them fearful, disappointed, feeling as if they had been personally attacked and violated, because someone had entered their private domain, and stolen something very important. Then, the scene would shift. The would-be criminal would see God's perfect law which says, "THOU SHALT NOT STEAL!" He would see a reenactment of the latest death by fire in Gehenna, which was carried out recently, in public, when one had refused to listen to his teacher from God's family. He would then hear of how "lust, when it hath conceived, brings forth sin," and be reminded that "the wages of sin is death!"

Will such events occur? Possibly.

When the would-be thief repents of his innermost thoughts, he will be warmly forgiven and received back into his family and community. He will be gently warned, with a smile of encouragement from a member of God's family (probably a former member of his own family-maybe his former mother or father??) never to allow such thoughts into his mind again, but to work, so he can afford to purchase the thing he had begun to covet.

During the Millennium, there will be no more necessity for slowly teaching, reasoning, arguing, proving various biblical "points of doctrine." There will be no more amateur theologians, or "well-intentioned dragons," with their own self-professed importance, their lengthy charts and graphs, or their laboriously-crafted doctrinal arguments.

Instead, any member of the newly-born God family will have the unlimited ability to utilize visions, dreams, and real-life experiences to shock people out of their carnal vanity and stun them into awareness of God's truth!

Such a one, now a very member of God's family, could appear at will in his or her glorified state to his or her own beloved family members. One might suddenly change from that glorified state, right before the startled eyes of their loved ones, into an emaciated, ugly, wasted human, lying near death in a hospital bed, with tubes connected to bags of fluid attached to their beds, and with a tube protruding from their trachea.

One might then say: "This was ME, only a few weeks before I died! I had repented of my forty years of smoking two packs of cigarettes a day, and had turned to God! I was studying day and night right there in my hospital bed! I read my Bible, I prayed to God, but it was too late for me, physically, and God chose not to heal me! I suffered agonies. I suffered most of all mentally, because I knew what it would mean for my wife and children to lose their husband and father; to lose their livelihood! NOW, I AM TELLING YOU, PUT THAT CIGARETTE DOWN!"

Do you think that kind of teaching, from a member of God's own spiritual family, would be effective? Then, this member of God's family could once again change, and appear in His or Her glorified spiritual body! He or she could say, "But look at me now!" Would any further "proof" be needed? Think about it! The greatest PROOF of the wonders of God's governing family, His kingdom on this earth, will be the members of His family, themselves!

But what if one persists, and a crime or sin is committed?

Then we have biblical precedents for the kind of punishments Christ's perfect government will exact. For minor infractions, it will be possible for repentance to occur and restitution to be made, either in the form of goods, cattle, or volunteer work. For major ones, it shall be "an eye for an eye, tooth for tooth, smiting for smiting, burning for burning, life for life."

For willful sin and violation of God's laws?

The "wages of sin is death!" Violent sinners will be destroyed in Gehenna fire! Do we have biblical precedents for Christ's government carrying out capital punishment by Gehenna fire? Of course we do. We have read of how Christ's first act will be to administer capital punishment to the beast and the false prophet!

And what of rewards, and of God's loving mercy and unmerited pardon in the Millennium?

## **Graduation Day In God's Kingdom**

We have seen that the Bible uses a 100-year life span as a pattern of God-that each individual will live for one hundred years during the "Great White Throne Judgment."

Is this a pattern God will use during the millennial reign of Christ and God's family? It seems logical. This is not "dogma," or information necessary for your salvation or mine; it really matters not at all to your decision during this lifetime, here and now. What you will be doing, and whether you will be in God's kingdom is being decided daily, as you live your life, NOW.

But there are certain logical patterns which God uses which may reveal to us the answers to questions not really detailed in the Bible, but available only through extrapolation. It seems illogical that the multitudinous causes for human death would prevail during the Millennium.

For example, since God's own governing family under Christ will be ruling the world, and since God's promises include healing the sick, it is inconceivable that the horrible death toll experienced by mankind today from cancer, emphysema, diabetes, cholera, meningitis, and the like, would continue. It is illogical that people would die in automobile collisions, air crashes, or from murder.

Clearly, God's Word describes the millennial reign of Christ as a time of great peace. A time of prosperity, happiness, and good health is pictured. No more disease. No famine. No "natural" calamities such as tornadoes, hurricanes, earthquakes, fires, mudslides, avalanches, or floods.

Since God's family will prevent crime by chastising would-be criminals before they commit an act of violence, people will not be injured or killed in robberies, assaults, rapes, drive-by shootings, or mass murders.

In the light of the foregoing, it is equally illogical, from what we can know about the Millennium, that God would allow a God-fearing, repentant, obedient person to die from some physical cause, and then resurrect that person. No such second resurrection of the righteous dead is depicted anywhere in Scripture.

But again, we have a logical pattern from God's Word.

God clearly intends to instantaneously change the righteous living at the moment of Christ's return. We have read of this great event again and again in this book. Paul wrote: "Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep [die], but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we [the living] shall be changed" (I Corinthians 15:51,52).

It is logical, then, that as each righteous person reaches the end of a long, 100-year life span, God will change that person from mortal to immortal; from human to divine!

Think what this means, and let your imagination apply it to human circumstances. What will it mean to families whose great-grandparents, who are now, respectively, 135 and 142 years of age (assuming they were 35 and 42 when the Millennium began, and they became converted at that time) have reached the end of an allotted 100-year life span?

God's ruling, governing family will make it known, naturally, to all loving family members and members of the community, that it is graduation day for these humble, obedient, repentant, God-fearing people. Probably, there will be a brief ceremony within the family. Then, at a divine command, like a miniature "last trump," they will be changed from flesh to spirit, from mortal to immortal, right before the eyes of their loved ones!

Will it happen this way? It seems logical that it will, but God, in His perfect wisdom, has not chosen to go into detail about such things in His Word. This is extrapolation from the Scriptures, remember, and not "saving" knowledge, or dogma.

On the one hand, we have biblical examples which strongly indicate there will be somber, reflective ceremony accompanying the destruction of wicked sinners during Christ's rule on earth. On the other hand, there seem to be logical patterns in the Scriptures that a joyous, moving ceremony will accompany the entry into God's spirit family by those who overcome.

## **You CAN "Take It With You" When You Die**

Finally, consider: What of beloved family members who have died, but who were never privileged to be called into God's truth? What of those who, though "good and decent people," were never truly converted?

As you learned earlier, we human beings live in an earthly "tabernacle," our physical bodies. But we reside in our minds. Our memories are not stored in our kneecaps, or our elbows, but in our minds. The billions of human beings who will be resurrected in the second resurrection-those who are the "rest of the dead" who do not come up until after the Millennium-are those who never had a real chance for salvation.

What constitutes a chance?

From many, many scriptures, it is obvious that only those who make a determined, conscious decision to reject God's way of life, His wondrous love, His gracious forgiveness-those who rebel against His laws, and who willfully spurn His salvation will be destroyed in Gehenna fire.

Jesus showed that the Pharisees and the majority of the population of His time could not understand because God had not opened their minds and hearts!

Read it! "And the disciples came, and said unto Him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables? He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given...therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand, and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive. For this people's heart is waxed gross; and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear" (Matthew 13:10-16).

God has deliberately called some few from time to time, but He has not called the masses! The churches do not understand this. Millions assume some vast "tug o' war" exists between Christ and Satan, Christ trying desperately to "save the world," while Satan struggles desperately to keep it "lost." This is a lie of the devil, and portrays the devil as equally strong, or stronger, than Christ.

Your Bible reveals that the vast majority are blinded; that they are deceived. But a deceived person does not know that he or she is deceived. A deceived person can be completely sincere. He or she can be honest, loyal, faithful, believing, loving, caring, and sharing! A deceived person can be the nicest person you ever met!

As my father was fond of saying, "What you don't know, you don't know that you don't know!"

Now, consider the ramifications of these principles, in the next verse: "For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them" (Matthew 13:17).

Prophets and righteous men do not burn in Gehenna fire simply because God, in His infinite wisdom, chose not to reveal His plan of salvation unto them! Such men will come up in the great, general "White Throne Judgment" time.

Now, think!



When God resurrects the dead, it will as though they had been dead for only a split second of time! So far as they were concerned, they were alive one moment; something happened, perhaps a wreck, or a fall, or a crash, or a bullet! They felt virtually nothing! Then, in a split second of time they are alive again! Their memory is intact. Their character is intact. The kind of person they were is exactly the kind of person they still are!

So you see, your loved ones and mine, who really never consciously rejected God and His salvation will have a wonderful opportunity to repent, and to be saved, in the Great White Throne Judgment! Don't you believe that a person of good character will have a running head start towards receiving God's truth above those who had poor character? Of course!

That is what I mean when I say, "You can take it with you when you die," meaning your character! In summary, then, we have seen there are THREE resurrections revealed in the Bible. The first is the dead in Christ. The second is the "rest of the dead" who "lived not again until the thousand years were finished," the dead, in the vast majority, who come up for a one-hundred year period of judgment. But this leaves one category of human beings not yet resurrected: the incorrigibly wicked! They are typified by the rich man of Luke 16, and called by the grisly phrase "death and the grave." They come up at the end of this phase of God's plan (II Peter 3:12) when the earth itself is destroyed by fire. Then, God says: "Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (II Peter 3:13).

What of those "new heavens and new earth"?

God says: "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And He that sat upon the throne said, BEHOLD, I MAKE ALL THINGS NEW!" (Revelation 21:4,5).

Believe it or not, this is the true BEGINNING of the great plan of God.

Now, every being on earth is divine. Now, all are finally members of God's great, expanded family!

What then?

Our known universe contains countless galaxies. Galaxies can contain hundreds of billions of stars! Each star, of which our own sun is but an "orange dwarf" as an example, could hold in its gravitational field any number of planets.

Why do you suppose God has created all those galaxies, all those suns, all those billions upon billions of planets?

Today, they are lifeless, empty, vain, waste, and chaotic.

So was our planet earth, until the One called Elohim said "Let there be light!"

Do you suppose He could ever do it again?

What about those who become "co-heirs with Christ"? Could they ever be called upon to go to a distant planet? Your God and mine is Creator. He has a great, fathomless purpose in all He does. Perhaps, far from the "end" time, the time of the new heavens and the new earth are but "the beginning."

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## Imperial Academy Begins Second Year of Full-Time Classes

**For several years after incorporation, Imperial Academy was able to offer only regional seminars, weekend Bible studies, and one and two-week summer classes. However, beginning in early autumn of 1994, the Academy began accepting full-time students in residence on campus. Here, in brief, is a statement of purpose and outline of the Academy. Interested full or part-time students, take notice!**

**by Garner Ted Armstrong**

**A**nd now, the second year of classes begins! As reported in these pages in our March 1995 issue, commencing on September 5, 1995, the day after Labor Day, Imperial Academy will offer 15 semester hours of classes.

The curriculum will include:

Old Testament Survey ..... 3 semester hours  
The Major Prophets ..... 3 semester hours  
The Epistles of Paul ..... 3 semester hours  
The Book of Revelation ..... 3 semester hours  
The Bible and Modern Social Issues ..... 3 semester hours  
Practical Public Speaking ..... elective

Our faculty consists of myself, our vice president, Mr. Ronald L. Dart, Charles E. Groce, Bronson T. James, and Vance Stinson.

Here is a synopsis of information about the Academy:

### **General Information**

Imperial Academy is a privately supported coeducational institution. The Academy is interrelated with and dependent upon the Church of God, International, but is separately incorporated, governed by an independent and self-perpetuating Board of Trustees.

### **Statement of Purpose**

Imperial Academy exists for the primary purpose of providing a qualified, dedicated, trained ministry for the membership of the Church of God, International. Secondly, it seeks to provide an academic community emphasizing spiritual, moral, social, ethical and cultural standards of the highest quality for those who, while not called to the ministry, recognize the need for loyal, dedicated service toward the church and their local community: to provide educated and qualified non-ordained leadership for the church.

The Academy will strive for excellence in all instruction, research, public service, and learning opportunities in an atmosphere of scholarship, academic freedom, culture, accountability, dedication, and devotion to Almighty God.

The Academy will seek to enhance the development of personality, character, loyalty, and service toward members of the church and the community at large. The academy will strongly emphasize the building of Christian character, the development of true values, the development and maintenance of the highest moral codes.

The Academy is established to provide undergraduate curricula in theology, speech, pastoral administration, counseling, and all those prerequisites for service to the church, whether ordained or non-ordained.

The Academy will provide individual counseling and academic assistance in an effort to help each student to identify and achieve his or her highest personal, educational and spiritual objectives.

## **Accreditation and Recognition**

Imperial Academy will strive, within its God-given resources, spiritual, physical, and financial, to build toward an academic institution that will achieve full regional accreditation upon fulfillment of all criteria of the Southern Association of Schools and Colleges. It is understood that, in its first years of operation, the Academy will offer only those courses designed for service to the church, and that, as the Eternal provides, additional faculty and courses will be offered. Imperial Academy is a bona fide academic institution, incorporated under the laws of the State of Texas. It meets the standards required by Federal and State law. Until the Academy can offer a full four-year curriculum, it will issue only certificates, not degrees.

## **Qualifications for Admission**

Applications for admission will be considered by the Admissions Committee for those persons having at least a high school diploma or its equivalent.

Qualified applicants will be admitted regardless of age, sex, or race.

Qualified applicants need not be baptized members of the Church of God, International. However, successful applicants will be assumed to be in harmony and general agreement with the doctrines and practices of the church. While ministerial recommendation is desired, it is not prerequisite for admission.

## **Tuition and Fees**

Tuition is \$36.00 per semester hour. Textbooks and other study materials will be provided at cost. Use of the library is gratis. There is no charge for any of the church's published literature or tapes which may be utilized for course study.

There will be a daily or weekly food-service charge, which will be on an "at cost" basis.

## **Housing**

For those wishing to live on the grounds, the Academy will provide low-cost, adequate student housing. Ongoing projects, such as our recently-acquired "Lodge On The Lake" will provide dormitory/apartment accommodations for both married and single students. Rental will include all utilities, use of laundry facilities, common-room lounge, light eating facilities, and other amenities, and will be partially subsidized by the Academy. Additionally, off-campus housing can be obtained by those who wish to commute.

## **Employment**

The Church of God, International, will provide, within its budgetary limits, some part-time employment for deserving students. Part-time work may become available from time to time in such areas as research and writing, editorial assistance, buildings and

grounds, construction and maintenance, mail processing, printing, custodial, or food service.

## Financial Responsibility

For those students who ask for part-time work or financial assistance, debts incurred will be itemized under an "Accounts Receivable" record in the business office. Part-time work will be credited against this account. Each student should estimate what percentage of his pay from part-time work he wishes to have credited against his account, and what percentage of his pay he wishes to receive bi-weekly for out-of-pocket necessities.

It is expected that each student will attempt to make significant payment against their "AR" during summer employment, or off-campus part-time work.

## Applications

Interested potential students should write to the Office of the Registrar, Imperial Academy, 22525 Hwy. 155 South, Flint, Texas, 75762, and request application forms. Completed forms are required. Incomplete applications cannot be considered. A current photograph or snapshot is mandatory. All applications will be carefully considered by the Admissions Committee, but completed applications are not a guarantee of acceptance.

Anyone desiring further information may write to the address above, or call (903) 825-2525.

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# Is God Collecting Ancient Antiques In Heaven?

**John saw a vision of the "Ark of the Testimony" in the Temple in heaven (Revelation 11:19). The Ark of the Testimony is also called the Ark of the Covenant and the Ark of the Testament. It was built by ancient Israel under explicit plans given by God. It contained the Ten Commandments, written with the finger of Jehovah God. It was of the finest materials, and was decorated with overshadowing cherubim. It represented the very Throne of God, and was the most priceless national treasure of ancient Israel. If this precious ark contains only some old, musty, archaic relic which has been abolished; if it contains only an old, unworkable, unwanted, harsh law which has been done away, why does God want it to occupy such a prominent place in His temple in heaven? Does God merely want to begin a "heavenly museum" so He can display something "old"?**

**by Garner Ted Armstrong**

Something that is "old" is usually something that is spoiled, deteriorated, worn-out, used-up, musty, rusty, and dusty-something to be thrown away.

An old suit, old shoes, old furniture, old, spoiled fruit, old bread with mold on it-these we throw out, discard, or give away to charity.

But something NEW?

A new home, a new car, a new suit-these are to be desired! We say, "It's brand new!" Just why we refer to the brand, but don't identify it, in this awkward English idiom is puzzling. But we all know what the expression means.

If we say, using the analogy of a little newborn baby being induced to draw its first breath, "It's brand, spanking, new!" we know we are referring to something valued, something highly prized. So it is with people who speak of the "Old Covenant" and the "Old Testament." To them, "old" in the expression means musty, dusty, and rusty; passed out of usage, tired, shopworn, archaic, antique-merely an old, used-up, unwanted curiosity.

But the "New Covenant" is supposed to be greatly desired.

Under the terms and conditions of the NEW Covenant, many are being told, "The Christian is under no obligation to observe the laws of God."

## Where Are All the Books?

Where are all the books in the great libraries, in the theological seminaries and church schools, which do away with the command, "Thou shalt have no other gods before Me"?

There aren't any.

Where are all the major volumes, scholarly works, articles, tracts, pamphlets, and books which argue forcibly against the command, "Honor thy father and thy mother"?

There aren't any.

Where are all the many books, journals, articles, and tracts which demolish the command, "Thou shalt not kill"?

Where are all the books in church schools and theological seminaries which abolish the command, "Thou shalt not commit adultery"?

There aren't any.

Why?

Simply because no church, no denomination, no religious organization in the Western world of professing Christianity teaches that these points of the Ten Commandments are wrong, evil, burdensome, or flawed. Most churches preach family values, love toward neighbor, forgiveness, and worship toward the one true God.

But where are all the books, journals, scholarly works, articles, pamphlets, and tracts which seek to abrogate the Fourth Commandment?

Oh, they are practically everywhere. Articles about how the Sabbath was supposedly "done away" are legion. Whole segments of the Catholic Encyclopedia seek to establish Sunday as the day for Christian worship (write immediately for our free booklet, Sunday, Saturday-Which?).

Dozens of books, perhaps hundreds, have been written to justify worship on the day of Solis Invictus, the "invincible sun."

The Fourth Commandment was the great test commandment. It was to be the identifying sign between the true God and His people down through all their generations (Exodus 31:12-18). God made the seventh day holy at creation (Genesis 2:2,3), then set it apart for a memorial of creation, a holy day of rest and worship for His people for all time. Never did He change it, abrogate it, or nullify it.

The Sabbath was known and kept by the ancient patriarchs before the Flood. It was kept by Abraham and his family (Genesis 26:5). When God (the One Who became Christ, Who was one of Elohim) wrote the Ten Commandments, He said "REMEMBER the

Sabbath Day....," indicating it was a law already known, one to be remembered, and not forgotten.

The Sabbath was in full force and effect from Moses to Christ. Christ kept the Sabbath day, and said He was "Lord of the Sabbath," insisting it was made for all mankind, and not just for one race (Mark 2:27). He set us an example that we should follow in His steps (I John 2:3-6).

The apostles kept the Sabbath day. Paul's "custom" was to keep the Sabbath day (Acts 17:2), long years after the resurrection of Christ-several decades after everything that was supposedly "nailed to the stake" had been completed. Paul taught gentile churches to "keep the feast," meaning the Feast of Unleavened Bread (I Corinthians 5:8); instructed them in how they were to observe the Lord's Supper, or Passover (I Corinthians 11:23-34).

He wrote: "For He spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all His works. And in this place again, If they shall enter into My rest. Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein [the Sabbath as a type of the Promised Land, which is a type of God's Kingdom], and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief [disobedience]:

"Again, He limiteth [points out, defines, sets apart] a certain day, saying in David, Today, after so long a time; as it is said, Today if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts. For if Joshua had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day. There remaineth therefore a keeping of the Sabbath [margin: "rest"] to the people of God. For he that is entered into His rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from His" (Hebrews 4:4-10). The Greek word in verse nine is Sabbatismos, a derivative of Sabbaton, which means "Sabbath." The meaning of Sabbatismos is, literally, "Sabbath-keeping."

In every other case in this passage, the word rest is completely different from Sabbatismos, used only in verse 9. It is katapausis, from two roots: kata, meaning "down in place or in time," and pausis, from which we take our word "pause." In other words, it means "down-pausing" or "resting."

This word appears about two thousand words earlier in the Greek dictionary, and has absolutely no etymological connection to Sabbatismos. The translators in 1611 allowed their prejudices against God's Sabbath day to cloud the meaning of this plain scripture!

Thankfully, some modern English translations have, in their margins, "a keeping of the Sabbath" to explain Sabbatismos in verse 9.

Anciently, it was on the weekly Sabbath day that Joshua and Israel walked a short "Sabbath-day's journey" across the miraculously dried-up Jordan River into the Promised Land. On that Sabbath day, Joshua spoke to the people, reminding them of the rebellion



of their fathers; of the significance of inheriting the Promised Land; of the necessity to obey God and not to forget His laws!

Referring to this event, David quoted Joshua (Psalm 95:7-11), and is himself quoted by Paul in the book of Hebrews.

God's Sabbath day, and His annual Sabbaths, will be observed by all the world in the millennial reign of Christ (Zechariah 14:9-19).

How strange it is that there are no books whatever which seek to abrogate any of the nine commandments which do not mention the Sabbath day but perhaps hundreds of them which attempt to abolish the FOURTH command!

Today, you live in a ready-made, Sunday-observing world. All the Western world's economies and social practices are geared to Sunday observance. High school and college sports, dances and parties are usually on a Friday night. Friday night, beginning at sunset is God's holy Sabbath day, which is trampled underfoot and ignored by rebellious, God-defying people.

Saturday is a major shopping day. It is a sports day, a day for fun and games, for people to seek their own pleasure.

Any person who begins to keep God's Sabbath day in obedience to God's commands and the example of Jesus Christ soon finds himself in the midst of terrible, traumatic controversy. His friends and relatives, sometimes spouse and children, believe he has "gone crazy." Suddenly, his business associates and friends think he has taken up with "religious fanaticism." Thousands have lost their jobs over Sabbath-keeping. Thousands have lost careers, homes, pensions, wives, husbands, or friends because they decided to begin obeying God by keeping the Sabbath!

How utterly SHOCKING it must be to some of those same people to now be told by their church leadership, who only months or weeks previously upheld the Sabbath, that the "Sabbath day is not obligatory upon Christians!"

How do those people feel whose lives were shattered due to the losses they suffered over the Sabbath? How do they feel toward church leaders who only weeks and months earlier told them they must keep the Sabbath, and, in being obedient, lost everything, but are now told by the same church leaders that it was all unnecessary?

How utterly betrayed they must feel!

All that sacrifice-was it in vain?

In corporate business such actions usually result of massive class-action lawsuits. But many people, like numb automatons, just bow their heads and mutter their mantra, "Let God work it out. Let God work it out."

Question: Who are they, or we, or anyone, to "let" God do anything? Does your action or your belief either stay God's hand or guide it? And, whatever happened to "work out your own salvation, in fear and trembling" (Philippians 2:12)?

IF you are one who will become born of God at the resurrection, or instantaneously changed (I Corinthians 15:50-52) at the time of the last trump, you will see the Temple of God. You will see, with your own eyes, inside that temple, the "Ark of the Testimony." And within that ark, you will see the original tables of stone, and the Ten Commandments written with the finger of Elohim, Who became Christ!

But if you think the law is a musty, dusty, old relic-if you think it is "done away"-you will never see such a sight, for God will not save a single person He cannot GOVERN!

## **Did God Make A Major Mistake? Some Puzzling Questions**

According to hundreds of "New Covenant" denominations, the law was done away with the death of Christ. But why would God write a law He knew was flawed?

First, Who, or What, was Jesus Christ before His physical birth of the virgin Mary?

"In the beginning was the Word [Greek: Logos, meaning Spokesman], and the Word was with God [the Logos was with Theos], and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not any thing made that was made. In Him was life; and the life was the light of men... He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not.

"He came unto His own, and His own received Him not. But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name...and the Word was made flesh, and dwelt [Greek: "tabernacled"] among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the Only Begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth" (John 1:1-14).

So the Member of the Divine Godhead who, acting as God's Spokes-man, appeared to the Old Testament saints was the One Who became Jesus Christ!

The One you and I think of as "Creator" is the Logos of the Godhead Who became Christ! The One who said "Let there be light," is the One Who became Christ!

Therefore, the same Person of the Godhead Who plagued Egypt, Who parted the Red Sea, Who wrote the Ten Commandments with His own finger is the One Who became Jesus Christ! Notice further: "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, Whom He hath appointed heir of all things, BY WHOM ALSO HE MADE THE WORLDS: Who being the brightness of His [the Father's] glory, and the express image

of His Person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high" (Hebrews 1:1-3).

Who purged our sins? Who was the "express image" of the Father? Who made the worlds? It was the Divine Person of ELOHIM Who became Christ!

There is absolutely no question about it! Jesus Christ of Nazareth is the Member of the Divine Sovereign Family called Elohim, or God, Who wrote the Ten Commandments. But why did He write them if He knew they were terribly flawed in some way?

If God knew He was going to have to abrogate His own law, then why write it in the first place? Does not God know the end from the beginning? Does He not know all? Is He not omniscient? Then why, if the Ten Commandments were to be done away, did He write them in the first place? What was the penalty for breaking the Ten Commandments under Moses and the judges? Death! Did God carry out this penalty?

He certainly did! Time and time again, when stiff-necked Israelites rebelled against God's laws, He plagued them! Many were bitten by serpents and died; many were swallowed up by a gigantic crevasse; many died because of Sabbath-breaking; many died of a plague of diseased quail even as they ate (Numbers 11:32,33).

So if you think God did away with His law through Christ's sacrifice, you must think "God" and "Christ" are different, somehow. But they are NOT. The One you know of as "God" in much of the Old Testament is the Person of the Godhead Who became Christ, as you have seen proved from your own Bible!

What does this startling, astounding knowledge do to the theory that Christ came to do away with the law?

It utterly demolishes such a painfully stupid theory!

God says: "For I am the Eternal, I CHANGE NOT, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed" (Malachi 3:6).

The New Testament says: "Jesus Christ the SAME yesterday [when He wrote the Ten Commandments, and when He plagued the people who broke them], and today [right now, as you are reading this!], and for ever [out into the Millennium, and into eternity]" (Hebrews 13:8). Once the rebellious notion that Christ came to do away with the law is ignorantly accepted, all of these scriptures present a mind-boggling puzzle.

Is there anything allowed in heaven that is not holy?

You know there isn't. Even in type, or metaphor, nothing is pictured inside God's temple in heaven which is not holy.

Then is the Ark of the Testimony holy? Are the Ten Commandments inside of it, right under the mercy seat, which depicts God's throne of grace, holy?

Paul wrote: "Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good" (Romans 7:12).

God's law is holy. It is perfect. It is good. And it is to be obeyed by those who love God (Acts 5:32).

## **More Puzzling Questions**

"Great peace have they that love thy law," said David. Really? What about those who ignore God's law? Who not only experience no feelings of love toward it, but actually resent it, if not hate it?

Peace of mind, a quiet conscience-of what value is it?

Millions wish they had it.

If your conscience is screaming at you; if you feel under condemnation, you are unhappy, probably frustrated. Many become hopeless, confused, even manic depressive, entertaining thoughts of self-destruction, all as a result of a lack of mental tranquility. You are what you think. Paul wrote Timothy: "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power [confidence, boldness, strength], and of love, and of a sound mind [mental maturity]" (II Timothy 1:7). How do we receive the Spirit of God, which can impart to us such vital qualities? Put another way, is there anyone who does not desire POWER, love, and mental maturity? Would we rather be weak and unsure, filled with rejection and acrimony, and mentally unstable? And what, if anything, has God's law got to do with power, love, and a sound mind? "God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth," said Jesus Christ. But God will not give His Holy Spirit to a rebellious, God-defying lawbreaker. Are you a citizen of a free country? Most of you live in democracies, including citizens of the Philippines, Australia, South Africa, Britain, Canada, and the United States. How did you "earn" your citizenship?

Why, you didn't. You were merely born of parents living in a free country.

Now, how are your liberties guaranteed?

They are guaranteed under law. So long as you obey the law of the land, your liberties are guaranteed. But, if you break the law, then what happens?

You must pay a penalty. It may be merely a fine, or it may be loss of your freedom. Today, millions of people in all the aforementioned countries are behind bars, in prison, having lost their liberty because they broke the law.

Suppose a kind judge said to someone who has broken the law, "I am going to be lenient this time. I am going to allow this lawbreaking to be a lesson to you, and not impose a prison sentence. You are free to go."

Does the lenient judge mean you are free to go out and break the law?

Then WHY do so-called "Christian" ministers believe that God Almighty, Who forgives you for sin (which is lawbreaking) when you accept Jesus Christ as your Savior, says you are now free to break the Ten Commandments?

Paul asked: "Shall we continue in sin [breaking the Ten Commandments], that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin [in Christ, since His death paid the penalty, which is death] live any longer therein?" (Romans 6:1,2).

## **Your Salvation Is At Stake**

Why do so many seem to believe receiving salvation is easier than buying a car, going to school, getting a job, getting married, or applying for a credit card?

"Just believe," they say. There is "nothing you must do to be saved," they say.

Once and for all, UNDERSTAND!

Salvation CANNOT BE EARNED BY LAW-KEEPING!

Salvation is God's free, loving gift, in and through the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is only possible through Christ, our Savior.

But in order to receive salvation, we must first repent! (To fully understand repentance, please write, or call, for your free copy of *Why Should YOU Repent?*)

And when we repent, we repent of sin, which is the breaking of God's Ten Commandments. Write for our large, free book entitled, *The Ten Commandments*.

God, through His grace, which is His great loving capacity for mercy and forgiveness, grants us repentance, and then, when we broken-heartedly come to Him through Jesus Christ, He forgives us our former sins and lawbreaking.

Now, He GIVES us His marvelous FREE GIFT of salvation; He begets us as His own children through His Holy Spirit (write for our free booklet, *Why You Were Born*).

Now, in and through Christ's intercessory work, as our daily High Priest, God makes it possible for us to keep His laws in the spirit (Hebrews 8:7-12).

We do not earn salvation by keeping His laws. We cannot ever, in a thousand lifetimes of one hundred years each, by keeping every point of God's law, "earn" the free gift of

salvation. Salvation is free, but the rewards in God's kingdom of future status, service, activity, and responsibility is directly related to the works we produce after we have received the free, loving gift of salvation (read I Corinthians 3:11-15; Ephesians 2:10; James 2:17-26). (For your study, and for a deep, rich understanding of God's plan of salvation, please write or call for *The New Covenant-Does It Do Away With God's Law?* and *Saturday, Sunday-Which?*)

No, God is not collecting "musty old artifacts" in heaven. The Ark of the Covenant, with its precious, original tables of stone, are seen there because they are HOLY, of INESTIMABLE VALUE-because they are PERFECT.

David, a man after God's own heart, and the future king over all Israel in the Kingdom of God (Jeremiah 30:9), wrote of God's law: "The law of the Eternal is perfect, converting the soul..." (Psalm 19:7).

I do not earn my freedom by obeying the laws of my country, but I can avoid losing my freedom by keeping them. So it is with the law of God. You cannot earn salvation by keeping the Ten Commandments, but you can avoid LOSING God's free, loving gift by avoiding sin.  
Think about it.

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# PESTILENCE!

# **Mankind is at War-Biological War- and the Germs Are WINNING!**

**The made-for-TV thriller, Robin Cook's *Virus*; the recent movie starring Dustin Hoffman, *Outbreak*; a sensational non-fiction account titled *The Hot Zone*-all have focused attention on recent fears generated by Ebola virus deaths in Zaire. What should you know about Jesus' prediction of PESTILENCE in the last days?**

**by William H. Ellis**

**F**or many years, mankind has fought the war against microscopic bacteria and viruses. And now the microbes are winning!

There has been much talk in the media about an "Andromeda Strain" of worldwide epidemics, or about an "Apocalypse Bug" which may threaten to extinguish all human life.

Dr. Jonathan M. Mann of the Harvard School of Public Health is quoted: "In one vital area, the emergence and spread of new infectious disease, we can already predict the future -and it is threatening and dangerous to us all....What is new, however, is the increased potential that at least some of these diseases will generate large-scale, even worldwide epidemics" (*The Coming Plague*, preface xi).

When asked about the signs that would identify the final days of man's rule on this earth and the times that would immediately precede His own return, Jesus Christ told His disciples that wars and rumors of wars would come before full-scale international conflicts. Next in the order of events, He said: "and there shall be famines, and PESTILENCES, and earthquakes in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows" (Matthew 24:7-8).

## **Questions To Answer**

Are increasing diseases and rampant epidemics solely the result of the continued degradation of our planet's environment?

Is mankind reaping the natural and inevitable punishment for sins such as warfare and immorality? What about the horrible potential for biological warfare?

Is God the author of diseases and plagues? Does He use them as punishment for disobedience against Him? Is God responsible? And, if so, why would a merciful God act in such a way? Are Christians who are serving God and living as Jesus Christ would have them live protected against all disease? What does the Bible say about illness, disease, epidemics, plagues? What does the Bible say about protection for you and your family? What does the Bible say about God's power to heal?

These are the questions to be examined in this series of articles. In this series you will find the answers from your Bible.

## **PART ONE: DANCING ON THIN ICE**

### **A World Out of Balance**

Man's civilization rests on a thin veneer stretched over this planet. It is extremely fragile. When it breaks, a frighteningly dangerous world escapes from below. Yet, mankind in its arrogance strides confidently upon this brittle surface.

What happens when the delicate infrastructure of man's civilization breaks down? What are the factors which cause civilization's collapse? Why has our world been thrown out of balance? The causes are twofold: 1) man's ignorant and callous disregard for the beautifully balanced environment in which he lives-the wonderfully interconnected, interrelated, interdependent ecological system of the earth; and 2) the greed, selfishness, and hatreds which fuel the aggression and warfare between human societies.

### **Disease Follows Warfare**

The threat of disease epidemics always follows warfare.

At the 1993 onset of the ethnic warfare in Rwanda, the warring Hutu and Tutsi tribes committed slaughter against women, children, and the elderly. Those who were able to escape as refugees fled Rwanda to neighboring Zaire. There, in overcrowded camps, and drinking water from sources polluted with human waste, thousands of the refugees were overcome with cholera. But it was the warfare which broke the fragile surface of human society.

In Bosnia, the "ethnic cleansing" being conducted by Serbians against Muslims is forcing thousands of women, children, and the elderly from their homes into distant camps. In other areas, water supplies have been cut and convoys with humanitarian supplies from outside the war zone are not permitted to bring in needed food and medical supplies.

Diane Seligsohn reported in 1994: "The situation was further aggravated by large migrations of people from the war-torn areas....Civil wars create conditions that favour the outbreak of infectious disease. People deprived of food have weakened immune systems and they may be obliged to drink contaminated water; the lack of garbage collections attracts disease-carrying vermin. Such conditions have been responsible for epidemics of hepatitis as well as diphtheria in the Bosnian capital, Sarajevo" (*World Health*, November-December 1994).



Displaced post-war populations must try to survive the breakdown of services which no longer provide clean water and fresh food, but now allow disease-bearing vermin to flourish.

"Conservative Harvard University political analyst Samuel P. Huntington opined that the world had entered a stage of conflict...far more insidious: cultural conflict. Wars and battles were fought over religion, over historic enmities....When such conflicts occurred in developing countries, they created new possibilities for reemergence of old scourges such as typhus, cholera, tuberculosis, and measles-classic wartime opportunists" (*The Coming Plague*, p. 591).

### **Global Germ Village**

In addition to the disruptions of warfare, mankind is altering its delicately balanced environment and, as a result, is reaping a backlash from diseases once considered under control by medical science.

"The human environment is changing with unprecedented rapidity. Ecosystems are being altered across the planet. Climate may be changing, too. People are cramming themselves into vast cities and traveling between continents with hitherto unheard-of ease" (*The Economist*, May 20, 1995).

"The unparalleled degree of mobility in today's society, thanks to modern transportation, makes the world a global village not only for people but also for microbes" (*Neue Zurcher Zeitung, Zurich*, October 26, 1994).

Dr. Jonathan Mann noted: "The dramatic increases in worldwide movement of people, goods and ideas is the driving force behind the globalization of disease" (*The Coming Plague*, preface, xi). Nobel prize winning biologist, Joshua Lederberg said: "The microbe that felled one child in a distant continent can reach yours today and seed a global pandemic tomorrow....Jet-age travel whisks germs around the world" (*The Houston Chronicle*, April 9, 1995).

Populations in all countries are abandoning the countryside to move into cities. The poorer peoples of the world are crammed into slums, shanty towns, barrios, and ghettos in already overpopulated megacities. In these places even basic services such as water, waste disposal, and fresh food are often unavailable to them.

"Megacities were arising in the developing world, creating niches from which 'virtually anything might arise;' rain forests were being destroyed, forcing disease-carrying animals and insects into areas of human habitation and raising the very real possibility that lethal, mysterious microbes would, for the first time, infect humanity on a large scale and imperil the survival of the human race" (*The Coming Plague*, p. 7).

"Cities, in short, were microbe heavens, or as British biochemist John Cairns put it, 'graveyards of mankind.' The most devastating scourges of the past attained horrific

proportions only when the microbes reached urban centers, where population density instantaneously magnified any minor contagion that might have originated in the provinces" (*The Coming Plague*, p. 235).

Epidemics rarely occur in areas of widely dispersed human habitation and low population density. The fear is that these diseases will find their way into the masses of people jammed into the megacities of the world. Spreading a disease from city to city is simply a matter of boarding an airliner in Peru and flying to Los Angeles.

### **Chilling Examples**

In a harbor near Bangladesh, known to be a cradle of cholera epidemics, a ship carrying infected bilge water set sail for Peru. Once it arrived at Callao Harbor in Lima, Peru's capital, it discharged its bilge water and the billions of cholera infected algae.

The El Nino currents of the Pacific off Peru spread the cholera from one Latin American port to another.

Meanwhile, a dozen sick people boarded an aircraft in Lima to land at Los Angeles airport. Two years later, cholera had sickened 900,000 people and killed 8,000 in Central and South America.

Now, it is said that indications of cholera bacteria have been found off U.S. shores in the Gulf of Mexico.

But, aren't there medicines, vaccines, and antibiotics that can deal with these diseases? Yes, but the latest advances in medical technology are simply not available equally throughout the world.

"The steadily growing number of people suffering from chronic-progressive ailments and the increasing use and abuse of antibiotics have led to the development of resistant strains of bacteria and thus to the resurgence of old infectious diseases such as tuberculosis, which has become an especially grave problem among the homeless in America's inner cities" (*World Press Review*, May 1955). A recent outbreak of tuberculosis in Minneapolis began when one homeless man infected forty-four more people in a welfare office.

For another example: "Russia suffered 50,000 deaths last year from diphtheria, a disease that had supposedly been conquered" (*The Houston Chronicle*, April 9, 1995).

### **Third World Everywhere**

Described as an example of Third- worldization, the Russian diphtheria epidemic was not unique. "When the Iron Curtain was lifted, it revealed the Third World status of the old communist regimes, and conditions only worsened amid the infrastructural chaos," Laurie Garrett notes in *The Coming Plague* (pp. 504-505).

Indeed, what happened was the thin, fragile crust of mankind's infrastructure had cracked, and disease-an old disease-had leaked back into the modern world.

Garrett continued: "But there was no need to search behind the Iron Curtain, the Bamboo Curtain, or below the Sahara to witness microbial exploitation of Thirdworldization. The process was occurring during the 1980s and the early 1990s inside the wealthy nations of North America and Western Europe.

"Not only had America's cities sunk to Third World levels of childhood vaccination and access to health care, but its surveillance and public health systems had reached states of inaccuracy and chaos that rivaled those in some of the world's poorest countries" (*The Coming Plague*, p. 512). Termed "multiple drug resistant" (MDR) forms of bacteria, these forms of disease are virtually immune to treatment. "By 1993 the MDR-TB (multiple drug resistant tuberculosis) epidemic had made its way to the suburbs, such as New York's Long Island and Westchester County...The CDC (Center for Disease Control) determined that 14.2 percent of the nation's tuberculosis in 1993 involved MDR-TB" (*The Coming Plague*, p. 523).

New strains of bacteria from the developing world threaten to spread infection and disease worldwide. "In Brazil, a 'super staph' bacterium, for example, has developed a resistance to most antibiotics, the indiscriminate use of which is believed responsible for the more virulent microbes. Better drugs seem only to result in stronger bugs" (*Veja, Sao Paulo, Brazil*).

### **Hosts-Man and Rat**

Since the time of the Black Death in Europe of the Middle Ages (A.D. 1348), rats carrying fleas spread bubonic plague. An estimated 20 million people, one third of Europe's total population at the time, died.

More recently, in 1994 in India, an ecological system upset the natural habitat of a rural rat population. These rats, carrying fleas infected with plague, entered the urban population of cities. "Man and the rats are merely, so far, the most successful animals of prey. They are utterly destructive of other forms of life. Neither of them is of the slightest use to any other species of living things," wrote Hans Zinsser, in his *Rats, Lice and History* in 1934.

In *The Coming Plague*, Laurie Garrett describes rats as the hosts of viruses: "Throughout history, rats and mice have taken advantage of human movements to gain access to new ecologies around the world...it should come as no surprise that they carry viruses which, whether found on the Volga steppes or in the deserts of Arizona, bear remarkable resemblances" (p. 546).

Garrett reports on the work of researchers who are "convinced the rat infections were relatively recent, having occurred sometime around the Korean War when aerial bombing campaigns drove the (*A. agrarius*) field mice out of their natural habitats into urban areas,

where they go into turf battles with the rats and probably passed the [Korean Hantaan] virus on" (p. 539).

And, again, it was war which triggered the spread of disease. In His Word, God uses the same order of events over and over again: first, war-the destruction of society's infrastructure; second, famine-weakened human immune systems; third, pestilence-bacteria and viruses borne by rats and insects (Ezekiel 6:11; Jeremiah 14:12; 24:10; 27:8, to mention a few).

### **Viruses Adapt Quickly**

Unlike bacteria, viruses are not affected in anyway by antibiotics.

We all are familiar with the common cold. It is a virus. No cure has yet been found for the common cold. Influenza is also a virus. "The genetic material of the influenza virus...is extremely unstable and continuously changes its structure" (*World Press Review*, May 1995). "During the winter of 1918-1919, 20 million people around the world died in an influenza epidemic-spread, in part, by soldiers coming home 'safe' from World War I" (*Current Health*, November 1994).

Once again the fragile fabric of civilization was ripped by war to reveal deadly disease. But today people can get a flu shot, a vaccination against the flu, can't they? In fact, most vaccines merely are small doses of the very disease they are intended to prevent. The prevention is accomplished by the human body fighting the vaccine until an immunity is built up against the disease.

The World Press article continued: "These diverse viral agents can interact with one another...recombine to produce new variants against which humanity has built up no immunity." The virus which has caused so much attention lately is just such an incurable virus, the Ebola Zaire virus is 90 percent fatal to humans.

Biologist Rita Colwell of the University of Maryland reports: "Of the some 5,000 species of viruses known to exist in the world, we've characterized (studied carefully) less than four percent of them."

"The emergence of...any number of other rainforest agents appears to be a natural consequence of the ruin of the tropical biosphere. The emerging viruses are surfacing from ecologically damaged parts of the earth" (*The Hot Zone*, Richard Preston).

If some of these viruses are in our water supply, surely our treatment plants would purify our water, people believe.

"In a liter of raw human waste there were more than 100,000 infectious viruses-none of which were vulnerable to mere chlorine treatment" (*The Coming Plague*, p. 562).

In 1993, an intestinal parasite, cryptosporidium, made 403,000 people sick in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. It is recorded as the largest attack of waterborne illness in U.S. history.

## **Old and New**

Old, well-known illnesses which most of us believe that medical science has long since conquered, have returned-with a vengeance.

"There is no question that for whatever reason, as a result of what man does to himself [war] or what he does to his environment, the threat of infectious disease is on the rise in the world right now. The re-emergence of tuberculosis and untreatable strains of malaria, for example, are worrisome trends" (*The New Republic*, July 17 & 24, 1995).

"We could preserve every acre of rainforest the world over, clean up every river and stop every war, and we would still have a raging antibiotic resistance problem" (*The New Republic*, July 1995).

The bugs are winning!

The books and movies in current circulation about the Ebola virus may scare you, but there is something you can do about it.

## **A Nation In Chaos- Other Refugees!**

Picture in your mind some 3 to 5 million refugees streaming down primitive roads toward a barren wilderness. They are seeking escape from a devastated nation whose cities lie in chaos. Such was the scene some 4,000 years ago when Almighty God brought the former slaves of Egypt-the people of Israel-into the Sinai desert. Read about these refugees in your Bible. Their story as it relates to our subject begins when Moses was sent to confront Pharaoh, warning him to let Israel go (Exodus 7).

Each time Pharaoh refused to release the people of Israel, God sent disaster into the midst of Egypt. Their essential water supply became polluted, unfit to drink (Exodus 7:14-19), and filled with stinking, rotting fish (Exodus 7:18). Then it was frogs, frogs everywhere, frogs indoors and out (Exodus 8:1-15), and when the frogs died, their rotting bodies were still everywhere (verse 14). Next came the lice (Exodus 8:16-19), and the insects affected both human and animal health. "Then the magicians said unto Pharaoh, This is the finger of God" (verse 19).

God was making a point, but Pharaoh wouldn't change his mind. To emphasize the point, God brought flies on the Egyptians. Yet, none of the flies bothered the people of Israel who lived in the territory of Goshen (Exodus 8:20-23). In this place the original Hebrew might well be translated "stinging insects." Whatever they were, "the land was corrupted" in the sense of being made rotten, but Israel's land was not.

From this point on, God made plain that there was a difference between those He would protect and those who suffered in Egypt.

A murrain afflicted the cattle of Egypt-yet the cattle of Israel were not infected with the disease (Exodus 9:1-7). Could the murrain be a form of what we call anthrax today?

The murrain was followed by what our King James translators called blains and boils. Some commentators think this was bubonic plague-which is still a threat to the world today (Exodus 9:8-12).

As the entire infrastructure of the nation of Egypt crumbled around him, Pharaoh remained adamant-foolishly so.

Hail and fire running along the ground hit man and beast, flattening and burning scrubs and trees (Exodus 9:22-35). Now the foundation of Egypt's wealth was being destroyed, its phenomenal agricultural bounty. Wind and locusts destroyed the remaining crops (Exodus 10:1-20). Pharaoh remained stubborn.

He finally released the people of Israel only after the firstborn of Egypt died (read Exodus 10-14) and note that God was able to preserve and protect His people, the newly emerged immigrant refugees of the nation of Israel.

But water for the refugee nation was as much a priority in ancient Sinai as it is for the people of Sarajevo or Rwanda today. When God miraculously provided Israel water, he tested-proved-them. The test was of obedience:

"If you wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is right in His sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these disease upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am the Lord that healeth thee" (Exodus 15:26).

Notice that God's promise was conditional on the people becoming obedient to Him. And these promises were made before God Himself spoke from Mount Sinai with the Ten Commandments.

### **Health Promised for Obedience**

God instructed the complaining refugees of ancient Israel in matters of hygiene and even in ways to protect their moving campsite from disease.

As a part of the laws given from Mount Sinai, God promised conditionally: "And ye shall serve the Lord your God, and He shall bless thy bread, and thy water; and I will take sickness away from the midst of thee" (Exodus 23:25).

God gave them instruction in gaining and maintaining good health by regulating the foods they ate (Leviticus 7:23-27), and even which animals should be used for food (Leviticus 11).

He discussed in detail how contagious disease should be dealt with as a matter of public health policy, using the example of leprosy, which, today, we call Hansen's disease (Leviticus 13 and 14). Contagious diseases like Ebola which are transmitted by bodily fluids from one person to another, or diseases which can be associated with fleas, ticks or lice in clothing like bubonic plague, Lyme's disease, etc. are prescribed for treatment in Leviticus 15.

In God's law, provisions were made for quarantine-for the protection of the community's health (Numbers 5:2-3; Leviticus 13:45-46).

Although it may seem unnecessary to those who live in wealthy North America or Northern Europe, God even commands that human beings should not eat "road kill" or the carcass of an animal that dies of its own disease (Leviticus 22:8). And while some may consider that thought disgusting, perhaps they should look closely at the conditions and the foods being eaten by the emaciated and starving people of Zaire, Rwanda, Somalia, Bosnia, and countless places where the fragile fabric of society had been torn through to expose the ugliness beneath.

There are indications that Ebola virus, the horrible hemorrhaging death so recently in the news, could be traced to eating meat from an infected monkey. While monkey meat may be a delicacy in Zaire, it is forbidden for human consumption by God's laws, for our own good (Leviticus 11:27). It is likely, too, that had the poor refugees of Rwanda been able to apply God's law to assure the cleanliness of their camps and their water supplies, the epidemic of cholera-the result of human waste in water-would not have cost so many lives (Deuteronomy 23:10-11).

There are those who say God's laws are done away. It is obvious that God's laws were given to mankind for our good. Which of these laws of health and cleanliness would some people want to do away with?

### **Protection from Disease**

As ancient Israel began its journey through the wilderness of Sinai, God gave them His word-His promise-of blessings for obedience to His law.

"Ye shall keep my sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary: I am the Lord. IF ye walk in my statutes, and keep my commandments, and do them," He CONDITIONALLY assured them blessings including freedom from disease (Leviticus 26:2-13).

But what happens when mankind rejects God's way and willfully rejects God's law? Read the remainder of Leviticus 26.

In the next article in this series, we will take a long, hard look at the problem disease that has become PANDEMIC in this world and remains incurable-HIV/AIDS.

We will examine what the future really holds for this disease-ridden planet, what God says about it and how it will affect you and your loved ones.

It is about time Christians understood what is happening, right now, which can bring about global catastrophe and sufficiently threaten all human life that unless Jesus Christ returns to rescue mankind, "there should no flesh be saved" (Matthew 24:22).

To be continued....

Old diseases, thought to be conquered, are still a threat.

Whooping Cough	bacterial	airborne
Tuberculosis	bacterial	airborne
Diphtheria	bacterial	waterborne, airborne
Cholera	bacterial	waterborne
Malaria	bacterial	mosquitos
Yellow Fever	viral	mosquitos
Streptococcus	bacterial	body fluids
Staphlococcus	bacterial	body fluids
Influenza	viral	airborne
Polio	viral	waterborne
Bubonic Plague	bacterial	rats, fleas
Pneumonic Plague	bacterial	rats, airborne
Typhus	bacterial	airborne
Smallpox	viral	body contact
Meningitis	bacterial/viral	body contact
Measles	viral	airborne
Leprosy	viral	airborne
Anthrax	bacterial	domestic animals

New, previously unheard of diseases also present incurable problems for researchers. Ebola Virus viral body fluids Hantavirus viral mouse scat Marburg viral body fluids Rift Valley Fever viral mosquitos Dengue viral mosquitos Lassa viral body fluids Machupo viral mouse scat Junin viral mouse scat HIV viral body fluids AIDS viral body fluids Lyme Disease viral ticks Definitions Outbreak: usually refers to a localized, short-lived exposure of a limited population to a dangerously contagious disease. Epidemic: a larger, more wide-spread outbreak of disease in which control is essential to keep the disease from spreading to major populations. Endemic: a disease is considered "endemic" when it is established and becomes a permanent part of a particular population or particular region of the world. HIV/AIDS is considered endemic in Africa, a continuing and permanent threat to the general population. Pandemic: When an epidemic spreads to populations throughout the world. HIV/AIDS is a worldwide, global disease.

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