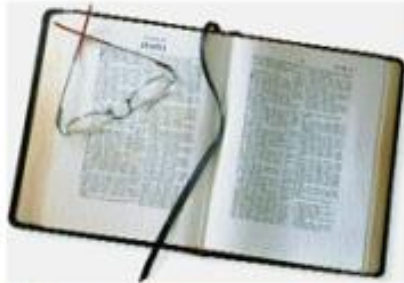


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The

# *Youth*

**Bible Study  
Course**





# **The Youth Bible Study Course**

**Lesson 1 - Does God Exist?**

**Lesson 2 - Is the Bible True?**

**Lesson 3 - Who and What is God?**

**Lesson 4 - Angels and Demons**

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# LESSON 1

## DOES GOD EXIST?

### 1] Who created the universe?

- We know the universe had a beginning because radioactive elements like uranium would have turned to lead long ago if the universe has always existed.
- The fact that the universe is expanding points us back to the fact that the universe had a beginning. It takes an almighty Creator to bring a universe into existence where no matter existed before (**Genesis 1:1**).



### 2] The wonders of design in the universe

- The Earth's tilt, rotation and distance from the Sun are just right for supporting life and we have an ideal atmosphere with just the right proportions of oxygen and nitrogen. Our atmosphere has an amazingly thin ozone layer which blocks out deadly long UV rays, without which, no life could exist.
- The moon's distance is just the right distance to create gentle enough tides which are sufficient to rejuvenate (with oxygen) the waters of the oceans due to the movement it creates.
- The awesome size and power of the universe staggers the imagination. The evidence of design is seen in the orderly nature of the motion of the stars and galaxies, not to mention the beauty and orderly patterns we see in some of the colourful nebulas and constellations.
- Gravity pulls the planets toward the sun while inertia keeps them in motion once they have been put in motion. Who gave the stars and planets the original push and what keeps them going? Without a Creator who gives the planets in our solar system a push before they start to slow down they would all fall into the Sun in time like the Mir space station fell to earth.
- We see design in the wonders and mysteries of the atom and the harmony of the laws of the universe. The stars in the heaven and all of matter follow laws of physics and chemistry, etc. which are totally predictable and unailing. From where did these laws come from if not from God?



### 3] Water

- The amazing properties of water show evidence of design. There is water's versatility as ice, steam, clouds, snow and rain.
- There is water being a curious exception to natural law by being heaviest at 4 degrees centigrade and expanding when becoming ice which prevents lakes from freezing solid.
- There is the beauty and miracle of snowflakes. Billions fall each winter without one ever being identical! What greater testament is there to an incredibly creative God?



### 4] The wonders of design in nature

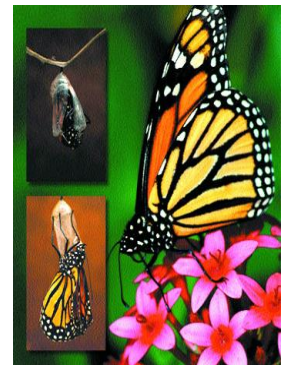
- The law of biogenesis states that life can ONLY come from pre-existing life. Inanimate matter can't suddenly become living so it takes the Living God to have created life.
- Viruses are mostly poisons which is a strange first step if evolution was true and viruses were the first forms of life.
- The building blocks of life – cells – are incredibly complex and far too complex to have come into being through evolution which relies on positive random changes.
- We have the amazing balance of nature where plants, through the mysterious process of photosynthesis to produce food, take in carbon dioxide and expel oxygen while animals breathe in oxygen and carbon dioxide. How could such an amazing system like that happen by chance?
- There are the marvels of design all throughout nature which show that there has to be a great Designer who designed it all.

Some of those incredible designs we see in nature include:

- The unique way insects breathe where each cell essentially has its own “private lung”.
- The flying wonders we know as birds which are perfectly aerodynamically designed for flight with hollow bones, a strong large heart that beats hundreds of times a second, wings and feathers and a remarkable breathing system.
- The perfect helicopter – the hummingbird – which can fly backwards and sideways and beats its wings up to 75 times a second.
- The amazing sight of hawks and owls.
- The unbelievable sonar system of bats.
- The jumping ability of grasshoppers and fleas.
- The natural lighting system of fireflies and deep sea creatures.
- The amazing ability of animals like electric eels to produce electricity.
- The chameleon with its incredible ability to change its colour.
- The ability of salmon to jump 10 feet up rapids and their amazing sense of smell which helps them find the exact place where they were born up to 1000 miles inland.



- Evolution in billions of years could never come up with the amazing metamorphosis of butterflies from caterpillars and tadpoles (with gills) to frogs (with lungs). In the case of butterflies, the total transformation from the lowly greedy caterpillar into the beautiful butterfly is a lesson of the reality of the transformation of man into the spirit born children of God at the resurrection ([John 3:3-7](#), [1 Corinthians 15:42-44](#); [Philippians 3:21](#)).
- The beauty we see in all throughout nature in birds, in tropical fish and coral reefs, in gemstones and in the colour of rainbows is testimony to the great Artist that designed it all.
- All creatures are highly specialized and perfectly adapted for their environment from the cactus in the desert, the eagle in the air and the penguin in the Antarctic.



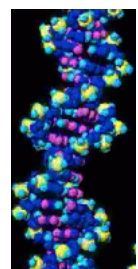
## 5] The wonders of design in man

- There are all the wonders of design in man’s own body such as all the various systems which work so harmoniously together such as the digestive system, the immune system, the respiration system and the circulation system ([Psalm 139:14](#)).
- There is the miracle of conception. From a single fertilized cell grows a new human of around 30 trillion cells with all the necessary structures and systems working perfectly.
- There is the design and shape of our red blood cells which have no nucleus. There is also the design of blood clotting which stops us from bleeding to death when we are cut.
- Our eyes are another incredible wonder which have a lens with no blood vessels, are flexible and can change their shape to focus perfectly on objects at any distance.
- There are also the mechanical marvels of the heart, hands, ear and our muscles which point to the great Designer.



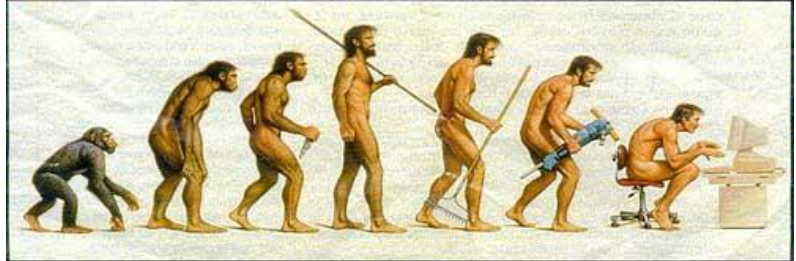
## 6] Creation or Evolution?

- Natural selection only selects the best of existing traits – it does not produce new ones.
- Mutations only produces varieties in the same species – it doesn’t create new species.
- The result of mutations are almost always bad. As mutations are almost invariably inferior to the original stock this would constitute “Survival of the Unfit”.
- Evolution teaches the exact opposite of what the second law of thermodynamics says. It states that all things will descend into DISORDER rather than order, if left to themselves.
- Even if our bodies could have come into being through natural processes, how could the software to run our bodies have written themselves in our DNA without some great intelligence to write those instructions?
- Symbiosis is another marvel in nature which witnesses against the theory of evolution. Some creatures both literally need each other to survive. So which came first if they need the other to survive?
- The ultimate in symbiosis is seen through the whole animal kingdom with sexual reproduction. How could evolution produce two different sexes that both need each other in order to continue the species?



- The fundamental difference between man and animals is that animals are guided by instinct – a predefined pattern of behaviour – while man has a mind and acts with intelligence (**1 Corinthians 2:11**).
- There are also sexual differences between man and animals. Sex is only for reproduction with animals. When they go “on heat” once or twice a year females always get pregnant when mating occurs. The rest of the year there is no sex or interest in it. In marriage, couples can have sex at virtually anytime yet pregnancy can only happen on a handful of days each year. Sex in humans is not merely for reproduction like in animals but is designed as a pleasure bond between a husband and wife.

- There are major differences that show that man is not descended from the apes. There is the difference in animal instinct in apes and mind in humans, the sexual differences mentioned above, the lack of body hair with humans, the much larger brain in humans and the lack of the Broca’s convulsion in apes which gives man the gift of speech.



**Somewhere, something went terribly wrong**

- The Bible is correct when it says that man was created by God 6 000 years ago from the dust of the ground and that he did not evolve from apes. God created mankind in His own image and put him in dominion over all the animals on earth (**Genesis 1:26**). Man has been given the gift of a mind to choose right from wrong, and with God’s Holy Spirit develop God’s character and one day be born into God’s family.

## 7] Answered prayer

- The most personal proof of God’s existence is that of answered prayer (**Matthew 7:7-11, 1 John 3:22**). When you experience clear, undeniable answers to prayer over the course of time one’s belief in the existence of a supreme, powerful God who loves each of us personally is strengthened.
- “For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse” (**Romans 1:20**). The evidence of God’s existence is all around us, in the heavens, all throughout nature and in the wonders of our own human bodies.

## LESSON 2

### IS THE BIBLE TRUE?

#### 1] Fulfilled Prophecy

- The Bible can be proven to be the Word of God because of its accurate prophecies such as God naming Cyrus 200 years ahead of time as the conqueror of Babylon and the one who would allow the Jews to rebuild Jerusalem (**Isaiah 44:28-45:3**).
- Other accurate prophecies that have come to pass include the details of the fall of Nineveh (**Zephaniah 2:13-14**) and Babylon (**Isaiah 13:20-21**), the great empires from Babylon to Rome (**Daniel 2, 7, 11**), the birthright promises to Abraham's descendants fulfilled in the British Empire and the United States of America (**Genesis 12:1-3, 17:5-6, 35:11, 48:19, 49**) and also the many prophecies dealing with the life of Jesus Christ (**Isaiah 7:14, Isaiah 53, Micah 5:2**).



#### 2] Answering the doubting questions over the Book of Genesis

- Jesus Christ believed in the accuracy of the book of Genesis by quoting it (**Matthew 19:4-5, 24:37-38**). Luke included Adam in the genealogy of Christ (**Luke 3:38**) and the apostle Paul also believed that Adam was a real person (**1 Corinthians 15:45**).
- The Bible makes no claim that the universe is only 6 000 years old. It states that in the beginning that God created the heavens and the earth. Then at some time prior to 6 000 years ago it BECAME without form and void (**Genesis 1:2**). Based on the fact that we can see objects billions of light years away, the universe is at least that old in age.
- In **Genesis 1:1** we read "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." The word created is from the Hebrew "bara" meaning create from nothing. A different Hebrew word "asah" is translated made in **Genesis 1:16** in reference to God making two great lights in the sky and **Exodus 20:11** where God says "'For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them". It can mean create but in most cases it means make or fashion or prepare. It can also mean "made" or "had made". The latter is the best translation for **Genesis 1:16** - "God had made two great lights...and the stars also". **Exodus 20:11** can be translated in the following way - "For in six days the LORD prepared (or fashioned) the sky [heavens] and the earth, the sea and all things in it."
- Lucifer said: "I will exalt my throne...[AND] ascend above the heights of the clouds" (**Isaiah 14:13-14**). God gave him a throne on earth AND he was on the earth at the time he rebelled against God. Satan and his fallen angels caused the destruction we read of **Genesis 1:2**.
- In **Hebrews 11:3** we read: "By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God". The word translated here as "framed" is the Greek word "katartidzo". It is translated as restore in **Galatians 6:1** and mended in **Matthew 4:21** in reference to mending fishing nets. If we paraphrase **Hebrews 11:3** with these other translations it would read: "By faith we understand that the worlds were restored / mended by the word of God". In **Psalms 104:30** we also read: "You send forth Your Spirit, they are created; and You renew the face of the earth." The Hebrew word used for "renew" is "chadash" which means "rebuild, renew, repair".
- **Genesis 1:7** says that God "divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament". Many believe that the waters above the firmament was a water canopy that surrounded the earth before the Flood like a greenhouse shielding the earth from cosmic radiation. This extra protection from cosmic radiation may have been the reason why the aging process was much slower before the Flood allowing people to live hundreds of years (**Genesis 5**).
- **Acts 17:26** states that God "has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their pre-appointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings." It is evident from this verse that when God created Adam and Eve He put in them genes that would allow them to produce children with different racial characteristics. A similar thing must have happened with Noah and his wife to preserve the races through the Flood.

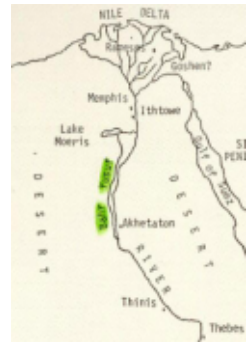
#### 3] Historical accuracy

- The Bible is historically accurate as seen by many recent discoveries proving various events of the books of Genesis and Exodus were not just myths.



This seal, with its impression at right, is known as the Temptation Seal. Discovered at the site of ancient Samaria, it depicts a serpent, woman, tree and man—all important elements in the account from Genesis of the temptation.

- The Bible's creation story (**Genesis 1**) is simple, accurate from a physical point of view and is free of the bizarre ideas found in creation myths of other ancient peoples. The Temptation Seal and Adam and Eve Seals found in Sumer support the accuracy of the Bible's creation story.
- The story of the Flood (**Genesis 6-8**) is supported by the existence of hundreds of Flood stories with common threads in virtually every culture on the face of the earth.
- The story of the Joseph (**Genesis 37-50**) is supported by the existence of "Bahr Yusef" – the Canal of Joseph which runs 200 miles parallel to the Nile and is dated to the time of Joseph.
- The story of the Exodus and the plagues of Egypt (**Exodus 7-14**) is supported by the Ipuwer papyrus which is an Egyptian record of the plagues just as described in the Bible.
- Other discoveries which help support the Bible's historical accuracy include Ebla tablets which show Sodom and Gomorrah (**Genesis 18-19**) did exist, proof of the existence of the Hittites (**Genesis 15:20**) and the bas reliefs at the Temple of Karnak in Egypt which show the same cities that Shishak conquered in Palestine and the booty of the Temple of God when he conquered Jerusalem in the days of Solomon's son, Rehoboam (**2 Chronicles 12**).
- Along with the record of the Jewish pharisee, Josephus, we have quotes from Justin Martyr, a Roman historian, Cornelius Tacitus, and Julian the Apostate all supporting the fact that Jesus really did live as could be verified in their day by existing Roman census records.



#### 4] Scientific accuracy

- The Bible is scientifically accurate with details such as the rain cycle (**Ecclesiastes 1:6-7**), the shape of the earth (**Isaiah 40:22**), its description of the mystery of gravity (**Job 26:7**) as well as the beneficial nature of the health laws (**Leviticus 11, 13**).

#### 5] Has the Bible been preserved accurately?

- Jesus backed up the authority of the Old Testament by the way He used and quoted from it. He treated the accounts in Genesis of Adam and Eve and the Flood as fact (**Matthew 19:4-5, 23:35, 24:37-38, Luke 24:44-45**). So did the apostles (**Luke 3:38, 1 Corinthians 15:45, 1 Peter 3:20-21, 2 Timothy 3:14-16**).
- The Jews had very strict conditions for making copies of Old Testament books which make them incredibly accurate. Compared to a handful of copies each of other ancient books of the same time there are well over 13 000 copies of New Testament manuscripts that support the accuracy of the New Testament.
- It is evident that the apostles were very aware of the fact that God was using them as instruments through divine inspiration to add more books to the existing canon of scriptures that the Jewish community had at the time (**Isaiah 8:16**). There are a couple of places in the New Testament that refer to already existing New Testament writings as Scripture (**1 Timothy 5:18, 2 Peter 3:15-16**).
- The apostles, who were not rabbis but a bunch of commoners and fisherman, turned the world upside down (**Acts 17:6**) with their willingness to teach and die for the belief that Christ died and rose again – something no rational person would be willing to do for something that was a hoax.



#### 6] The Unity of the Bible

- The Bible is amazingly consistent in its theme, message and accuracy for a book written by 40 different people over 1500 years.
- The history of the Israelites pictures the New Testament plan of salvation showing that the Old Testament and the New Testament present one message. In the Old Testament it is the shadows and types, and in the New Testament we have the reality of God's plan of salvation.
- The Israelites were in bondage to the Egyptians. Egypt is a picture of the old life of sin in which all are held under the domination of Pharaoh, who represents the devil. The only way to be rescued from Egypt's bondage and God's judgement was through the blood of the lamb. The slain lamb is the substitute for the first-born, and God's Lamb, Jesus Christ is our substitute, our Passover lamb (**1 Corinthians 5:7**). He dies in our place, and we are free from the old life of bondage, sorrow and sin through the blood of the Lamb.
- The annual festivals that God gave to Israel in **Leviticus 23** not only symbolize key events in Israel's history and civil life but also symbolize the great plan of salvation that God is working out through humanity (**Colossians 2:16-17**).

- We also see many shadows and types in the great many prophecies for the end-time set to occur in our near future. Many events that occurred in ancient Israel were a type of events prophesied for the end time. In the end-time the Beast power that conquers modern Israel (**compare Revelation 18:7-8 with Isaiah 47:5-9 and Isaiah 10:5, 20**) is referred to as both Assyria and Babylon. The United European power that will be a final revival of the Roman Empire will be composed of the ethnic peoples who descend from both the ancient Assyrian and Babylonian empires who took captive the northern kingdom of Israel (722 BC) and the southern kingdom of Judah (the Jews – 585 BC).
- God's way of life found in the Bible from front to back is remarkably consistent and profound. God's way is the way of GIVE, of love for God and fellow man (**Matthew 22:37-40**) while sin is portrayed as the way of GET.
- The Bible is truly an incredible book. It begins with a garden, a tree of life and an invitation to enjoy it (**Genesis 2-3**) and it ends with that same theme of a garden and the tree of life and man and God ultimately enjoying an intimate relationship living peacefully together (**Revelation 22**).

## 7] Christianity and the Bible compared to other religions

- The writings of the world's religions in comparison with the Bible, are seen to be unhistorical. Their teachings are not worked out step by step in the life of a people.
- The Koran (the holy book of Islam) speaks of jihad (holy war) and conversion by the edge of a sword which violates the principle of freedom of choice which God gives to all people (**Deuteronomy 30:19**).
- Mohammed (the writer of the Koran) commands his disciples to kill those who oppose his claims ("When ye encounter infidels, strike off their heads till ye have made a great slaughter among them" - Sura 47:4) after telling us elsewhere "Let there be no compulsion in religion" (Sura 2:258). This is one of several contradictions in the Koran. Jesus Christ commands His disciples to hold to a higher standard and tells us to bless those who curse us and to do good to those who hate us (**Matthew 5:43-44**).
- Islam does not emphasize the problem of sin and has very little consciousness of it. In contrast to Christianity which calls for inward holiness (purity of motives and thoughts, not just religious actions and ceremony), Islam proposes self righteous works as a means of salvation. It is externalistic. It focuses on doing certain outward actions without focusing on having purity in one's thoughts and motives.
- There is no other book which can offer salvation from the heavy burden and grief of sin. Buddhism with its meditation and ethics, Confucianism with its philosophies and idealism, Hinduism with its synchronised religion and its extreme idolatry, Shintoism with its variety and mythology, Islam with its lack of provision for sin - they all fail to bring the relief and joy of forgiveness, and the peace of a soul rightly related to God.

## 8] How can we truly know that God is always true and a God of love?

- What proof is there that He is not part good, part bad but totally good – that He truly is a God of love? Part of the answer is to read the Bible in depth and see what His track record has been like. We see God's love in the profound wisdom of His laws in the first books of the Bible and the wisdom of the book of Proverbs. We also see it in the profound acts of love shown in the gospels in the life of Jesus Christ – acts of love so much greater than man shows toward His fellowman (**Philippians 2:5-8**). By reading the Bible regularly you will gain a deeper sense of how great and loving God really is.
- The other part of the answer is by putting God to the test and living by His way of life and by doing so you can prove that truly is a God of love (**1 John 4:8**).

## 9] What are Some Keys to Better Understand the Bible?

- Some keys to better understand the Bible include:
  - 1) Ask for God's guidance with a proper attitude (**James 1:5**).
  - 2) Obey God and He will increase your understanding (**Psalms 111:10**).
  - 3) Accept the Inspiration of all the Bible (**2 Timothy 3:16-17**).
  - 4) Study the context (read and consider the verses before and after).
  - 5) Study all the scriptures on the subject (**Isaiah 28:10, Acts 17:10-12**).
  - 6) Use Bible helps properly.
  - 7) Seek the guidance of God's church (**Romans 10:14-15**).



## LESSON 3

### WHO AND WHAT IS GOD?

#### 1] Who and what is God?

- God is a family composed of two beings – God the Father and Jesus Christ (**John 1:1**).
- In **John 1:1** it says that the Word (who became Jesus Christ – **John 1:14**) was with God and then it says that the Word was God. God is not only a name used to describe the Father but God is also a KIND of being.
- The Hebrew word for God in **Genesis 1:1 and 1:26** is “Elohim”. Though there are some technical differences, it essentially is like a uniplural word in English such as a team, church or family. There is one team or one church or one family but at the same time there are many members that are a part of that one team or one church or one family. God is one family made up of many members.
- God the Father and Jesus Christ are one (**John 17:11**) in the sense they are of one mind and purpose. The marriage union between a husband and a wife where they become one in mind and purpose (**Matthew 19:4-6**) is a type of this unity between God the Father and Jesus Christ.
- God the Father is greater in authority (**John 14:28**).
- The Family of God will expand in the future as they bring “many sons to glory” (**Hebrews 2:10**).



#### 2] Who was Jesus Christ?

- Jesus said that He was the God being who called Himself “I AM” when He appeared to Moses (**John 8:53-58, Exodus 3:13-14**) and also was the one who appeared to Abraham as Melchizedek (**Hebrews 7:1-3**).
- Jesus Christ was the member of the God family who dealt personally with Israel in the Old Testament and was the one who appeared to Moses and gave him the Ten Commandments (**1 Corinthians 10:4**).
- Jesus Christ was the one who created mankind following the command of His Father (**Ephesians 3:9**). Jesus Christ was our Creator and His life therefore was worth more than all of mankind’s put together! This is how he could pay the price for all mankind’s sins.
- To pay for our sins He became flesh (**John 1:14**) and was supernaturally conceived by the Father through the power of God’s spirit in the womb of Mary 2000 years ago (**Matthew 1:18-20**).
- Jesus was both man and God. He was the “Son of God” (**Mark 1:1**) but He chose to focus on His humanity when on earth by more often referring to Himself as “the Son of Man” (**Matthew 8:20, 9:6, 10:23, 11:19**).
- Christ always defers to Father and is delighted to do so because He has complete love for and trust in the Father (**John 14:28-31**). His love and submission to the will of the Father is best exemplified by His willingness to lay His life down for all humanity (**Matthew 26:39-41**) through the unjust punishment of crucifixion (**Matthew 27, Philippians 2:5-8, 1 Peter 2:21-24**).
- Jesus Christ, though He never sinned, was tempted in all points like we are (**Hebrews 4:15**). He knows the pulls of the flesh that push us in the direction of sin and can empathize with the struggles that we have with sin. He has had personal experience with hunger and thirst, sexual desires, great physical pain, loneliness and many other temptations that Satan threw at Him. He can empathize better with us as one who has gone through those personal experiences.
- He is the Son of God (**Mark 1:1**), our Creator (**Ephesians 3:9**), our High Priest (**Hebrews 4:14-16**), our Saviour (**John 4:42**), our friend (**John 15:14**) and our elder brother (**Hebrews 2:11**).

#### 3] What does God look like?

- God is a spirit being (**John 4:24**) and is normally invisible to human eyes (**Colossians 1:15**).
- The shape of the Father and Jesus Christ is that of man’s physical shape which was made in God’s image (**Genesis 1:26**).
- Jesus Christ’s appearance now is described by the apostle John with these words: “His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes like a flame of fire; His feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace” (**Revelation 1:13-15**).

- This description of Jesus Christ is very similar to the description of God the Father in **Daniel 7:9** where we read: "I watched till thrones were put in place, and the Ancient of Days was seated; His garment was white as snow, and the hair of His head was like pure wool."
- A slightly different description of God the Father's appearance is found in **Revelation 4:2-3** where we read: "Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne set in heaven, and *One* sat on the throne. And He who sat there was like a jasper and a sardius stone in appearance; and *there* was a rainbow around the throne, in appearance like an emerald." Jasper was originally applied to every green translucent stone though today it's mostly used to denote red chalcedony. Sardius ranges from brown to orange or red in colour.

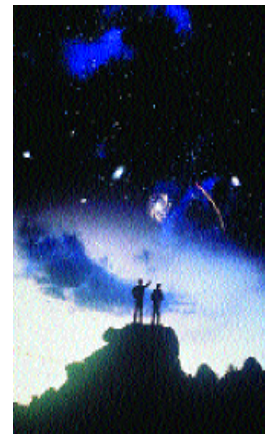
#### 4] Is the Holy Spirit a person?

- The Holy Spirit emanates from God the Father and Jesus Christ, fills the entire universe and is like God's extended arm by which He can act on anything anywhere (**Psalm 139:7-8**).
- The Holy Spirit is called "the POWER of the Most High" (**Luke 1:35**) or "the power of God" (**Romans 15:19, Jeremiah 32:17, Judges 14:6**). The Father and the Son's spiritual bodies are not omnipresent, but the Father and the Son are omnipresent by and through the Holy Spirit in the sense that they can see, know and do anything through their all-pervading spirit that issues from them and can act on anything anywhere.
- The Holy Spirit is NOT a third person of a trinity. It is given by supply (**Philippians. 1:19**) such as a double portion that Elisha received (**2 Kings 2:9-10**). It dwells in all christians (**Romans 8:9**) and it can be quenched (**1 Thessalonians 5:19**) if we resist its impulses to do good or we don't use that power after we have been baptized.
- When we are baptized we become "partakers of the divine nature" (**2 Peter 1:4**) through God's spirit. "Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit [which] was given to us" (**Romans 5:5**).
- God's Holy Spirit is many things - including the power of God (**Luke 1:35**), the mind of God (**Romans 8:27**) and the life of God (**Romans 8:11**), by which the Creator imparts temporary life to all of His physical creatures, and by which He will grant eternal life to all who repent of their sins, are baptized and are willing to walk by His way of life.



#### 5] What is God's character and personality like?

- God is Creator of all - of everything in the vast Universe - the stars, the galaxies in endless space, this earth, man, and everything in the earth (**Genesis 1:1**). That is what God is - what He does. He creates! He designs, forms, and shapes. He gives life! He is the great giver. And His law - His way of life - is the way of giving, not getting which is the way of this world (**1 John 4:8**).
- God is also the Ruler of all the universe (**Daniel 7:13-14, 2 Chronicles 20:6**).
- God is holy and free from sin (**Psalm 99:9**).
- God is love and cares for all His creation, including all mankind, through whom God plans to reproduce Himself (**1 John 4:8, John 3:16-17, Genesis 1:26**).
- God can change His mind. Abraham talked God out of destroying all the righteous people in Sodom and Gomorrah (**Genesis 18:20-33**). Moses talked God out of destroying all of Israel (**Exodus 32**). God changed His mind about King Hezekiah because of the king's prayer to Him and granted 15 more years to his life (**2 Kings 20:1-6**).
- God wants us to "cast **ALL** of our cares upon Him" (**1 Peter 5:7**). Not some but **ALL** of them – big and small! God takes a very personal interest in each and every one of us. God is concerned with anything and everything – no matter how seemingly small and insignificant – that could in any way affect the quality of the final work of art – the character - that He is creating within us (**Philippians 1:6**).
- God lives in heaven which may well be situated around the north celestial pole (**Isaiah 14:13**).
- God's throne will descend to earth in the New Jerusalem after the millennium and the Great White Throne Judgment period (**Revelation 4, 21-22**).



## LESSON 4

### ANGELS AND DEMONS

#### 1] What are Angels?

- Angels are spirit beings (**Hebrews 1:14**).
- Angels have great power, intelligence and are invisible to humans unless they manifest themselves (**Psalm 103:20, Colossians 1:16**).
- A great many of the angels were created before the original creation of the earth (**Job 38:7**).
- There are well over 100 million angels (**Daniel 7:9-10, Revelation 5:11**).

#### 2] What Do Angels Look Like?

- In their usual spiritual shape they look quite different to both man and God in appearance. Most have many wings and some have multiple faces which include the face of animals (**Ezekiel 1:4-14, Isaiah 6:1-3, Zechariah 1:11, 6:1-8**).
- Just as there is great variety in the different races of mankind, so too is there great variety in the angelic world. While most look like and have the features of animals some appear to look similar to humans in their natural spirit shape (**Ezekiel 40:3, Daniel 9:20-21**). It appears some may even look like women (**Zechariah 5:9-11**).
- They are called “sons of God” in **Job 1:6** and **Job 38:7** only in the sense that they are creations of God. While some appear to resemble humans in appearance they are NOT sons of God in the same way Jesus Christ is and the way those in the church are – conceived or begotten now by God’s spirit at baptism and later born as spirit beings at the resurrection to be fully composed of God’s Holy Spirit (**Hebrews 1:5**).
- They can change their appearance at will and when they manifest themselves to humans they usually look like regular men (**Hebrews 13:2**). In many of these cases they have a brightness to them and wear bright white clothes (**Acts 1:9-11**).



#### 3] What Do Angels Do?

- Angels are servants of God and have various duties, such as conveying messages to God’s prophets and protecting God’s people (**Psalm 91:11, Hebrews 1:14**).
- There are angels assigned to protect God’s people (**Matthew 18:10**) but there isn’t one angel per person. Angels are sent to protect (**Daniel 6:22**). Sometimes more than one angel can protect a person (**Psalm 91:11**) while at other times one angel can be sent to protect a few people (**Daniel 3:28**).
- God’s angels serve us by punishing the unrighteous (**Exodus 12:23, Matthew 13:41-42, 49-50 Acts 12:21-24**) and sometimes God uses them to punish us that we might repent and turn back to Him (**2 Samuel 24:15-17**).
- The angels of God will have the privilege and honor to bring the faithful to Christ so that they may receive from Him their reward (**Matthew 24:30-31**).
- The angels rejoice when each of us repents and turns to God (**Luke 15:10**). The angels are interested and desire to look into the truths of God that we learn from God (**1 Peter 1:12**) and have their own language (**1 Corinthians 13:1**).
- There are different ranks of angels such as cherubim (**2 Kings 19:15**) and seraphim (**Isaiah 6:1-3**). Two of the high ranking angels are Gabriel and the archangel Michael (**Jude 9**).
- Angels are separate individuals who have free moral agency which is required for the development of character.

#### 4] Did God Create a Devil?

- Lucifer was one of the cherubs that God created (**Ezekiel 28:12-15**). He became vain and puffed up and turned to the way of sin.
- He was very intelligent and powerful and this power and intelligence went to his head. He became full of pride and vanity. He thought he could run the universe better than God and tried to take over God’s throne and rule the universe (**Isaiah 14:12-14**). His rebellion failed and he was cast back down to earth (**Luke 10:18**).



- Lucifer became Satan the Devil. The word Satan means prosecutor or adversary. The word devil means accuser.

### 5] What were Lucifer (Satan) and his angels doing on earth before God created Adam and Eve?

- Many of the angels were put on earth under Lucifer. As a training ground to help them develop this character and learn to co-operate with God and His plans and co-operate with each other, Lucifer and a great number of the angels were put on earth.
- Isaiah shows that God gave him a throne on earth AND he was on the earth at the time he rebelled against God. Lucifer said: "I will exalt **my throne**...[AND] ascend above the heights of the **clouds**" (**Isaiah 14:12-14**).
- The world today in nature is not a reflection of the kind of government God intended to be exercised by the angels throughout nature. It is a reflection of the Devil's idea of competition, of devouring, and keeping in balance by each thing competing with something else. God has allowed nature to be governed in part by the way of survival of the fittest and devouring but God will change nature to reflect His way when Christ brings the Kingdom of God to earth (**Isaiah 11:6-9, Hosea 14:19**).

### 6] Did other angels follow Satan when he rebelled?

- Lucifer, who became Satan, persuaded a third of the angels under him to also go the way of the Dark Side (**Revelation 12:3-4**). These fallen angels are known as demons (**Matthew 9:32-33**).
- Given that there are over 100 million angels (**Daniel 7:9-10**) that means there could be well over 30 million demons on this earth!
- Certain of the fallen angels were locked up in a prison or place of restraint (**1 Peter 3:18-20, 2 Peter 2:4-5, Jude 6**) while others still roam free about the earth (**Luke 8:30-32, Job 1:6-12, Matthew 9:33**).

### 7] What are Satan and the demons like?

- The power of Satan and the demons is limited by God (**Job 1:6-12**).
- Satan's power is mostly in his power to deceive people into living against God's ways, but he and his demons can sometimes possess people when God allows it. Some enter the bodies of people to afflict them with diseases (**Luke 8:30, 32, Matthew 9:33, 17:18, Luke 5:35, 41**). Some people become insane due to the influence of demons (**1 Samuel 16:16, Matthew 11:18, Luke 7:33, John 7:20**). The demons have no power over God's people so we don't need to fear them (**1 John 5:18, Acts 8:6-7, 16:16-18**).
- Satan and the demons are the power behind many supernatural phenomena (including ghosts and alien sightings) which they use to deceive man and get him to believe things which are not taught in the Bible (**2 Thessalonians 2:9, 11:14-15, 1 Samuel 28**).
- Satan is the great deceiver of mankind and broadcasts his attitudes of selfishness and hatred persuading mankind to live against God's way (**Ephesians 2:2**). Just as radio waves are broadcast through the air, so too does Satan broadcast his thoughts and moods of selfishness and hatred through the air.
- The spirit in man in each of us is automatically tuned in to his broadcasts. It's up to us whether we flow along with it or reject those impulses and stick with God's ways with the help and power of God. When it comes to this battle of the mind that all of us face, James tells us to "Submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you" (**James 4:7**).



### 8] What is the Future for Satan and the Demons?

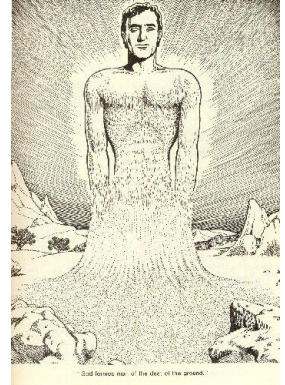
- Knowing his time left is short he will once again launch another attack on God's throne in heaven for one last desperate takeover bid. Michael and the righteous angels will win and Satan will be cast back down to earth. This appears to occur just before the Great Tribulation.
- In his rage he will go after the Church of God as it flees to a place of safety but fail to stop them. He will then turn his fury on those who don't make it to the place of safety and on the world at large stirring up the Great Tribulation which will bring man close to the point of complete annihilation before Jesus Christ returns to rule the earth (**Revelation 12:7-14**).
- Satan will be cast into the bottomless pit for 1000 years when Christ returns (**Revelation 20:1-3**). A little while after the millennium, he and the other demons will be cast into the lake of fire and influence mankind no more (**Revelation 20:9-10**).

## LESSON 5

# OUR INCREDIBLE HUMAN POTENTIAL

### 1] Why did God create man?

- The earth was originally created millions of years ago (**Genesis 1:1**) and then it became “waste and void” shortly prior to 6 000 years ago as a result of the rebellion of Satan and the demons (**Genesis 1:2**). In six days nearly 6 000 years ago, God renewed the surface of the earth (**Genesis 1, Psalm 104:30**).
- On the sixth day God created man saying: “Let us make man in our image, according to our likeness” (**Genesis 1:26**). The animals were created after their own kind but man was made after the GOD kind. God wanted to share the wonderful life that He has and can offer to others with children of His own. God wanted to have beings with different viewpoints and experiences to share their company with. God the Father and Jesus Christ wanted to fellowship and work together with a diversity of beings at their own level of God existence and so began the great plan of God **TO REPRODUCE HIMSELF THROUGH MANKIND!**
- God created the first man and called him Adam. He then took a rib from him and created Eve and put them in the Garden of Eden (**Genesis 2:15-23**).

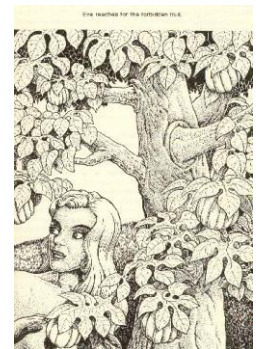


### 2] When did God create Adam and Eve?

- The book of Genesis is richly detailed with chronological data giving us the ages of so many of the patriarchs. Because of these details we know that God created man nearly 6 000 years ago. Most historians and Bible scholars date the beginning of Solomon's reign to **971 BC** (give or take a few years). If we use **971 BC** as the beginning of Solomon's reign then the Exodus occurred around 1447 BC and Abraham left for the land of Canaan in 1877 BC (**1 Kings 6:1, Galatians 3:16-17**). Using the dates of **Genesis 5 and 11** we also come up with an approximate date of **3960 BC** for the year that God created Adam and Eve. Remember that is only an approximate date. That would put the 6000<sup>th</sup> anniversary of this momentous event around the year **2040 AD**.

### 3] What was the purpose of the two trees in the Garden of Eden?

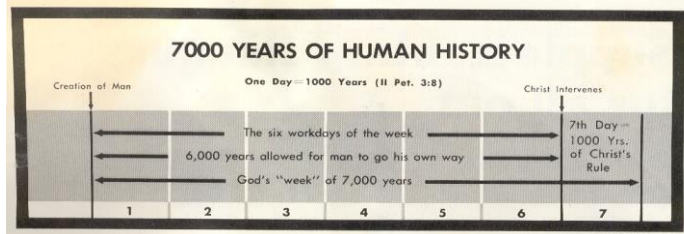
- God cannot instantly create character. He would have created us instantly perfect if He could have. Character requires free will and for the person to choose God's way and live by it even against temptation and self-desire.
- To develop their character, God tested Adam and Eve to see if they would live by His way or not. This test involved two trees (**Genesis 2:9-17**). One was the tree of life which symbolized receiving God's Holy Spirit and the power to live God's way. The other tree was the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. They were plainly told that they could not eat from that tree.
- Satan appealed to Eve's vanity and deceived her into thinking that she would be wise like God if she ate of the fruit of the forbidden tree. Adam wasn't deceived and ate the fruit to please his wife when she offered it to them (**Genesis 3:1-17**).
- Their act of deliberate disobedience led to God casting them out of the Garden of Eden (**Genesis 3:22-24**). God sentenced them and their descendants to being cut off from Him and the help of His Holy Spirit to live His way for 6 000 years before God would intervene and take over the government of the world.



### 4] Why did God cut Himself off from mankind?

- God ordained that 6 000 years of sinning human existence PROVE FOR ALL TIME that Satan's way can result only in evils, suffering, frustration, hopelessness, and death. God is allowing Satan to deceive and sway mankind for 6 000 years to prove this truth for all time.

- God's Master Plan involves a duration of 7000 years (**2 Peter 3:8, Hebrews 4:1-9**). The seven days of Creation were a type. Just as there were six days of work followed by God resting on the Sabbath, God has given man six millennial days to labour with sin without His help followed by a millennium of spiritual rest.



- As painful as it would be for mankind, God's decision to allow Satan to stay and tempt mankind for 6000 years would deepen the contrast between God's way of life and the way of sin. It would allow the worst of humanity to display itself and build up the FULL range of sin and wrong experience to prove for the rest of eternity that sin hurts.
- Why were we created physical and mortal? Why weren't we created as spirit beings that are immune to physical pain? One reason is to understand more deeply the lesson that sin hurts than we could have if we were created as spirit beings like the angels. Without feeling pain we are often a lot slower in changing our ways to stop doing things that are destructive to ourselves and others. Another reason is to help keep us humble and to more deeply appreciate God's greatness when we see it compared to our own minute power in comparison.

### 5] Why do we have so much suffering in the world?

- We live in a world of such awesome technical progress and advancement yet plagued with terrible evil and suffering at the same time. Why is there such suffering? There are a number of reasons. Mankind, as a whole, is cut off from God (**Hosea 4:6**) and the help of His Holy Spirit (except for those He is calling ahead of time) and Satan continues to tempt mankind to do evil (**Matthew 4:3, Revelation 12:9**).
- A tragedy in our life can occur for many different reasons. It could happen because of a sin or bad choice on our part (**Galatians 6:7**). It could happen because of someone else's sin. It could happen because of negligence on our part or that of someone else. It could happen because of time and chance (**Ecclesiastes 9:11**) such as being in the wrong place at the wrong time.
- God will often allow Christians to suffer pain and poverty to help teach them lessons such as humility and patience (**1 Peter 1:6-7**). Some of God's servants were quite wealthy like Abraham and Solomon. Others were quite poor yet no less righteous.
- Sometimes God allows church members to suffer different kinds of tragedies so they can comfort and help those with similar problems in the future during the millennium and the Great White Throne Judgment period (**2 Corinthians 1:3-5, Colossians 1:24**).



### 6] What is salvation?

- Salvation means to be preserved from destruction or evil. Spiritually speaking, salvation means to be saved from the penalty of sin (**Romans 5:9-10**). Sin is breaking God's laws (**1 John 3:4**) and the penalty for sin is death (**Romans 6:23**). Jesus Christ has paid that penalty on our behalf so we don't have to pay it (**Romans 5:6-10**). As our Creator His life was worth more than all of our lives put together.
- Salvation is a process. We are "saved now" from past sins (**Ephesians 2:8**). We are "being saved" from the sins (bad habits) that have earned us the death penalty (**1 Corinthians 1:18**) and then we shall be "fully saved" at the resurrection to immortality (**Matthew 24:13, Romans 5:9**).
- Because we continue to sin in this life we need to ask God to forgive us regularly so the new sins that we commit after baptism don't leave another death penalty hanging over us again (**1 John 1:9**). We are not fully and completely saved until the resurrection to immortality when our character is fully set and we will not sin ever again (**Hebrews 12:23, 1 John 3:9**).
- Salvation is a gift (**Ephesians 2:8**) which we can NEVER earn but if we never fulfil the conditions of repentance and baptism (**Acts 2:38-39**) He'll NEVER give it to us. Repentance is an ongoing condition to retain God's Holy Spirit in us (**Psalms 51:11**).
- As long as we have God's Holy Spirit when Christ returns or at death if we die beforehand, then God will resurrect us to immortality at Christ's return (**Romans 8:11**). If we continue to regularly strive to overcome sin and confess our sins when we stumble we will continue to have the Holy Spirit. We can



lose the Holy Spirit by deliberately turning from God's way of life or from neglecting to live God's way (**Hebrews 10:26**).

### 7] What does it mean to be born again?

- The way in which a baby is born is patterned after how God plans to reproduce Himself through mankind.
- All human life comes from a tiny egg called an ovum which is produced inside a human mother. This ovum has a very limited life of about 24 hours unless it is fertilized by a sperm cell from a male. Compared to eternity, our human life, of an average of 70 years, is very limited (**1 Peter 1:24**).
- The spirit in man in each of us is like the ovum and God's spirit is like the sperm from the father. At baptism the two unite to form a newly begotten spiritual life (**Romans 8:15-17**). A new God being has been begotten but he or she still has a long way to go before he or she is born into God's family.
- Like an embryo in its mother's womb is nourished, we must be nourished by spiritual food (**Matthew 4:4**). The church acts as our mother providing that spiritual food through the messages that we receive through the ministry (**Ephesians 4:11-15**).
- Not all babies make it to that moment of being born into the world. Sometimes a woman has a miscarriage when a baby doesn't develop properly. Likewise, we can be a spiritual miscarriage if we don't grow in God's character after we have received God's spirit (**Hebrews 2:3, 1 Corinthians 9:27**).
- After a period of nine months on average comes the big day when the baby is finally born. At the resurrection those who have God's spirit will be transformed and be born into God's family on the same God level of existence as God the Father and Jesus Christ (**1 Corinthians 15:50-53**). If one is born of the spirit (born again) HE IS SPIRIT (**John 3:5-6**)!



### 8] How can God change us from matter to spirit beings?

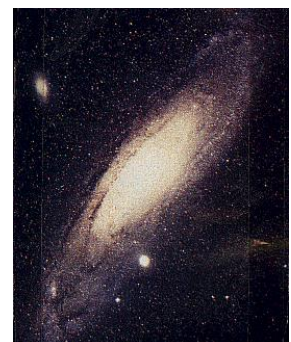
- The spirit that is in every human acts as a mould (**Job 32:8, 1 Corinthians 2:9-11**). It preserves the human's memory, his character, his form and shape. The flesh and blood physical body, after death, decomposes and decays, but the spirit that was IN that body, like the sculptor's mould, preserves all the form and shape, the memory, and the character intact. And that mould, being spirit does not change -- even though the resurrection may take place thousands of years after death.
- The resurrected being will be COMPOSED of SPIRIT, not matter as the human model was. In the resurrected SPIRIT form he will suddenly come ALIVE. It will seem like the next flash of a second from his loss of consciousness at time of death.

### 9] Can man really become God?

- What makes Jesus different from the angels are the same two things that will make us human beings different from the angels at the resurrection. We will also be begotten and then born sons of God just like Jesus Christ and we will also inherit all things (**Hebrews 2:5-8**).
- The first commandment in **Exodus 20:3** tells us that no other being or kind of being can be worshipped except for God. In **Revelation 22:8-9** we see that we are not supposed to worship angels.
- In the same book in **Revelation 3:9** Christ says the following to the Philadelphia church: "I will make them [false christians] come and **WORSHIP** before your feet and know that I have loved you." The Greek word used in **Revelation 3:9** is EXACTLY THE SAME GREEK WORD, "PROSKUNEO" that is used in **Revelation 22:8-9** - the worship which could only be directed to God and not to angels.

### 10] What will we be doing for eternity when we are born into God's family?

- The universe is currently in a state of decay. It is running down and is eagerly awaiting our birth into God's family so it can be set free from that decay (**Romans 8:18-23**). Once we are finished fixing up planet Earth, the whole universe with its billions and billions of stars and planets awaits us. God is in the creating business and we will join the family business of creating and beautifying the entire universe for all eternity with God the Father and Jesus Christ.
- God is reproducing Himself through us and He wants to share His wonderful God level of existence with each and every of us! That is our incredible human potential!

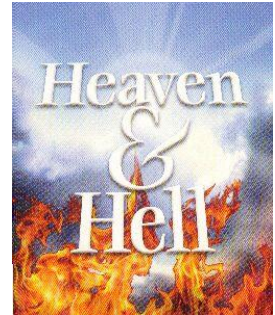


## LESSON 6

# THE TRUTH ABOUT HEAVEN AND HELL

### 1] Do you have an immortal soul?

- In **Genesis 2:7** we read that when God created Adam he became a soul. The Hebrew word that is translated soul everywhere it is found in the Old Testament is “nephesh”. This Hebrew word means “a breathing creature” and is also used to describe animals (**Genesis 1:21, 24, 2:19, 9:10, 12, 15, 16**) and even a dead body (**Leviticus 19:28, 21:1, 22:4**). The soul is not something in the body. It is the body!
- The Bible says that souls are not immortal. In two places in the Bible it says that souls can die (**Ezekiel 18:4 & 20**).
- The Greek word translated as soul in the New Testament is “psuche”. It also means a breathing creature and is applied to animals (**Revelation 8:9, 16:3**).
- According to Jesus the soul can be destroyed by God (**Matthew 10:28**).
- Satan told Eve she would “not surely die” (**Genesis 3:1-5**) — that she had an “immortal soul” that would live forever. This was the origin of the big lie that man has an immortal soul.
- The teaching that man has an immortal soul which either goes to heaven or hell at death can be traced back to Egypt. From Egypt the belief was passed onto the Greek philosophers. The early Catholic teachers were heavily influenced by pagan Greek ideas and this is how this teaching became Catholic and Protestant doctrine.
- Eternal life is a gift from God (**Romans 6:23**) not something that we automatically have.
- At the resurrection we will PUT ON IMMORTALITY! (**1 Corinthians 15:51-53**) There is no point to the resurrection if we already have an immortal soul.
- The spirit that is in every human acts as a mould (**Job 32:8, 1 Corinthians 2:9-11**). It preserves the human's memory, his character, his form and shape. The flesh and blood physical body, after death, decomposes and decays, but the spirit that was IN that body, like the sculptor's mould, preserves all the form and shape, the memory, and the character intact.
- The resurrected being will be COMPOSED of SPIRIT, not matter as the human model was. In the resurrected SPIRIT form he will suddenly come ALIVE. It will seem like the next flash of a second from his loss of consciousness at time of death. The spirit in man has no consciousness of itself.
- Those who are dead have no consciousness between their death and the resurrection (**Ecclesiastes 9:5, Psalm 6:4-5, 115:17, Job 14:21, John 11:11-14, Daniel 12:2-3**).



### 2] Does anyone go to heaven when they die?

- Jesus said that no man has gone to heaven except Himself (**John 3:13**).
- Christians are called Abraham's seed in **Galatians 3:16 and 29** and will inherit the same land that God has given to Abraham as an inheritance. Paul said in **Romans 4:13** that the promise to Abraham and to his seed – true christians – has expanded to include the whole world.
- Those who have died and had God's Holy Spirit will be resurrected when Christ returns to earth. When Christ returns they will reign with Christ on earth for a thousand years (**Revelation 5:10, 20:6**).
- We are not going to heaven – HEAVEN IS COMING DOWN TO EARTH! God the Father will eventually bring the New Jerusalem to earth and this will become the headquarters of the universe (**Revelation 21:1-3**)!
- The promised land to Abraham and his seed, which has expanded to include the whole earth, will continue to expand and include the whole universe (**Isaiah 9:6-7, Hebrews 2:8, Romans 8:18-23**)!

### 3] Does anyone go to hell when they die?

- The word hell in the Old Testament is translated from the Hebrew word “sheol” which means the grave.
- In the New Testament there are three Greek words that are translated as hell – “hades”, “tartaros” and “gehenna”. Hades means the grave. Tartaros means a place of restraint or prison for the fallen angels (**2 Peter 2:4**). Gehenna is derived from Valley of Hinnom which lay just



This is hell (gehenna) - The Valley of Hinnom just south of the old city of Jerusalem.



outside Jerusalem. Trash, as well as the dead bodies of animals and despised criminals, were thrown into the fires of gehenna, or the Valley of Hinnom.

- Christ used gehenna to picture the terrible fate of unrepentant sinners in **Matthew 10:28**. Christ said that God will destroy both the soul (life) and body of the wicked in hell. They won't burn and burn forever! They will be destroyed!
- Those who aren't "saved" in this life when they die don't go straight to hell. They await a future resurrection (**John 5:28-29**).

#### 4] Is this life everyone's only chance for salvation?

- In God's mercy all mankind will be given every opportunity to repent and become a part of God's family. Those who still rebel against God will not burn forever but will die very quickly – the second death (**Revelation 20:12-15**). They will perish – cease to exist (**Luke 13:3, Matthew 3:12, Hebrews 10:26-27, Malachi 4:1-3, Romans 6:23**).
- God is not trying to save all of mankind now. He has called and chosen to be a part of the church only a few at this time (**John 6:44, 1 Corinthians 1:26, Mark 4:11-12**).
- All people who have not received salvation up to Christ's second coming will get another chance – a first real chance at salvation when God resurrects them at the end of the millennium (**Revelation 20:4-5, 12-13, Ezekiel 37:1-14, Matthew 10:14-15, 11:20-24, 12:41-42**). This is the Great White Throne Judgment period. God's Holy Spirit will be offered to them (**Ezekiel 37:14**) and they will probably have a full 100 years to repent and be converted (**Isaiah 65:20**).
- God is truly is a God of justice and fairness who will give everyone a full and equal chance at salvation. He does not want anyone to perish but to have eternal life and be born into His family (**John 3:16**)!

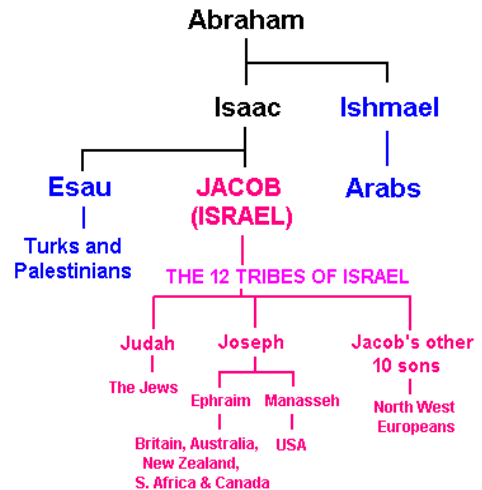


## LESSON 7

# WHY DID GOD CHOOSE ISRAEL?

### 1] Who are the Israelites?

- A few centuries after the Flood God chose Abraham and promised to develop his descendants into a group of influential nations chosen for the purpose of teaching and illustrating His values and way of life to the rest of the world (**Genesis 12:1-3, Genesis 17:5-6**).
- Israel was the name that God gave to Abraham's grandson, Jacob, which means "Overcomer with God" (**Genesis 32:28**). Jacob had 12 sons and from those sons descended the 12 tribes of Israel. Only one of those 12 tribes are the Jewish people or the Jews as they are called.



### 2] Why Did God Choose Israel?

- **God chose Israel for three important reasons -:**
  - [1] **To be a model nation that would encourage other nations to want to come under God's rule (**Exodus 19:3-8, Deuteronomy 4:6-8**).**
  - [2] **To prove that even with the knowledge of God's laws and every other advantage that man still needs the Holy Spirit to live by God's way of life. God knew they would break their covenant with Him ahead of time (**Deuteronomy 31:20-21**).**
  - [3] **To write through the painful lessons of experience that only living God's way leads to happiness and breaking God's laws only brings misery (**1 Corinthians 10:1-11**).**

### 3] What do you mean by the Old Covenant and the New Covenant?

- In an earlier covenant God made with Abraham He promised to use the nation of Israel to bless all the nations of the world (**Genesis 12:3, 22:18, 28:14**).
- When God gave them the Ten Commandments at Mt Sinai after He brought them out of Egypt He offered to be their God and bless them physically (**Leviticus 26:1-13, Deuteronomy 28:1-14**) if they would obey Him. This proposal by God which was accepted by the nation of Israel (**Exodus 19:8**) became known as the Old Covenant.
- Symbolically, the relationship between God and Israel was like a marriage (**Jeremiah 31:32**). Israel broke their covenant with God when they went into idolatry and turned away from His laws. Spiritually they were committing adultery with other gods and refused to repent. As a result, God symbolically divorced ancient Israel (**Jeremiah 3:7-8**).
- The member of the God family who personally dealt with ancient Israel was Jesus Christ (**1 Corinthians 10:4**). He was the one who was symbolically married to ancient Israel.
- God knew ahead of time that in order to fulfill the purpose of the Abrahamic covenant of using Israel as a model nation to bless all nations that a NEW covenant would eventually be required for them to have the heart to obey Him (**Jeremiah 31:31-33**) and eventually fulfill their destiny as the model nation by which He will bless all nations.
- When Jesus Christ returns He will make a new covenant with the nation of Israel (**Jeremiah 31:31-34**), and give them His Holy Spirit which will give them the ability to keep that covenant and never break it again.
- All who are baptized and partake of the Passover have made a covenant with God to come under God's rule and live by God's way of life (**Luke 22:20**). The New Covenant is based on better promises (**Hebrews 8:6**) including the giving of the Holy Spirit to help us live by the spirit of the law and offering us eternal life in the very family of God!
- With the Old Covenant Jesus Christ was married to physical Israel. With the New Covenant He will not marry physical Israel but He will marry the church – spiritual Israel (**2 Corinthians 11:2, Ephesians 5:25-32, Revelation 19:7-9**). When physical Israel repents at Christ's return they will be baptized into the church and become a part of spiritual Israel.

## Timeline of Old Testament Events

<b>c. 3960 BC</b>	Adam and Eve created.	<b>969– 929BC</b>	Solomon is king over Israel.
<b>2302 BC</b>	Noah's Flood.	<b>929BC</b>	Israel splits into two kingdoms – the northern kingdom of Israel (10 tribes) led by Jeroboam and the southern kingdom of Judah (2 tribes) led by Rehoboam.
<b>1950 BC</b>	Abraham is born.		
<b>1875 BC</b>	God calls Abraham out of Ur to go to the land of Canaan.		
<b>1850 BC</b>	Isaac is born.	<b>870 – 850 BC</b>	Ahab rules Israel with Jezebel, Jehoshaphat rules Judah and Elijah is prophet in Israel.
<b>1790 BC</b>	Jacob (Israel) is born.		
<b>1660 BC</b>	Jacob's family moves to Egypt.	<b>709 BC</b>	Assyria takes the northern kingdom of Israel into captivity. They become the "lost" 10 tribes.
<b>c. 1550 BC</b>	Egypt makes slaves out of the Israelites.		
<b>1445 BC</b>	God brings the plagues on Egypt and frees Israel under Moses.	<b>716 – 687 BC</b>	Hezekiah rules Judah.
<b>1405 BC</b>	God brings Israel into the Promised Land under Joshua.	<b>640 – 609 BC</b>	Josiah rules Judah.
<b>1400 – 1050 BC</b>	The time of the Judges including Gideon, Samson and Samuel.	<b>605 – 585 BC</b>	Babylon takes Judah (the Jews) into captivity. This is also the time of Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel.
<b>1049 – 1009 BC</b>	Saul is chosen as king and rules Israel.	<b>535 BC</b>	Cyrus of Persia after conquering Babylon issues decree allowing Jews to return to Palestine.
<b>1009 – 969 BC</b>	David is king over Israel.		

### 4] What were the birthright blessings that God promised to Abraham?

- There are two aspects to the blessings which have become known as the birthright blessing or blessings of Abraham. There are the national physical blessings of great prosperity (**Genesis 12:1-3**) and then there is the great spiritual blessing that God promised to him - the promise that Jesus Christ would be born from His descendants and that His death would make it possible to save mankind from the penalty of their sins (**Galatians 3:16**).
- These national blessings of great prosperity would make it possible for them to help and benefit many other nations all around the world. These birthright promises were passed down through Isaac and Jacob. All of Jacob's 12 sons would share in the blessings promised to Abraham but the double portion of this birthright was passed onto Joseph's sons, Ephraim and Manasseh (**Genesis 48:19**).
- The birthright tribes of Manasseh and Ephraim became the great nation of America and the company of nations known as the British Commonwealth, just as God had promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob thousands of years earlier (**Genesis 35:11, 48:19, 49:1, 22-26**). The sons of Joseph led the world into an era of unprecedented knowledge, prosperity and technological advancement.

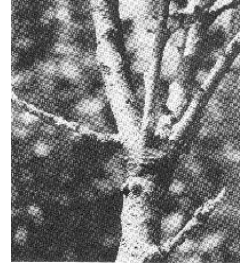


### 5] Will Israel ever become God's model nation?

- The biblically based values on which the founding fathers built the United States of America and which the British Empire was built upon have given way to a denial of God and the same kind of self-serving materialistic attitude that led to the collapse of the ancient kingdoms of Israel and Judah.
- As Moses delivered the ancient Israelites from Egyptian slavery, Jesus Christ is coming to deliver modern Britain and America and the other Israelite-descended nations from an end-of-the-age captivity (**Jeremiah 30:1-7**) by a modern religious and political system called 'Babylon the great' (**Revelation 17**), centered in Europe. They will be humbled after their awful slavery and turn to God at that time (**Deuteronomy 4:25-31, Ezekiel 20:43, 36:27-28**).
- When Christ returns He will bring the remaining Israelites of all the tribes back to the land of Palestine in an exodus that will be even bigger than that of Moses' day (**Jeremiah 16:14-15**).
- The nation of Israel divided into two kingdoms in the days of Solomon's son, Rehoboam. Ezekiel prophesied that at Christ's return the two kingdoms will be re-united as one nation – the Jews and the other tribes led by Joseph (America and Britain) will be one united nation (**Ezekiel 37:15-23**).
- They will be prepared in the wilderness and be offered the new covenant before they enter the Holy Land (**Ezekiel 20:34-36**). After Christ returns God will first work with physical Israel and offer them His Holy Spirit and they will then be converted (**Ezekiel 36:27-28**). Then, through their example when they do repent, God will open up salvation to the Gentile nations. Israel will become God's model nation and all nations will be blessed because of their example (**Isaiah 27:6, 54:3, 61:9, 62:2**).

## 6] What do you mean by a Spiritual Jew or a Spiritual Israelite?

- The Jewish people are only one of the twelve tribes of Israel and they descend from Jacob's son, Judah. The name "Judah" means "Praised of God". Spiritual Jews are those who have received God's spirit and who's life is worthy of God's praise (**Romans 2:28-29**).
- Israel's (Jacob's) name means "Overcomer with God" (**Genesis 32:28**). One can be a physical Israelite having descended from Israel (Jacob) but to be a true spiritual Israelite one needs to be a part of God's church and be "an overcomer with God" (**Galatians 6:16, Romans 9:3-8**).
- Through Jesus Christ's sacrifice and being called them into the church God has granted access to the New Covenant to physical Gentiles by grafting them into spiritual Israel - the church (**Romans 11:17-18, Ephesians 2:11-13**).
- God's punishment will come first on Israel and then on the Gentiles (**Isaiah 10:5-12**). After Christ returns God will first work with physical Israel and offer them the chance to be spiritual Israelites and then, through their example when they do repent, God will open up salvation to the Gentile nations (**Isaiah 2:3, Zechariah 8:22-23**). Israel will become God's model nation and all nations will be blessed because of their example.
- After Israel fulfils its destiny as God's model nation in the World Tomorrow all nations will become God's chosen people (**Isaiah 19:24-25**).

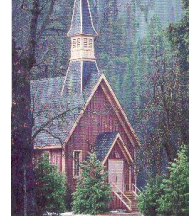


## LESSON 8

### THE PURPOSE OF THE CHURCH

#### 1] What is the Church?

- When the New Testament talks about the Church, it speaks of an assembly of people. In the Bible the word church is a translation of the Greek word *ekklesia*, meaning 'a calling out'. It never refers to a building or meeting place, but always to people, the ones 'called out' of the world's society by God calling them into His service.



#### 2] How does one become a part of the church?

- It is God the Father who moves us through His spirit to want to be a part of the church (**John 6:44**). God initiates the process and He is the one who grants repentance (**Romans 2:4, 2 Timothy 2:25**).
- The only way we become a part of the church is when we receive the Holy Spirit at baptism (**1 Corinthians 12:12-13**).
- In many of the world's churches babies are baptized (or christened) but this is contrary to what the Bible teaches. **Acts 2:38** shows that the conditions that have to be met before God gives someone the Holy Spirit are repentance and baptism. A degree of maturity is required for a genuine, heartfelt repentance.
- The word 'baptize' is not an English word. It is a Greek word. In translating it into English, the translators left this Greek word untranslated. Literally, in the Greek, the word is 'baptizo'. The definition of this word is 'IMMERSE.' It means to plunge into, put into, dip. It does not mean 'to sprinkle' or 'to pour' as practiced by many of the world's churches.
- Baptism pictures, in symbol, the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. But it is a DUAL picture, as all things in God's Plan are DUAL in operation. It also pictures the crucifixion of the old self (**Romans 6:3-7**), or of the sinning life, the burial of this sinning self, and the coming up out of this watery grave, symbolic of a CHANGED person resurrected to a new, righteous, spiritual life in Christ Jesus.
- Noah and his family being saved from the watery grave of the Flood (**1 Peter 3:20-21**) and the Israelites walking through the parted waters of the Red Sea (**1 Corinthians 10:1-2**) were types or symbols of this ritual of baptism.
- Baptism washes away our sins and through this ceremony we are forgiven of our past sins. The laying on of hands which accompanies it is where the newly baptized member of the church receives the Holy Spirit (**Acts 8:14-17**).



#### 3] What is the Purpose of the Church?

- God has raised up the church for the following important reasons :-

[1] To train a group of converted people who will assist Christ in setting up His government over the world in the millennium.

[2] To proclaim God's truth and announce the coming Kingdom of God as a witness to the world.

[3] To provide a group of people in which those who God calls can learn the lessons of teamwork.

[4] To teach and assist in the character development those who God calls in this age.

[5] To provide a support group for those who God would choose in this age.

- A prime minister or president of a country doesn't run a whole country on his own. He has a cabinet and a whole staff of people to assist him. Likewise, Jesus is training others ahead of time who will help Him rule and fix up this world during the millennium. A number of other verses show that Christians who overcome will rule with Jesus Christ when He sets up the Kingdom of God on earth (**Daniel 7:27, Jude 14-15, Revelation 2:26, 5:10**).
- King David will be resurrected to immortality at Christ's return and be king over all twelve nations of Israel (**Jeremiah 30:9; Ezekiel 34:23-24; 37:24-25**). Each of the original twelve apostles will be king,

under David, over one of these then super-prosperous nations (**Matthew 19:28**). Under the apostles, each now king over a great nation, will be rulers over districts, states, shires, counties or provinces, and over cities (**Luke 19:11-27**). These kings and rulers will be resurrected immortals, born into the kingdom (family) of God as Spirit beings.

- Those who are called and chosen in the church are called the firstfruits of the great harvest of people in God's plan (**James 1:18, Revelation. 14:4**).
- Christ told the church to go into all the world, preach the gospel and make disciples (students) in all nations and teach those who are willing to learn all things that He had taught them (**Matthew 28:18-20, Mark 16:15-18**).
- God is in process of training future world rulers. For God to select people who will become one of these future rulers they have to hear and be taught God's truth (**Romans 10:14-15**).
- God's plan has been executed in such a way that He has chosen the ordinary, average people and not the world's great and mighty people who are rich and famous so that no-one can say they made it into God's kingdom because of how great that they are. He who wants to glory or boast should boast of God's greatness, not their own. (**1 Corinthians 1:26-31**).
- The word tithe comes from an Old English word meaning 'tenth'. Tithing, then, means merely the practice of 'tenthing', or simply giving back to God 10 percent of one's increase (**Leviticus 27:32**). Jesus Himself and the apostle Paul upheld the practice of tithing (**Matthew 23:23, 1 Corinthians 9:13-14**) as God's means of financially supporting the church and its work of preaching the gospel.
- As well as preaching the good news of God's coming Kingdom, the church in this end-time has another commission, which is proclaiming the Ezekiel warning message, warning the nations descended from Israel of their coming end-time captivity (**Ezekiel 33:1-9, Amos 3:6-7**).
- God wants us to be able to get along and work with people with all types of different personalities and styles since the people of the world that we will be working with in the World Tomorrow will be very different. Some people will have personalities that are easy to get along with while other people we may find more difficult to get along with. The church is a training ground to help us learn teamwork and these kind of people skills with all types of different people (**1 Corinthians 12:14-26**).
- God gave those of us in the church the gift of a ministry and leadership to help teach us how to live by God's way of life and build God's character in us (**Ephesians 4:11-15, John 21:15-17**).
- The church is to be a support group of concerned members for those who God calls in this age (**1 Corinthians 12:14-26, Romans 15:1**).
- Often we think of the "feeding the flock" part of the commission to the church as something that is only done by the ministry through sermons and so on when, in reality, we all play a part in it. When we support and encourage one another with our time and our friendship and when we "stir up love and good works" (**Hebrews 10:24**) in one another we play a part in feeding the flock. Our support and friendship can play a big part in helping other people to grow spiritually and make it into God's Kingdom.



#### 4) How is the Church Run?

- Jesus Christ is the living, active head of the church (**Colossians 1:18, Ephesians 5:23**). He guides and directs it, inspiring the ministers in the church as they lead the flock, working out circumstances to help all of us to grow and opens up doors for the work of preaching the gospel to reach far and wide into the world.
- Godly church government emphasises service more than command (**Luke 22:25-27**); gentle encouragement more than rebuke; being 'helpers of your joy' (**2 Corinthians 1:24**) more than policeman over their faith; visiting, counselling, anointing, encouraging more than criticising; seeking those who are straying rather than threatening the weak with excommunication (**Luke 15:3-10**); building up faith, not instilling fear.
- There are two scriptures that give us a list of the various ministerial (meaning service) functions in the church (**Ephesians 4:11-12, 1 Corinthians 12:28**). Some of those ministerial functions include positions such as apostles, evangelists, pastors and elders.
- Christ directed the early church through the apostles who were chosen directly by Him (**Luke 6:13**). The word 'apostle' simply means 'one sent forth'. The apostles were instruments in Jesus' hands, through which He could spread the gospel, correct, reprove and lead the church.



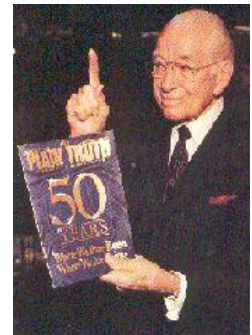
- An evangelist means an announcer of good news. They made converts, established local churches and appointed elders and deacons (**Titus 1:5**), and visited established churches (**Philippians 2:19-20**) with authority over local officers.
- The word pastor means 'shepherd' (**Ephesians 4:11**). Over each local congregation there is also a local pastor. He is the presiding elder or bishop (**1 Timothy 3:1-2**) over other elders in a local congregation.
- Jesus Christ and the apostle warn us that there are false ministers who masquerade as true ministers of God (**Matthew 7:15-23, 2 Corinthians 11:13-15**).

### 5] How Do You Identify the True Church?

- Some of the identifying signs of God's true church include:
  - The correct name – the Church of God (**Acts 20:28; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 10:32; 11:22; 15:9; 2 Corinthians 1:1; Galatians 1:13; 1 Timothy 3:5**)
  - Keeping the Sabbath day (Friday sunset to Saturday sunset) holy (**Exodus 20:8-11, Luke 4:16, 31-32**)
  - Observing God's Holy Days (**Leviticus 23**)
  - Preaching obedience to God's laws (**Matthew 4:11; 5:17-19**)
  - Preaching the gospel of the coming Kingdom of God (**Mark 1:14, Acts 1:3; 8:12; 14:22**)
  - Not teaching false doctrines and practices such as man having an immortal soul which goes straight to heaven or hell when we die (**Ezekiel 18:4, 20; Matthew 10:28**) and not observing pagan holidays such as Christmas and Easter.

### 6] What has the History of the Church Been Like?

- God's church has continued to exist for the last 2 000 years. Powerless, often persecuted, and rejected as heretics, the world lost sight of them. Instead, there emerged from a lost century following Paul's death, a church that was steadily growing in popularity but growing further away from the gospel that Jesus taught (**Revelation 17**).
- Seven letters recorded in **Revelation 2 and 3** contain a number of snapshots of the church at various times in history over the past 2000 years. Like many other prophecies in the Bible these letters are dual in nature highlighting qualities of the church at that time yet also containing prophecies about the future of the church.
- We need to learn from the lessons of the seven churches. Some of those important lessons include keeping our first love alive for God and His way of life (**Revelation 2:2-4**), standing firm in the midst of trials like Smyrna (**Revelation 2:9-10**), keeping ourselves pure from the wrong influences and ways of the world (**Revelation 2:20**), holding fast to God's truth against the attacks of false teachers (**Revelation 3:11**) and not being lukewarm, self-satisfied and complacent like the Laodiceans by drawing near to God with zeal (**Revelation 3:17-19**).
- God's true church has always been small compared to the professing christian world's churches (**Luke 12:32**) but it is faithful to the truth of the Bible and its commission of preaching the gospel to the world and making disciples of all nations. Through the church, God is preparing a people who will become the future rulers of the world in the World Tomorrow and who will help Jesus Christ bring the rest of humanity into the family of God.

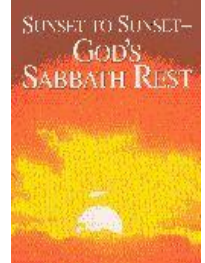


## LESSON 9

# GOD'S HOLY DAYS

### 1] What is the Sabbath?

- The fourth of the Ten Commandments is the Sabbath which is described as a weekly “anniversary” of the day when God rested after renewing the face of the earth 6000 years ago at the time that He created Adam and Eve (**Genesis 2:1-3, Exodus 20:8-11**). It reminds us on a weekly basis that we worship the great Creator of the Universe.
- Relationships take time. Every successful association demands time. No close relationship can succeed without it—no courtship, no marriage, no friendship. Our relationship with God is no exception. The Sabbath (A Hebrew word meaning rest) is a special day to concentrate on developing our spiritual relationship with God (**Exodus 20:8**).
- In the Bible we see that God begins and ends days at sunset (**Leviticus 23:32, Deuteronomy 16:6, Genesis 1**), not midnight or sunrise (like in ancient Egypt). The seventh-day Sabbath begins at Friday sunset and ends at Saturday sunset.
- The Sabbath was also given as a sign to identify who are the people of God (**Exodus 31:13**). The Sabbath is an important sign identifying those who are true Christians today. It identifies those who have surrendered their will to God, who obey God regardless of persecution or cost!
- By keeping the Sabbath holy we celebrate God’s creative work at the time of Adam and Eve (**Genesis 2:1-3, Exodus 20:11**).
- Another meaning that was connected to keeping the Sabbath was for Israel to remember coming out of slavery in Egypt (**Deuteronomy 5:13-15**). As slaves they had no rest like the Sabbath. For the Christian we can celebrate coming out of spiritual Egypt and the slavery of sin (**Romans 6:16-18**).
- A third important meaning attached to the celebration of the Sabbath on a weekly basis is that it pictures the millennium when God’s Kingdom will be brought to earth and mankind will finally experience “rest” from war, poverty and suffering. The last day of the week – the Sabbath - represents the rest at the end of man’s rule - the millennium (**Hebrews 4:1-9**).



### 2] How do we keep the Sabbath holy?

- The Sabbath is a space of time. God set it as that space of time from Friday sunset to Saturday sunset. Whenever that time comes to us, we are in holy time! It is GOD's time, not ours! Like Moses being asked to take his shoes off when he came near God’s presence in the burning bush (**Exodus 3:2-5**), God wants us to keep that day holy for the purpose of drawing closer to Him and not trample on it by doing activities that draw us away from that purpose.
- Jesus acknowledged that it was proper to rescue an animal that had fallen into a ditch on the Sabbath, and thus by implication handle other genuine emergencies that cannot wait until after the Sabbath to be resolved (**Luke 14:5, Matthew 12:9-13**). God wants us to use honest, sound judgment in applying the spirit and intent of what we can or should not do on His Sabbath day.
- There are three categories of things that we are to strive to avoid on the Sabbath– 1) Doing your own ways 2) Finding your own pleasure 3) Speaking your own words (**Isaiah 58:13-14**). Our own ways has to do with our employment, studies and those things involved in helping us make a living or our physical maintenance. Finding our own pleasure involves our hobbies, sports and other personal interests while our own words means the everyday things we talk about that don't involve God.
- God wants us to delight in the Sabbath (**Isaiah 58:13**). The Sabbath allows us time to think more about God, to pray and to study the Bible and learn more about God’s awesome purpose for our lives and how to achieve it!
- An intimate part of keeping the sabbath holy is assembling for a holy convocation. A convocation is a commanded assembly or gathering of people (**Leviticus 23:1-4**). God commands our presence each sabbath in the same way that a court can command our appearance to be a witness in a court case unless we have a genuine reason such as sickness or distance.
- God has commanded it because He knows we need regular encouragement and to regularly hear God’s truth being taught to us





to help us stick close to God. Without our minds being fed by God's values on this regular basis we quickly drift into following our natural desires and the ways of this world which are often the path of least resistance.

### 3] Why do the churches of the world keep Sunday?

- Jesus kept the Sabbath (**Luke 4:16**) as well as the apostles and the early New Testament church (**Acts 13:42, 17:1-2, 18:4**).
- Long before the birth of Christ the pagans were worshipping the sun on the first day of the week – Sunday. The move towards adopting Sunday by the Catholic Church was motivated by two things. The first was to distance themselves from the Jews. In the second century A.D. strong anti-Jewish persecution swept through the Roman Empire. The other thing that motivated the adoption of Sunday by the Catholic Church was to increase their numbers by mixing christian beliefs with pagan practices such as worshipping on Sunday. The change was justified by emphasizing that Sunday was the true Lord's Day, being the day they taught that Christ was resurrected on.
- After Jesus Christ returns the Sabbath will be kept by the whole world in the millennium (**Isaiah 66:23**).

### 4] What's wrong with Christmas and Easter?

- Most encyclopaedias will plainly show that Christmas was not celebrated by the early church but originated from pagan festivities that were given a "christian" veneer. The Catholic Church mixed christian beliefs with pagan practices such as the Roman feasts of Saturnalia and Brumalia which included customs such as the Christmas tree (**Jeremiah 10:3-4**), mistletoe, spending sprees, exchanging presents and other Christmas customs.
- Jesus was not even born in the winter season! When the Christ-child was born "there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night" (**Luke 2:8**). This never could have occurred in Judea in the month of December. The implications from the Bible are that Christ was born probably around the beginning of the Feast of Tabernacles (**Luke 2:7**).
- The word 'Easter' is not even of Christian origin. It is another form of Astarte, one of the titles of the Chaldean goddess, the queen of heaven who in ancient times was Semiramis, the wife of Nimrod (**Genesis 10, 11**).
- The Encyclopaedia Britannica tells us: "As at Christmas, so also at Easter, popular customs reflect many ancient pagan survivals - in this instance, connected with spring fertility rites, such as the symbols of the Easter egg and the Easter hare or rabbit" (15th edition, Macropaedia, Vol. IV, p. 605, "Church Year").
- God makes it very clear that He doesn't want His people mixing their worship of Him with pagan ideas (**Deuteronomy 12:29-32**). We can't worship Him anyway we want to. He has given us seven great festivals on which to worship Him along with the weekly sabbath which are much more enjoyable than the world's cheap substitutes of Christmas and Easter.



### 5] When was Christ crucified and resurrected?

- When asked to give the people a sign that He was the Messiah, Jesus said that He would be three days AND three nights in the heart of the earth" (**Matthew 12:39-40**) just as Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights (**Jonah 1:17**). It wasn't three day and/or night periods (36 hours), it was three days AND three nights. The time period according to Christ's statement was to be exactly 72 hours (**Mark 8:31, John 2:19**).
- If the resurrection took place at the same time of day as when Jesus was buried - only three days later - this would place the resurrection close to sunset, not sunrise, as is commonly assumed. John's account tells us that Mary Magdalene came to the tomb when it was yet DARK on the first day of the week and Jesus was NOT there (**John 20:1-2**). Since He was buried before sunset He had to have risen just before sunset on the weekly Sabbath. That means He was crucified on Wednesday afternoon and buried just before sunset on Wednesday.
- There were two sabbaths that week – a Holy Day on the Thursday (**John 19:30-31**) – the first Day of Unleavened Bread (The 15th of Nisan) and the weekly Sabbath. The women bought and prepared spices for His burial on the Friday after the annual Sabbath (**Mark 16:1**) and then rested on the weekly Sabbath (**Luke 23:56**) before going to the tomb on the first day of the week to find that He had already risen.
- The Sabbath the day after Christ was crucified was a high day – it was an annual Sabbath. The night before Christ was crucified He kept the Passover (**Luke 22:8-20**). This was the night part of the 14th of Nisan, the first month.



- The reason why the Catholic Church made the move to teach that Christ was crucified on a Friday goes back to the spring fertility festival which became Easter in the western world. Friday comes from “Freya” day. Freya was the Norse name of the ancient fertility goddess known as Venus in Rome and Ishtar in Babylon who’s sacred day was Friday.

## 6] What are God’s Holy Days?

- God gave to Israel His Feast days recorded for us in **Leviticus 23**. These festivals to Israel celebrated their national deliverance at the time of the Exodus by God’s hand and also showed gratitude to God for the two major seasonal harvests each year. As with many things of God the lessons of the Holy Days are dual in nature – they teach both physical lessons as well as spiritual lessons. They also teach us tremendous lessons about the great master plan God is working out here on earth through mankind.

<b>Festival</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Meaning for Ancient Israel</b>	<b>Meaning in God’s Great Plan of Salvation</b>
Passover	14 <sup>th</sup> of 1 <sup>st</sup> month	Celebrated the passing over of God over Israel that spared them from the last plague at the time of the Exodus ( <b>Exodus 12:26-27</b> ).	Celebrates the great sacrifice of Jesus Christ for the sins of all mankind who is called "our Passover" lamb ( <b>1 Corinthians 5:7, 1 Peter 1:18-19</b> ).
Days of Unleavened Bread	15 <sup>th</sup> to 21 <sup>st</sup> of the 1st month	Celebrated the Exodus out of slavery in Egypt ( <b>Exodus 12:17</b> ).	Celebrates putting sin out of lives as well as developing the character of God ( <b>1 Corinthians 5:7-8</b> ).
Pentecost	50 days from the Sabbath before wavesheaf offering	Celebrated the first, smaller harvest in Israel.	Celebrates how we, in the church, are the first small harvest of souls of all humanity ( <b>James 1:18</b> ) and the need for God’s spirit which was poured out when the church began on the Day of Pentecost in A.D. 30 ( <b>Acts 2:1-4</b> ).
Feast of Trumpets	1 <sup>st</sup> of 7 <sup>th</sup> month	Celebrated the beginning of the civil year.	Celebrates the return of Jesus Christ at the seventh trumpet to rule all nations ( <b>Revelation 11:15-18</b> ). It pictures the Day of the Lord when God is going to discipline this world and bring this world to repentance. It also points us to the joyous time when Christians ( <b>1 Corinthians 15:51-53, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18</b> ), will receive eternal life at the first resurrection and be born into the Family of God.
Day of Atonement	10 <sup>th</sup> of 7 <sup>th</sup> month	Celebrated the yearly atonement of sins for the nation of Israel.	Celebrates the banishment of Satan when Christ returns ( <b>Revelation 20:1-4</b> ). It also pictures the culmination of the redemptive work of Christ when we will be completely purged of sin at the resurrection made possible by the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ ( <b>Leviticus 16</b> ).
Feast of Tabernacles	15 <sup>th</sup> to 21 <sup>st</sup> of 7 <sup>th</sup> month	Celebrated the latter and greater harvest in Israel.	Celebrates the greater harvest of souls that will occur during the millennium ( <b>Isaiah 25:6-8</b> ) when Christ will bring the Kingdom of God to this earth and rule all nations and set His hand to save all of mankind with the saints of God – those Christians who overcome in this age ( <b>Daniel 7:27</b> ).
Last Great Day	22 <sup>nd</sup> of 7 <sup>th</sup> month	Part of the celebration of the latter and greater harvest in Israel.	Celebrates the Great White Throne Judgment period which we read of in <b>Ezekiel 37</b> and <b>Revelation 20</b> when all the dead who haven’t been saved up to Christ’s coming will be resurrected and be given their first real chance at salvation.

- The Passover is held at the beginning of the 14<sup>th</sup> day of the first month. This first month is not January. It is the month of Nisan or Abib (meaning green ears) on God’s calendar which starts in spring in the northern hemisphere. God set the moon in the heavens to divide time (**Genesis 1:14**).

- When Christ kept His last Passover before He was about to be killed He changed the symbols from the Passover lamb, which was an Old Testament type of Christ's sacrifice to the new symbols of the bread and wine which picture Christ's body and His blood which was sacrificed for us (**1 Corinthians 11:23-27**).
- The bread pictures four things - the literal body of Christ which was broken for us (**Luke 22:19**), the Word of God which is the bread of life (**Matthew 4:4, John 6:48**), the church of God (**1 Corinthians 10:17**) and the mind or giving attitude of Christ (**Philippians 2:5-8**).
- The wine pictures Christ's shed blood (**Luke 22:20**) to cover all our horrible past sins which gives us a fresh start. We are then forgiven of our past sins, though mindful we have to change our life from here on.
- Paul commanded the Corinthian Christians - mostly gentiles (non-Israelites) - to keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread. His instructions show that Christians from non-Jewish communities and cultures kept the Days of Unleavened Bread (**1 Corinthians 5:6-8**).
- Leaven or yeast is what is put into bread to make it rise. Leaven is compared to sin (**1 Corinthians 5:8**) because just as leaven puffs up bread so does sin puff us up spiritually. We must come out of this world's ways of sin (**Revelation 18:4**) - just as Israel left Egypt which is also a type of sin (**Hebrews 11:25-26**).
- We read in the New Testament that on at least two occasions, Paul carefully arranged his schedule according to where he wanted to be on the Day of Pentecost (**Acts 20:16, 1 Corinthians 16:8**).
- Trumpets were used for sounding a warning people of danger and the Feast of Trumpets reminds us of our job, as a church, to warn this world of the impending great tribulation (**Ezekiel 33:1-9, Isaiah 58:1**).
- God commands us to fast on the Day of Atonement (**Leviticus 23:32**) which is to abstain from food and water (**Exodus 34:28; Esther 4:16**) Fasting helps us remember how temporary our physical existence is. Without food and water, we would soon perish. Fasting helps us realize just how much we need God as the giver and sustainer of life.
- The name of the Feast of Tabernacles derives from God's command to ancient Israel to build temporary 'tabernacles', sometimes called 'booths', to live in during the festival. The Feast of Tabernacles is an annual reminder of our temporary state (**2 Corinthians 5:1-2**).
- What ancient Israel could enjoy for one week at the end of the fall harvest (**Exodus 23:16**) represented what He will bring to all mankind when He returns and sets up God's Kingdom on earth (**Isaiah 25:6-8**).
- Not only are Christians still obligated to keep the Feast of Tabernacles along with the rest of God's Holy Days, all nations will keep the Feast of Tabernacles in the millennium (**Zechariah 14:16-19**).
- God will see His plan through and bring many sons to glory (**Hebrews 2:10**). The spiritually thirst-quenching waters of the Holy Spirit will be available to all in the time depicted by "that great day of the feast" during the Great White Throne Judgment period after the millennium (**John 7:38-39, Joel 2:28**) All who have died without "being saved" will be resurrected to receive their first real chance at salvation (**Revelation 20, Ezekiel 37**). What a marvellous plan these biblical festivals portray!



## LESSON 10

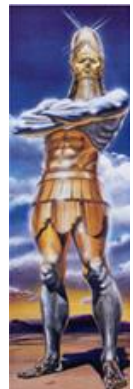
# THE GREAT TRIBULATION

### 1] What is the Great Tribulation?

- Before Jesus Christ returns to this earth and establishes the Kingdom of God on this earth mankind will go through its darkest and most frightening time in all of history. This final great world war is prophesied to go for 3 ½ years (**Daniel 12:7-13, Revelation 11:2-3, 12:6, 14**).
- Jesus foretold that the Great Tribulation would be so great that, unless God does intervene, no human being would be saved alive. (**Matthew 24:21-22**). Mankind will be brought to acknowledge that God's way is the only way to true peace.

### 2] Who and what is the Beast?

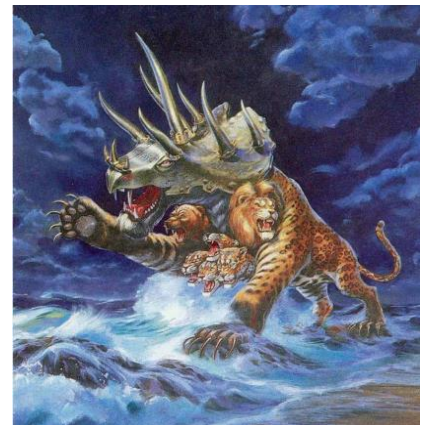
- The prophecies of the books of Daniel and Revelation give us an orderly story flow of world history and prophecy ahead of us. They show us that the major world power in the final world war leading up to the return of Jesus Christ will be a military power known as the Beast (**Revelation 17:7-14**).
- In **Daniel 2** we read about a great dream that Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, had that Daniel interpreted for him. God had given a vision about the great empires to come right up until the return of Jesus Christ. It was a prophecy of four great kingdoms to rule the ancient world.
- In **Daniel 7** we read that Daniel also had a dream of these four great kingdoms but instead of seeing a statue of a man made of gold, silver, bronze and iron like Nebuchadnezzar did, he saw four wild beasts – a lion, a bear, a leopard with four heads and a wild beast more terrible than the other three.



These four great ancient empires are plainly identified from history as -:

**The Babylonian Empire (625 – 539 BC)**  
**The Medo-Persian Empire (539 - 330 BC)**  
**The Greco-Macedonian or Greek Empire (333 – 31 BC)**  
**The Roman Empire (31 BC – 476 AD)**

- In **Revelation 13** we read about a beast that is a combination of the four wild animals in **Daniel 7**. If we count up the number of heads and horns of the four wild beasts of **Daniel 7** we come up with seven heads (remembering the leopard has four heads) and ten horns – the same number of heads and horns of the beast of **Revelation 13**. The Roman Empire swallowed up the territory and had many of the strengths of the previous empires and was a composite of the previous great empires.
- The ten toes of iron and clay are an extension or revival of the Roman Empire (a United Europe) that will exist at the time that Jesus Christ returns and sets up the Kingdom of God on earth (**Daniel 2:40-44**). The two legs of iron symbolize the Western and Eastern divisions of the Roman Empire. As there are five toes on each foot some of the nations that form this United Europe will be from Western Europe and others will be from Eastern Europe.
- The term “king” and “kingdom” are used interchangeably to refer to both the kingdom and the ruler or king over that kingdom (**Daniel 2:36-37**). The end-time beast is not only a revival of the Roman Empire but also is a term used to refer to the Hitler-like ruler who will rule this United European power (**Revelation 19:20**).
- In **Revelation 17** we read of another beast similar to the beast of **Revelation 13**. The seven heads are seven kingdoms and it is said of those that “five have fallen, one is and one is yet to come.” These are seven successive revivals of the Roman Empire that rise and fall after the original Roman Empire.
- The ten horns of **Revelation 17** represent the same thing as the ten toes of **Daniel 2** – ten rulers and/or nations that give their power to the end-time ruler over the final revival of the Roman Empire that will be based in Europe. They will make war with Jesus Christ at His return and be defeated by Him.



### DANIEL 2 (GREAT IMAGE)

Head of **GOLD** (Babylon)  
Arms of **SILVER** (Persia)  
Belly of **BRASS** (Greece)  
Legs of **IRON** (Rome)  
**10 TOES** of **IRON & CLAY**  
(Final Revival of Roman Empire)  
formed from ten nations)

### REVELATION 13

**BEAST with 7 heads and 10 horns**  
(Rome and its 10 revivals)  
**7 HEADS** (Composite of the  
four great empires)  
**10 HORNS** (10 successive revivals  
of the Roman Empire including  
3 barbarian kingdoms)

### DANIEL 7 (FOUR BEASTS)

**LION** (Babylon)  
**BEAR** (Persia)  
**LEOPARD with 4 heads** (Greece)  
**BEAST with 10 horns** (Rome)  
**10 HORNS** (10 successive revivals  
of the Roman Empire including  
3 barbarian kingdoms)

### REVELATION 17

**BEAST with 7 heads and 10 horns**  
(Rome and its 7 revivals after the barbarians)  
**7 HEADS** (The 7 revivals after the barbarians)  
**10 HORNS** (Final Revival of Roman Empire  
formed from ten nations)

### TEN ROMAN REVIVALS

1. Vandals (429-533)
2. Heruli (476-493)
3. Ostrogoths (493-554)
4. Justinian (554)
5. Charlemagne (800)
6. Otto the Great (962)
7. Hapsburg Dynasty (1500's)
8. Napoleon (1800)
9. Mussolini-Hitler (1939-1945)
10. United Europe still to come

- A great harlot called "Mystery, Babylon the Great" rides or controls the beast of **Revelation 17**. This woman is the great false church who is responsible for the death of a great number of true Christians. The Catholic Church has dominated all the revivals of the Roman Empire since the Imperial Restoration of Justinian in **554 AD**.
- **Matthew 24:7** shows sovereign nations and kingdoms fighting each other. While there are indeed globalists pushing their agenda on this world, the beast power is NOT some one world government but an end-time revival of the Roman Empire which we see the foundations of being laid today in Europe. The builders of the European Union quite openly use the iconography of Babylon and the woman riding the beast that features in the book of Revelation.
- The final great revival of the Roman Empire based in Europe will be a great political and military power that will work hand-in-hand with the great false church, which will be led by a great false prophet (**Revelation 20:10**) who, through Satan's power, will be given the ability to perform great miracles (**2 Thessalonians 2:3-10**) and encourage people to follow the beast – the government of the coming United Europe. It will be a union of both church and state like the Holy Roman Empire of the Middle Ages.
- This final revival of the Roman Empire is also called by the name of **BABYLON** in many prophecies. From the days of Nimrod and the Tower of Babel the name Babylon has come to signify man's political, economic and religious system apart from God. The name "Babylon" is used synonymously for both the great false church and the city from which she rules (the Vatican inside Rome) as well as the United Europe (**Revelation 17:5, 18:9-11**).
- Another name that is used in the Bible for this coming United Europe is **ASSYRIA**. The ethnic people who dominated the Assyrian empire migrated into central Europe and became the people we know as the Germans today. The prophecies of the Bible indicate that the German people will dominate this coming United Europe as they did during the days of the Holy Roman Empire and during the last revival when Hitler conquered much of Europe (**Isaiah 10:5-6**).

### 3] What is the Image, the Mark and the Number of the Beast?

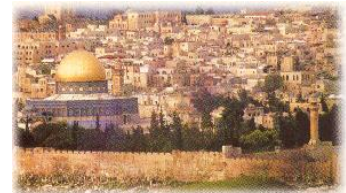
- In **Revelation 13** not only do we read about a great empire called the Beast but we also read about another beast that was like a lamb but spoke like a dragon. This second beast is the same great false church represented by the great harlot of **Revelation 17** who controlled the revivals of the Roman Empire and the little horn of **Daniel 7** who persecuted the saints of God (**Daniel 7:25**).
- The image of the beast we can see from history was the governmental structure of the Roman Empire that the Catholic Church structured itself after.
- The mark of the beast (**Revelation 13:15-17**) is something of a religious nature because it is forced onto people by the great false church. It brands on the people the mark of the "beast" - that is the mark of the Roman Empire, NOT the mark of the church. The idea that the mark of the beast is some sort of microchip or physical mark fails to meet the first criteria because it is the church NOT the government which causes people to receive the mark. A microchip or some physical mark would be forced onto people by the government not the church.



- The mark of the beast is **something of a religious nature** because it is forced onto people by the great false church and that it originated with the Roman Empire, not the church, which a cunning devil would seize upon as a means of cleverly deceiving people into breaking one of God's commandments and it involves a direct connection with holding a job - engaging in business - earning a living. Worshipping the beast (**Revelation 13:12**) and Sunday keeping, counterfeits of the 1st and 4th commandments, both fit these criteria.
- The Catholic Church itself has said: "Sunday is our **MARK** of authority." (The Catholic Record, Sept. 1, 1923). The true Sabbath is a mark or identifying sign between us and God that we are His people (**Exodus 31:12-17**) and it is also like the mark of the beast as it is received on the forehead, signifying accepting it mentally, and on the hand, signifying obedience by work or rest (**Exodus 13:9, Deuteronomy 6:1, 8, 11:18**).
- Sunday-keeping has already been forced onto people in the past in the way that the mark of the beast will be in the future. After the decree of the Council of Laodicea (**363 AD**) men couldn't hold a job or engage in business unless they worked on Saturday and rested on Sunday. Duality is another key to understanding prophecy. What has happened will happen again. History often has a habit of repeating itself.
- According to a tradition attributed to Polycarp, disciple of the Apostle John who wrote the Book of Revelation the number 666 is 'contained in the Greek letters of Lateinos' which means 'Latin man' or 'Roman'. This is certainly the name of the Beast for 'Roman' is the name of the empire itself as well as every citizen of it.

#### 4] What are the major battles that will occur during the Great Tribulation?

- In **Daniel 11** we find the longest prophecy or collection of prophecies in the Bible. This series of prophecies describes the course of 2500 years of history in the Middle East from the time of Daniel to the time of Jesus Christ's second coming.
- An Arab power known as the King of the South will push or attack this power for whatever reason. This war begins with the coming United Europe sweeping through the Middle East and invades many countries including Israel (**Daniel 11:40-43**). Jordan and the Palestinians, who have close ties with Europe will be allowed to be independent after Europe's Middle East invasion. Egypt, Libya and Ethiopia will be conquered and occupied by European forces (**Daniel 11:42-43**).
- Since the Great Tribulation is to last 3 ½ years it appears as if the abomination of desolation (**Matthew 24:15-22, 2 Thessalonians 2:4**) when the daily sacrifices will be stopped by the coming United Europe, will occur 1290 days (43 months) before the return of Jesus Christ (**Daniel 12:9-13**). A month later (1260 days before Christ's return - **Daniel 12:7**) Europe invades the Middle East.
- America and Britain will probably stand up to Europe for its invasion of the Middle East, especially America who have been staunch allies of the state of Israel. **Hosea 5:5-7** appears to be an end-time prophecy about the Modern Israelites nations and the Jewish state falling one soon after the other. Never did Israel AND Judah fall together, within the space of one month (a "New Moon") so America and Britain may be conquered within a month after the Jews and the Middle East invasion. Europe will launch a major assault on our Israelite nations. The war against America and Britain will wipe out a third of its people, another third will die of famine and disease and another third will be deported as slaves (**Ezekiel 5:1-12, Jeremiah 30:3-9**).
- **Ezekiel 6:6** says that "ALL your dwelling places the cities shall be laid waste". In **Isaiah 9:14** we read the following, "Therefore the Lord will cut off from Israel head and tail, palm-branch and rush **in one day**." This may refer to a surprise nuclear attack against our Israelite nations.
- Our Israelite nations will be taken into captivity in the Great Tribulation. A few verses show that it will be at the hands of the coming United Europe (**Isaiah 47:5-9 – compare with Revelation 18:7-8, Isaiah 10:5-8, 12-13, 20, 11:11, 16**). God will allow the cruel hand of this German-dominated Beast power to humble His people so they will turn back to Him in heartfelt repentance.
- The fifth trumpet plague describes in **Revelation 9** talk about two massive war offensives. It appears to be a bio-chemical assault on Russia and Asia by the Beast power which lasts for five months (**Daniel 11:44-45, Revelation 9:1-11**).
- The sixth trumpet plague is a massive counterattack by the Asiatics that sweeps across and destroys most of Europe with an absolutely massive army of 200 million (**Revelation 9:13-19**). This massive army will devastate Europe and this end-time Babylon will fall (**Revelation 18, Isaiah 10:12-13**). When everything begins to fall apart for Europe the European leaders will turn on the great false church (**Revelation 17:16**).



- The great Eastern armies meet the armies of Europe already deployed in the Middle East on the ancient battleground of Armageddon (the Jezreel Valley in northern Israel). At this critical juncture in time Jesus Christ returns and they are stirred by Satan and the demons (**Revelation 16:13-14**) to perceive Jesus Christ as a common enemy (as an Antichrist or invader from outer space) and proceed to Jerusalem to fight and be defeated by Christ and all the resurrected saints who come with Him.
- Christ will deal with Israel first and only later begin to work with the Gentiles. Once they are settled in Palestine will come the remainder of the Russian and Asian armies who will try and conquer the returned Israelites (**Ezekiel 38, 39**). God will fight for Israel and defeat them and from there on will be a millennium of peace and prosperity.

## 5] Will God's people be protected and how will this be done?

- Shortly before the Tribulation begins (**Daniel 12:12**) the church flees to the wilderness which means a desolate, deserted place (**Revelation 12:6-17**). God's church is fed by God in this place both physically and spiritually.
- Some of God's people do flee to this place of safety (**Revelation 3:10, Luke 21:36**) while others do not make it to the place of safety. Many of this generation are half-hearted Christians and because of this lack of zeal some members will have to go through the Great Tribulation (**Revelation 3:17-19**).
- While God's people are protected in the place of safety God will empower two converted leaders to be His two witnesses calling this world to repentance (**Revelation 11**). They will be given miracle-working powers to help get their message through to this sinful world.
- In **Revelation 7** we read about two groups of people that will be protected before God's wrath is poured out on mankind during the Day of the Lord (the final year of the Great Tribulation). The first are a group of 144,000 people of the 12 tribes of Israel. They are referred to as firstfruits – converted people in the church of God (**Revelation 14:4**). They appear to be spiritual Israelites as opposed to Israelites of physical tribes. There are 12 x 12 000 and the number 12 is significant in the Bible and generally thought of as the number of organisational beginnings so, in this end-time context, they could be the ones chosen for governmental roles in the coming Kingdom of God?
- The great innumerable multitude could be those converted and forgiven during the Great Tribulation who are also protected but due to being in captivity and a lack of opportunity to be baptised by God's true ministry are not sealed with God's spirit. The 144 000 and the great innumerable multitude are probably representative, in part or in whole, of the two great spiritual harvests of the firstfruits and the rest of mankind who are not in the first resurrection.



## 6] What are the seven seals?

- The first four seals release the famous "Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse". The white horse of the first seal (**Revelation 6:1**) represents false religion (**Matthew 24:4-5**) – that of the great false church which will support and feed the power of the United Europe.
- The red horse of the second seal represents world war (**Revelation 6:4, Matthew 24:6**).
- The third seal (**Revelation 6:5-6**), the black horse represents great famine (**Matthew 24:7**).
- The fourth seal (**Revelation 6:7-8**), the (sickly) pale horse represents disease (**Matthew 24:7**).
- **Revelation 6:8** also tells us that the "Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse" - false religion, war, famine and disease - will kill **A QUARTER OF THE POPULATION OF THE WHOLE WORLD! That's nearly one and a half billion people!**
- On the heels of those four seals will be the fifth seal which will be a martyrdom of many of God's true church (**Revelation 6:9-11**).
- Marking the beginning of the Day of the Lord (**Joel 2:31, Matthew 24:29**) is the sixth seal (**Revelation 6:12-14**). During the sixth seal the sun becomes dark, the moon becomes like blood (possibly from some cosmic dust) and these events are accompanied by an enormous earthquake such that islands and mountains are moved out of their place. The stars of heaven falling to the earth appear to be a reference to a great meteor shower.

Story Flow of the Book of Revelation	
<b>Seven seals</b>	
1	Religious deception ( <i>Revelation 6:1-2; compare Matthew 24:4-5, 11, 23-25</i> )
2	War ( <i>Revelation 6:3-4; compare Matthew 24:6-7</i> )
3	Famine ( <i>Revelation 6:5-6; compare Matthew 24:7</i> )
4	Disease epidemics ( <i>Revelation 6:7-8; compare Matthew 24:7</i> )
5	Tribulation and persecution ( <i>Revelation 6:9-11; compare Matthew 24:8-12, 21-22</i> )
6	Heavenly signs ( <i>Revelation 6:12-17; compare Matthew 24:29</i> )
<b>Seven trumpets</b>	
1	Destruction of vegetation ( <i>Revelation 8:7</i> )
2	Devastation of oceans and sea life ( <i>Revelation 8:8-9</i> )
3	Devastation of rivers and fresh water ( <i>Revelation 8:10-11</i> )
4	Sun, moon and stars darkened ( <i>Revelation 8:12</i> )
5	Torturous human afflictions ( <i>Revelation 9:1-12</i> )
6	Enormous military destruction ( <i>Revelation 9:13-19</i> )
7	Seven last plagues ( <i>Revelation 15:1; 16:1-21</i> )
<b>Armageddon and return of Jesus Christ</b>	

- The Day of the Lord is the last year of the Great Tribulation (**Isaiah 34:8**).
- The seventh seal opens up the seven trumpet plagues (**Revelation 8:1-2**).

## 7] What are the seven trumpet plagues?

- Following on the heels of the sixth seal are the first four trumpet plagues. **The first trumpet** describes hail mingled with fire and blood hitting the earth and causing fires which destroy a third of the earth's vegetation (**Revelation 8:7**). Hail mingled with fire appears to be a reference to a great meteor shower.
- The **second trumpet** plague is described as "a great mountain burning with fire" which hits one of the oceans causing destruction to a third of the ships and a third of the creatures in the sea (**Revelation 8:9**). This damage will probably happen because of a massive tsunami like that seen in the movie Deep Impact.
- The **third trumpet** plague describes "a great star from heaven" hitting the earth poisoning a third of the rivers (**Revelation 8:10-11**).
- The **fourth trumpet** plague is a plague of darkness so that a third part of the sun, moon and stars' light does not shine (**Revelation 8:12**).
- The **fifth and sixth trumpet** plagues describe two massive war offensives. The first one appears to be a bio-chemical assault on Russia and Asia by the Beast power which lasts for 5 months (**Revelation 9:1-11, Daniel 11:44**). The second is a massive counterattack by the Asiatics that sweeps across and destroys most of Europe with an army of 200 million (**Revelation 9:13-19, 18:1-8**).
- In **Revelation 16** we read about the last seven plagues which are released by the **seventh trumpet** at the very end of the Day of the Lord climaxing in the return of Jesus Christ. The first six of these last plagues are described as boils appearing on man and beast, seas again becoming as blood, rivers becoming as blood, men being scorched by the heat of the sun, great darkness and the Euphrates River being dried up to allow the Eastern armies to cross on their way to Armageddon. When ancient Babylon fell water was diverted and dried up a part of the Euphrates River.
- The very last plague is the greatest earthquake of all time which rocks the whole earth (**Revelation 16:18-21**)! Combined with this earthquake will be an incredible shower of hailstones (meteorites ?) with some weighing as much as a talent or 100 pounds.
- Jesus Christ returns to the earth with the sound of a mighty trumpet (**1 Thessalonians 4:16**) in power and glory. At this time will be the first resurrection of all of God's people who will meet Christ in the clouds with their new powerful spirit bodies – born into God's very own family (**1 Corinthians 15:50-53**).
- After this dramatic battle the marriage supper of Jesus Christ and the Church will occur (**Revelation 19:9**). Satan and the demons will be cast into the bottomless pit for a thousand years (**Revelation 20:1-3**) and will not be able to broadcast their impulses of sin and disobedience to the world.
- Then will come the time for the great Exodus of all 12 tribes of Israel back to Palestine of which the Exodus of Moses' day was a forerunner (**Jeremiah 16:14-15, Isaiah 11:11-15**).
- The population of our Israelite nations (and probably the whole world) will be decimated by the end of the Great Tribulation to where only a tenth will survive into the millennium (**Amos 5:3, Isaiah 6:13**). They will have been humbled by God and realize that God's way is the only way to peace.
- They will rebuild the destroyed cities (**Isaiah 61:4, Jeremiah 33:7**) and the world's population will rapidly expand once again (**Isaiah 27:6**) as Christ sets up the Kingdom of God here on earth and rules the world from Jerusalem.





## LESSON 11

# THE KINGDOM OF GOD

### 1] What is the True Gospel?

- When Jesus Christ came to earth He brought a message of good news – the true gospel. The message He brought was the message about the Kingdom of God (**Mark 1:14, Matthew 4:23, Luke 4:43, 9:1-2, Acts 8:12**).
- There are four things that are necessary to constitute a kingdom: **TERRITORY**, with a specific location and definite boundary lines ruled by a **KING** or Supreme Ruler or government ruling over **CITIZENS** or people who live in that territory and **LAWS** and form of government.
- In the future Christ will be the King over all nations (**Revelation 19:15-16**) and ruling this earth (**Daniel 2:31-35, 44-45**) with God's laws (**Ezekiel 36:27**). After the millennium and Great White Throne Judgment period the territory of God's kingdom will expand indefinitely and fill the whole universe (**Isaiah 9:7, Hebrews 2:8**).
- The gospel of the Kingdom of God is **DUAL** –: First of all, it is the good news of the coming FUTURE world-ruling government of God with Christ as king and second, it is the governing Family of God.
- The other half of the gospel is how we can be born into the God kingdom - the Family of God (**1 Corinthians 15:50**). This process of how we can be born into the Kingdom of God is also called salvation which is made possible through Jesus Christ and the forgiveness He has made available to us.
- Many today are completely wrapped up in prophecy and want secret knowledge that makes them feel special and knowing just when Christ will come. Jesus' approach as seen in the Kingdom parables of **Matthew 13** was completely the opposite. He was FAR more interested in the character of the people who would be a part of that Kingdom than conveying specifics of Bible prophecy! He was far more interested in developing people who were worthy of being in that kingdom!

### 2] How will peace come upon the whole world?

- Christ and the governing kingdom of God, then set up as the governing family, will bring about the coming utopia by two basic courses of action. First, all crime and organized rebellion will be put down by force -- divine supernatural force (**Isaiah 2:2-4, Psalm 149:5-9 Zechariah 14:17-19**) and, second, Christ will then set his hand to reeducate and to save or spiritually convert the world (**Isaiah 2:2-4, 11:9 Jeremiah 31:34, Ezekiel 36:26:27, Joel 2:28**).
- King David, when he is resurrected, will be king over all twelve nations of Israel (**Jeremiah 30:9; Ezekiel 34:23-24; 37:24-25**). Each of the original twelve apostles will be king, under David, over one of these then super-prosperous nations (**Matthew 19:28**). Under the apostles, each now king over a great nation, will be the rulers over districts, states, shires, counties or provinces, and over cities (**Luke 19:11-27**).
- Different aspects of the role of those of us who qualify for the first or better resurrection in the millennium are described in the Bible such as judges and counselors (**Isaiah 1:26**), teachers (**Isaiah 30:20**), foster fathers and nursing mothers (**Isaiah 49:22-23**), pastors (**Jeremiah 3:15**) shepherds (**Jeremiah 23:4**) saviours (**Obadiah 21**) and kings and priests (**Revelation 5:10**).



### 3] What terrible things will be no more in the Kingdom of God?

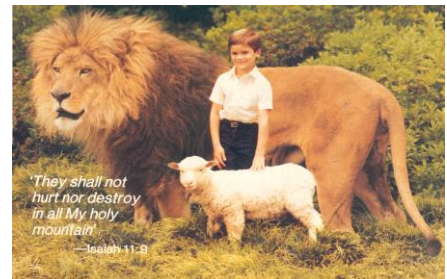
- In the World Tomorrow there will be no war (**Isaiah 2:2-4**). The war machines of Russia, America, the Arabs and all nations will be dismantled.
- In the World Tomorrow the millions of starving people in Africa and Asia will then know the abundance that we have enjoyed in our Western nations (**Amos 9:13**).
- God's laws such as the Jubilee year law (**Leviticus 25:8-17**), gleaning (**Leviticus 19:9-10**) and the land sabbath (**Leviticus 25:1-7**) will go a long way towards eliminating poverty in the World Tomorrow. In the World Tomorrow everyone will have an inheritance of land from God.



- In the World Tomorrow sickness and disease will be no more. "Then will the eyes of the blind be opened and the ears of the deaf unstopped. Then will the lame leap like a deer, and the tongue of the dumb [mute] shout for joy" (**Isaiah 35:5-6**).
- In the World Tomorrow there will be no more crime. The city streets will be filled with boys and girls playing without fear of serious accident kidnapping, mugging, abduction and the host of modern atrocities that plague our societies (**Zechariah 8:4-5**).
- God's kingdom will be wonderful and fantastic and the many miracles of Jesus give us a foretaste of what God's kingdom will truly be like after the return of Jesus Christ. It will be a time when natural disasters will cease and God controls the natural forces (**Matthew 8:24-27**). It will be a time when Satan and the demons will be cast out and no longer be able to stir people up to sin (**Matthew 8:16, Revelation 20:3**). It will be a time when world hunger (**Matthew 14:15-21, 15:32-38**), disease and sickness (**Matthew 15:30-31**) will be eliminated. It will be a time when life will be meaningful and joyous like a feast (**Isaiah 25:6**). And ultimately it will be a time when death itself will be banished or as the apostle Paul puts it "death will be swallowed up in victory" (**1 Corinthians 15:54**).
- In the World Tomorrow with all loving and worshiping God with all their minds, hearts and strength -- with all having concern for the welfare of all others equal to concern for self -- there will be no divorce -- no broken homes or families, no juvenile delinquency, no crime, no jails or prisons, no police except for peaceful direction and supervision as a public service for all, no wars and no military establishments.

#### 4] What other positive changes will there be in the World Tomorrow?

- Today the greatest and most awesome problem of all is the population explosion. Growing populations in all nations are rapidly outstripping the ability of the world to sustain them. In the World Tomorrow God will simply make much more of the earth cultivatable (**Isaiah 41:14-20, 60:5**).
- With Christ's guidance beautiful cities are going to be rebuilt that will boggle the mind of today's architects and town planners (**Ezekiel 36:10**).
- The exodus of the Israelites back to Palestine after Christ's return will be much greater than the one that occurred in Moses' day (**Jeremiah 23:7-8**).
- Like in the days of the British Empire they will go into other nations (**Isaiah 14:1-3**), help rebuild their cities, develop their civil infrastructure and teach them God's values. Israel will finally fulfill their destiny and become a model nation of kings and priests (**Exodus 19:4-6**).
- Everyone, including Arab nations, will have to keep the Feast of Tabernacles in the World Tomorrow (**Zechariah 14:14-16**).
- God will provide one language which will be the language for the whole world in the millennium (**Zephaniah 3:9**).
- With most people working on the land there'll be exciting opportunities to travel or study during the land Sabbath each seven years (**Leviticus 25:1-4**).
- God will change the nature of animals so there will no killing and devouring in the animal kingdom that reflects Satan's system of competition. Imagine no more venomous creatures and wild animals no longer being dangerous (**Isaiah 11:6-9**).
- The major task that we will have in the millennium will be to help Jesus Christ with the spiritual conversion of the whole world and bring them into the Family of God. Eventually thousands of millions will be spiritually converted (**Isaiah 2:2-4, 11:9, Jeremiah 31:34, Ezekiel 36:26:27, Joel 2:28**)! By the end of the thousand years, the great Family of God will be ready for the final step in God's Master Plan.



#### 5] What will happen after the Millennium?

- The last generation of the millennium will live over into a time which may actually last for many years before the Great White Throne Judgment period occurs when Satan will have been let loose and can invisibly broadcast his moods and feelings of selfishness and rebellion around the world. They will receive a taste of what it takes to fight those sinful urges to shake them out of their spiritual complacency. Some of the nations of Gog and Magog however will give into Satan's spirit of rebellion and mount a rebellion against Jerusalem which God will defeat (**Revelation 20:7-9**).
- At the time this rebellion is put down Satan and his demons will be cast into the lake of fire and they will deceive mankind no more for the rest of eternity (**Revelation 20:10**).
- After these events will then come the Great White Throne Judgment period. All who have died without being saved up to Christ's return will be resurrected and judged according to their works (**Revelation 20:4-5, 12-13, Ezekiel 37:1-14**). A period of trial and testing will have begun. They will be judged according to what's written in the books – the Bible. **Isaiah 65:20** indicates everyone will live at least 100 years.

- After the Great White Throne Judgment period God the Father will come and dwell with mankind on the earth and bring the New Jerusalem with Him (**Revelation 21-22**).
- We are told in the Book of Revelation that the New Jerusalem is absolutely massive. It is 1500 miles by 1500 miles in area. **The New Jerusalem will literally be two thirds of the area of Australia!** And it's also a staggering 1500 miles high! That height would put its peak some five times higher than the standard orbit of the space shuttle which orbits in space about 300 miles above the earth!



- The universe is currently in a state of decay. It is running down and is eagerly awaiting our birth into God's family so it can be set free from that decay (**Romans 8:18-23**). Once we are finished fixing up planet Earth, the whole universe with its billions and billions of stars and planets awaits us. God is in the creating business and we will join the family business of creating and beautifying the entire universe for all eternity with God the Father and Jesus Christ.
- **All wonderful these things are why overcoming, repentance as well as baptism are all important – they are our passport to the World Tomorrow and being a part of that better resurrection!**



## LESSON 12

### GOD'S LAW AND WAY OF LIFE

#### 1] What is God's way of life?

- In God's instruction manual, the Bible, He reveals two basic ways of life - two divergent philosophies. They travel in opposite directions. **They are very simply: the way of GIVE and the way of GET. God's way is the way of LOVE, of outgoing concern, of giving (Matthew 22:36-40, 1 John 4:8)!**
- The way of life of the early Christians was called the Way because they lived the way Christ lived (**Acts 19:9, 23, 22:4, 24:14**). Paul also referred to their way of life as **'the way of the Lord'** and **'the way of God'** (**Acts 18:25-26**).



*"... Narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it."*

#### 2] What are the Ten Commandments?

- The Ten Commandments are found in **Exodus 20** and **Deuteronomy 5** and are broad, specific actions that cover the basics of how to live a godly life. If you think of the Bible as a guidebook for human behaviour, the Ten Commandments serve as the main headings in its table of contents. By themselves, the commandments do not tell the whole story, but they clearly summarize it (**Romans 13:9**).
- The first four define how to relate to God and how to show proper love and respect for our Creator (**Matthew 22:36-37**). They are:

1) You shall have no other gods before me.

2) You shall not make for yourself a carved image...you shall not bow down to them nor serve them.

3) You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain.

4) Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.

- The last six give the basics of how to have right relationships with each other and to show love for our fellow man (**Romans 13:9**). They are:

5) Honour your father and your mother.

6) You shall not murder.

7) You shall not commit adultery.

8) You shall not steal.

9) You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour.

10) You shall not covet...anything that is your neighbour's.



- In **John 13:34** Jesus said, "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another". What was new about this commandment was His own example of love. When you think about the example of Jesus Christ in how He loved others, He really has raised the bar quite considerably by asking us to love others as He did. The incredible way in which He raised the standard by His example is what is so incredible and "new" about this command to love others.

#### 3] What are the Statutes and Judgments?

- After God gave Israel the Ten Commandments He gave them secondary laws which gave them further details on how to live in a godly way. God's laws give us an understanding of the mind of God and the statutes and judgments that He gave to Israel show us the mind of God in action as it applies to many specific situations.
- Statutes are secondary laws that made by lawmakers. Judgments are judicial decisions based upon the principles of already existing laws to come up with a decision as to how best to apply those principles where there is no specific law to cover what is being judged upon. To determine generally speaking whether a law in the Old Testament is a statute or a judgment we need to understand why the particular law was made and then we can ask whether that law can be applied for all cultures for all

times. If it can be, it's usually a statute (**Leviticus 11, 23:31**), otherwise it is usually a judgment (**Deuteronomy 22:8, Jeremiah 7:22**).

- God's laws on government are designed to protect the people from having unfit men gain positions of power and limit the burden put on the people by those in authority. They are also designed to help leaders best serve the people. Some government statutes and judgments include the qualities to look for in appointing leaders and judges (**Exodus 18:21**), kings having to write a copy of the Law (**Deuteronomy 17:18-19**) and limits on the power of any future king that the people of Israel might ask for (**Deuteronomy 17:14-17**).
- There are three tithes spoken of the Bible. The first tithe or tenth of our income is to go to God to support the work of the church (**Leviticus 27:30, Malachi 3:8-10, Matthew 23:23, Hebrews 7**). The second tithe or tenth of our income is for us to save and spend on ourselves and others during God's Holy Days such as the Feast of Tabernacles (**Deuteronomy 14:22-27**).
- The third tithe was a part of ancient Israel's welfare system and was taken up in the third and sixth years of each seven year cycle to provide for the poor (**Deuteronomy 14:28-29**) with preference given to those who could not glean the fields. The third tithe backed up the primary means of providing for the poor, which was gleaned what crops and fruit were left behind by those who harvested the land (**Leviticus 19:9-10**).
- We spend enormous sums maintaining prisons, but under the Israel laws the following methods were used in punishment:



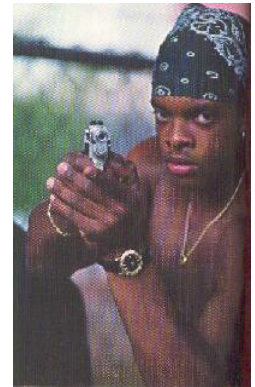
1) The death penalty for capital offences such as murder (**Genesis 9:5-6, Exodus 21:12-14**), kidnapping (**Exodus 21:16**), adultery (**Leviticus 20:10-21**), homosexuality and bestiality (**Leviticus 20:13-16**), blaspheming God (**Leviticus 24:11-16, 23**), desecration of the Sabbath (**Exodus 35:2**) and idolatry (**Exodus 22:20**).

2) Whipping from one to forty stripes for minor offences (**Deuteronomy 25:1-3**).

3) In case of stealing and destruction of another man's property, restitution: to which must be added from one hundred to four hundred per cent as punishment (**Exodus 22:1-4**).

4) Those who were financially unable to make restitution or pay the fine, were compelled to contribute their work and labour until the debt had been fully paid (**Exodus 22:1-3**).

5) Confinement in a city of refuge for accidental killing (**Numbers 35:22-28**).



- The purpose of the religious laws God gave to Israel were to help them stay close to God and maintain a high standard of morality and love and concern for each other which would result in peace and co-operation in Israel as well as many other blessings.
- The Sabbath and the Holy Days, were the fundamental religious laws God gave (**Leviticus 23**) along with rules of cleanness and uncleanness and other rules of purity (**Numbers 19:11-22**). The sacrifices were given (**Leviticus 1-6**) for the purpose of impressing on a carnal, physical people the need of a far greater sacrifice to come in the person of Jesus Christ, the son of God (**Hebrews 10:1-10**) and to impress on them the need to show thankfulness to God for all the wonderful things that God has done for His people.
- There were five different types of offerings – the burnt offering (**Leviticus 1**), the grain offering (**Leviticus 2**), the peace offering (**Leviticus 3**), the sin offering (**Leviticus 4**) and the trespass offering (**Leviticus 5-6:7**).
- God's laws on family life are designed to keep families strong and safe from the threats of infidelity, fornication, immorality of other kinds and financial hardship. Some of those family laws included honouring our parents (**Exodus 20:12**), honouring the elderly (**Leviticus 19:32**), diligently teaching children the truth and ways of God (**Deuteronomy 6:6-9, Ephesians 6:4**), commands against actions such as fornication (**Exodus 22:16-17**), marrying outside of Israel (**Deuteronomy 7:3**) (and today the church **1 Corinthians 7:39, 2 Corinthians 6:14**), homosexuality (**Leviticus 20:13, Romans 1:26-27**) and incest (**Leviticus 18**), exemption from military and other civil duties for newlyweds (**Deuteronomy 24:5**).
- God's laws on property and economics are designed to ensure the protection of the property and inheritance of men from theft, damage and devaluation. Some of them include having just weights and scales and a just medium of exchange (**Deuteronomy 25:15**) forbidding of interest to fellow Israelites except for commercial loans (**Exodus 22:25**), the clearing of debts at the end of each seven year cycle



(Deuteronomy 15:1-6), the Jubilee law (Leviticus 25:8-17), the land sabbath (Leviticus 25:1-7), and laws concerning the borrowing of items (Exodus 22:14-15).

- God's health laws include the forbidding of eating a range of animals that were designed for scavenging and other purposes than food such as seafood and pigs (Leviticus 11, Deuteronomy 14), banning of drinking of blood (Leviticus 17:10-14, 19:26) and eating animal fat (Leviticus 7:23-25). Animals that die naturally are not to be eaten (Deuteronomy 14:21) and the kidneys and the liver are also forbidden (Exodus 29:13, 22). God commanded the Israelites to physically circumcise their male babies on the eighth day (Leviticus 12:3) and to bury their sewerage (Deuteronomy 23:13-14).

#### 4) What can we learn from the Sermon on the Mount?

- While the Ten Commandments and the other laws and statutes focus mainly on the letter of the law, the Sermon on the Mount covers the spirit and intent behind the laws God gave to Israel when they came out of Egypt. In this sermon Jesus Christ laid out the very essence of Christianity (Matthew 5-7).
- At the beginning of His famous Sermon on the Mount He explained seven distinct character traits that produce true joy that persists, even in the midst of persecution, outward pressure and turmoil. These traits are often called the beatitudes or beautiful attitudes (Matthew 5:3-9). They are to be poor in spirit or humble, mourn for those who hurt in this world, be meek and teachable, be merciful, be pure in heart free from hypocrisy and be peaceable.
- He then used two analogies comparing us to salt and to light to show that we are to be good examples of living God's way of life in this spiritually darkened world (Matthew 5:13-16).
- Christ said that he did not come to destroy the law but to fulfill. Fulfill, in this case, means to live by it or to bring it to the full (Matthew 5:17-19). Not only did He teach that we should keep the letter of the law but that we should also live by the spirit or intent of the law. He used two examples to show how He magnified the law. He said don't just not murder but don't even hate someone in your heart (Matthew 5:21-22). We are not just to not commit adultery but not to lust for someone else's wife in our heart also (Matthew 5:27-28).
- In Matthew 5:23-26 Christ explained that we should be quick to resolve conflicts with people we know we have offended. For us to have a right relationship with God we need to have right relationships with others also (1 John 2:9).
- Christ tells us that we are to love even our enemies and said that if a man in anger abuse or hurts you, "turn to him the other cheek" (Matthew 5:38-42), that is, instead of avenging that injury, prepare for another, and bear it patiently. We may avoid evil, and may resist it, so far as is necessary to our own security but we must not *render evil for evil*, must not bear a grudge, nor avenge ourselves personally. We are to use the proper civil and law authorities to obtain vengeance and not take matters into our own hands (Romans 12:17 - 13:5).
- We are not to do good works to be seen of men or to draw attention to ourselves so others will praise us. We are to do good because we believe in helping others (Matthew 6:1).
- In the model prayer Christ gave (Matthew 6:9-13) He told us to begin our prayers by praising our Father in heaven. We are to pray for God's kingdom to come and that He will give us our daily needs which implies we should pray on a daily basis. We should care for and pray for other people's needs as well. We are also to daily seek forgiveness for our regular sins and those of others and we are to pray for spiritual strength for ourselves and others to handle the trials that life throws at us at times.
- Christ tells us to focus on laying up treasures in heaven (building God's character) rather than treasures on earth (Matthew 6:19-21). He also tells us that you can't serve two masters at the same time such as God and money (Matthew 6:24).
- Many people have to endure the weekly struggle of making just enough money to make ends meet. This can be a cause of great worry and anxiety for people. God tells us not to worry and that we have His promise (Matthew 6:25-33) that He will always provide for our needs (not always our wants though) if we seek Him and His righteousness **FIRST** ahead of everything else. Do we give Him first place with our time and obedience?
- In Matthew 7:1-5 Jesus tells us not to be judgmental and condemning in dealing with people. We aren't to have a negative, critical, "holier-than-thou" attitude towards others, especially when we have problems the same or greater than they have.

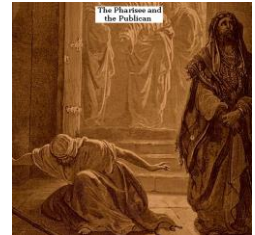


Jewish men pray at the Western Wall, also known as the Wailing Wall

- We must come to see that God is very real and really does answer prayer. Christ told His disciples to ask, seek and knock (**Matthew 7:7**) and that God would be there to provide. He then went on to explain the golden rule we should live by do to others what you would have them do to you (**Matthew 7:12**).
- In the conclusion to His Sermon on the Mount, Christ drew a series of contrasts by describing two paths, two trees and two houses that teach us that we must learn to make right choices while rejecting wrong ones (**Matthew 7:15-27**).

## 5] What are the seven deadly sins?

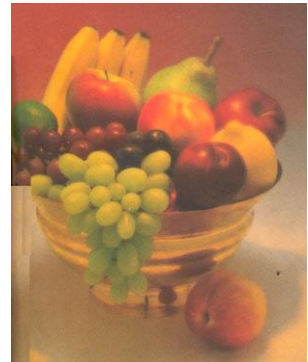
- Pride, envy, anger, greed, sloth, lust and gluttony. This list, known as the seven deadly sins, has been categorized together since the Middle Ages as a means of helping people examine their behaviour before God.
- There is nothing wrong with having a high opinion of ourselves, our achievements or our beliefs [the right kind of pride] as long as they are realistic and not excessive [the wrong kind of pride] (**Romans 12:3, 1 John 2:16**).
- There are a number of different kinds of pride. **The pride of other-control** is the inability to tolerate a situation unless in charge of it. **The pride of vanity** says: "I can't stand it if I am not noticed," and, "I can't stand it if, when I am noticed, somebody doesn't think well of me." **Presumptuous pride** says, "I can do anything. In fact, I can do anything better than you can." **The pride of self-sufficiency** is a pride that refuses to reach out for help, especially from God. Those who have the **pride of superiority** feel that they are better or more important than others and they look down at or despise others (**Luke 18:9**).
- Envy has nothing to do with what we already have. The envious person is worried about what somebody else has and is very similar to covetousness. The envious person cannot tolerate somebody's having something he or she wants and cannot have (**Proverbs 14:30**). It can easily be diagnosed: If you feel miserable when you see the success of somebody else, you have it or if you feel satisfaction from another's misfortune, you have it. To stop coveting and being envious, we need to practice being content with what we have (**1 Timothy 6:6-10**).
- Anger is an emotional reaction of hostility that brings personal displeasure, either to ourselves or to someone else. Anger does not have to lead to sin (**Ephesians 4:26**). Christians are right to be upset about sin and injustice and should take a stand against them. Often though, our anger comes from jealousy and from things simply not going our way. The wrong kind of anger is very closely connected to selfishness - a desire to always have things go your way and a lack of tolerance when for we are "wronged". We need a graciousness to accept things when circumstances go against us.
- The fourth deadly sin is that of greed. Greed refuses to be denied anything it wants to possess (**1 Timothy 6:6-10**). Greed is where we want too much, where we want to have more at the expense of others, where we want more than we can reasonably afford and where we are obsessed with possessions much more than character growth and building good relationships with people.
- Deadly sin number five is that of sloth, which is an old English word for laziness. Laziness is that trait of avoiding or being disinclined to work (**Proverbs. 6:6, 21:5**). There's a difference between leisure and laziness. Relaxation and recreation provide a necessary and much needed balance to our lives; but when it is time to work, Christians should jump right in.
- The sixth deadly sin is, arguably, the hardest of all to overcome. We know it as lust. Sexual lust is a covetous desire to have sex with someone who we are not married to. It hurts God because it shows that we prefer following our own desires instead of the leading of the Holy Spirit. It hurts others because it violates the commitment so necessary to a relationship and it deeply affects our personality, which responds in anguish when we harm ourself physically and spiritually.
- We are to take Paul's words to "flee fornication" (**1 Corinthians 6:18**) seriously and do as Job did by making "a covenant with [our] eyes not to look lustfully at a girl" (**Job 31:1**). Commit yourself that you will not look lustfully and that you will focus on Christ and His way anytime you are sexually stimulated.
- We should honour God by keeping ourselves in reasonable shape physically, keeping ourselves healthy and not abuse it through such practices as overeating or gluttony, drunkenness, smoking and substance abuse. By doing those practices we break the principle of glorifying God in our bodies (**1 Corinthians 3:16-17, 6:20**).
- The key to winning the battle over sin is simple: We must feed our spiritual nature (**2 Corinthians 4:16, Romans 12:1-2**) through things such as prayer (**Romans 12:12**), Bible study (**Matthew 4:4**), meditation (**Psalms 119:97-99**), fasting (**Isaiah 58**), listening to sermons and Bible studies (**Romans 10:14**), fellowshiping with God's people (**Hebrews 10:24-25**) and using God's Holy Spirit (**Ephesians 3:16-20, Romans 8:1-4**). We also must starve our sinful side by bringing every thought into captivity (**2 Corinthians 10:5**) and fleeing temptation (**1 Corinthians 6:18**).



- Sin depends upon and grows out of the believing of certain lies. The first is "X" is good for me. Sin results from the misbelief that something contrary to the Word of God is good for you (**James 1:14-15**). The second common untruth is, "I can't help myself". This sin says, "I've got to do it. I am helpless to stop myself. The temptation is bigger than I am," which God says is false in **1 Corinthians 10:13**.
- We cannot want to sin even though we might strive to resist it. We cannot want to sin and hunger and thirst for God's righteousness (**Matthew 5:6**) at the same time. We either have one attitude or we have the other. We cannot have both of them.

## 6] What are the fruits of the spirit?

- The Apostle Paul in the book of Galatians wrote that fruit of God's Spirit "is love, joy, peace, longsuffering (patience), gentleness (kindness), goodness, faith, meekness (humility), temperance (self-control): against such there is no law" (**Galatians 5:22-23**). These attitudes or fruits as Paul calls them are part and parcel of what God's nature is.
- Herbert W. Armstrong used to define our English word "love" as **AN UNSELFISH, OUTGOING CONCERN FOR OTHERS (1 Corinthians 13:4-7)**. Love is unselfish. It must have unselfish motives. Love doesn't give in order to get back. It gives purely out of concern to serve the other person. Love is outgoing. It must manifest itself in a pattern of good works and not just be good intentions (**Proverbs 27:5, 1 Timothy 6:18**). Love is also being concerned. Are our minds focused just on our daily pursuits and having fun or do we think a lot about others and their needs?
- **If we have true outgoing love we'll extend ourself beyond our own personal comfort zone and give to those we wouldn't naturally associate with, along with those who are closest to us (Luke 6:32).**
- Joy and happiness are similar but not the same. Joy is a calmness and thankfulness that God is in control whether your circumstances are good or bad while happiness is feeling good and excited about the way your life is (**James 1:2, 1 Peter 4:12-13**). Happiness comes from the word happenings which are sometimes good and sometimes bad.
- Peace is calmness and an absence of conflict which can be manifest conflict or inner conflict. Not only do we need to learn how to prevent conflict but we also need to learn how to resolve conflict (**Matthew 5:9**). Humility precedes peace. Pride, the opposite of humility, breeds contention (**Proverbs 13:10**).
- **When we have offended someone else** we need the humility to admit the mistake, apologize and make sure not to repeat it (**Matthew 5:23-24**).
- **When another person has wronged us** we need to approach them privately about the problem and show them the problem with gentleness and love (**Matthew 18:15-17**). We should sincerely forgive them when they do repent.
- **When two are arguing and have a conflict of interests over personal preferences that are not wrong of themselves** we need to put others needs and desires above our own and be willing to defer to others (**Genesis 13:7-9, Philippians 2:1-4**). We need to develop the flexible quality of being willing to yield or easy to be entreated (**James 3:17**). If we have that flexible approach to others, without necessarily yielding to everything when it may not be right to, we will find we can reduce the number of arguments we have with others.
- **Prevention is better than cure.** Two things we can do to prevent arguments are a) Strive not to do things that hurt or annoy others and b) Try not to be oversensitive (**Ephesians 4:1-3**). Don't complain too much about other's problems and bad habits. Though there is a time to point them out courteously, learn to bear with them more (**Colossians 3:13**).
- Patience is "the capacity, habit or fact of bearing pains or trials calmly or without complaint." Two things are involved: 1) being in an unpleasant situation, and 2) being calm about it. Some trials and persecutions we can do nothing about; we must simply remain under them, patiently, until the trials are over (**James 1:2-4**). As best we can, we should endure them cheerfully. Cheer is easier to endure than bitterness and self-pity.
- Kindness is the desire, the inclination, the willingness to do good - even when that good is undeserved (**Luke 6:31, Matthew 25:35-36**). It is being merciful, mellow and easily approachable.
- Goodness comes from the Greek word, agathosune, which means God's way of love in action expressed in acts of helping others.
- The word faith in the New Testament comes from the same word as believe. And both words believe and faith come from the root verb meaning "to be persuaded". Faith is being totally persuaded that God's promise of a better life in the future is true; of being totally persuaded that Christ was the Son of God and died for our sins, of being totally persuaded that He will come back again; and of being totally persuaded by God's promises to bless and help us throughout the Bible (**Hebrews 11:1**). A better





translation of this verse would be “Faithfulness (that is, God’s track record of faithfulness) is the evidence of things hoped for.”

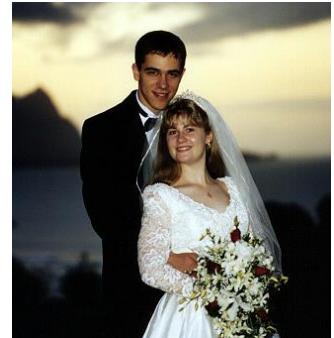
- Worry, the opposite of faith, is a sin. It is always a sin for two reasons. Worry is distrust in the truthfulness of God and worry is detrimental to the temple of God [our bodies]. When you worry we accuse God of falsehood!
- A humble person is lacking in selfishness, pride, envy and vanity (**Matthew 5:3**). A humble person is one who doesn’t feel superior to others. That doesn’t mean he wallows in self-pity but instead he realizes how insignificant he is without God (**John 5:30, Romans 7:18-24**). A humble person is willing to admit his mistakes and learn from and be corrected by others, especially from God (**Psalms 25:4-5, Isaiah 66:2**).
- A humble person is not snobby where they only spend time with those who are “good enough” for them (**Romans 12:16**). A humble person is willing to play second fiddle to and serve under others and doesn’t feel cheated when others get credit for things. He rejoices in others’ successes (**Romans 12:15**). A humble person doesn’t consider his needs as important as those of others but gives preference to them (**Romans 12:10**).
- Self-control (or temperance) anchors God’s love and your salvation. Self-control is active self-mastery. Self-control is the ability to temper our feelings and our drives and say no to them when expressing them might hurt ourselves and others and lead to sin (**1 Corinthians 9:26-27, 10:23, 2 Corinthians 10:5**).

## 7] What laws and advice does God have for young people?

- The starting point for young people who want to be wise and enjoy a happy and prosperous life is when we acknowledge only God has the real answers and when we believe He exists and respect His laws. The second principle strikes a little closer to home. God, who offers you such an incredible future if you will follow Him, says you must learn to listen and obey your parents and do what they say unless what they say is directly contrary to God’s law (**Proverbs 1:6-7**).
- We all have to make choices whether we like to or not. The decisions we make in our life will determine whether we will be a success or a failure in life, whether we will be richer or poorer, whether we will be happy or miserable. God’s way of life is the way to true happiness and the right kind of fun that doesn’t lead to youthful pitfalls and heartaches. God tells young people to diligently seek the knowledge and wisdom of God’s way of life from Him through reading His word, from their parents and from the church (**Proverbs 2:1-12, 3:5-7**).
- Develop a personal friendship with God (**Proverbs 3:5-7, 1 Peter 5:7**). Do you ask Him as you would ask a friend for help with the little things in life as well as the big things you need help with? KEEP CLOSE TO GOD AND OPEN UP TO HIM ABOUT EVERYTHING AS YOU WOULD WITH YOUR BEST FRIEND!
- In **2 Corinthians 13:5** we’re asked to examine whether we are in the faith. Why do you come to church anyway? Fun and social activities should be part of it but it shouldn’t be the most important thing. God has called us to be rulers and teachers (**Revelation 5:10**) when Christ comes back to straighten this world out. It really is a pearl of great price far more valuable than anything else we might have in this life (**Matthew 13:45-46**)!
- Men are called on by God to be good leaders of their families and they need to be masculine in the right kind of way (**1 Corinthians 11:3**). There are two sides to true masculinity - there are the physical and there are the spiritual characteristics. Men should be reasonable strong and fit and should be able to endure hardship, both physically and emotionally in order to comfort women through those kind of trials. Education and knowledge are vital tools for a masculine young man with real goals and purpose (**1 Chronicles 1:7-10, Luke 2:46-47**). A truly masculine man gives his all to help, provide, encourage and support his family seeking God’s help diligently in his life to truly lead others in a godly way.
- A good understanding of what true femininity is can be found described in two passages of the Bible. The first one in **Genesis 2:18** describes the goal of true femininity while the second one in **Proverbs 31** describes an ideal example of a truly feminine woman.
- The goal of true femininity is to fulfill the purpose of why God created woman - to be a helper to others and, in particular, to man. The word helper does not mean slave. It means a supporter and an encourager - someone who’ll lighten his load in life and is also a companion and a friend.
- There is no set mould for what a truly feminine woman should be like just a common theme - that she is a helper and a supporter to others as well as seeking her own fulfillment in a balanced way. A woman who is kind, who reaches out and cares for other people and makes them feel good about themselves, who’s generous and lives God’s way of life – that is **REAL** beauty (**1 Peter 3:3-4**)!

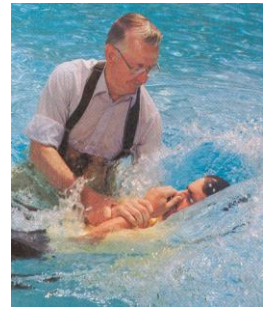


- Emotions and feelings are impulses from within us that move us toward action. Emotions are what drive us to do the things we do. When our emotions are controlled we do what is right and if they're not we do what we feel like. The Greeks put it well when they said that emotions must be ruled by reason and also, just as important, that reason must be warmed by emotion (**Joel 2:12, Hosea 7:14**).
- All feelings come and go and have the same up and down nature like waves. Feelings of romance, happiness, sadness, excitement and boredom continually go back and forth in our lives. With that in mind there's no need to panic when negative feelings creep into our lives.
- Dating is a form of giving - giving someone of a good time. Everybody you know has an effect on your life because you learn things you like and things you don't like. With broad dating experience you grow as a person. If you've dated only a few persons or if you've gone out with only one guy or girl you haven't given yourself the best possible chance to know what you really want in a husband or wife.
- It is GOD who joins together in marriage a husband and a wife. Therefore it ought to be - in your own interest - GOD who selects for you the husband or wife you are going to marry! And God will do this, if you ask Him, and then refrain from getting in a hurry and taking it into your own hands! This may require self-restraint and patience, yes, and also faith. But if you rely on God, He will not fail you. And if He selects your lifelong mate, you'll have the right one!
- Marriage is not so much in finding the right person but being the right person that counts. If you want a queen you need to be a king and vice versa. Marriage can only be a give and take commitment - you must be willing to give exactly what you want to receive. The golden rule here is - whatever qualities you desire in a mate, develop first in yourself.
- Good character is the most important thing to look for in a potential marriage partner. How much do they talk about and are interested in God's truth and way of life? **Does their calling mean the world to them?**
- Conversation is the lifeblood of relationships so develop the ability to have free-flowing conversation with each other. **You have to be the best of friends if you hope to be married and free flowing conversation is essential to that.** Along with those two qualities you certainly want to share a good number of common interests and find the other person attractive if you hope to marry a certain person. Don't take on the important responsibility of marriage until you are ready emotionally, socially, spiritually and financially.
- Sex is like a fire. That same fire that warms a house can burn it down. A fire in the fireplace gives warmth and comfort. A fire outside the limits of the fireplace destroys. The proper place for sex to burn is in the fireplace of the marriage relationship where it brings warmth to the relationship. Outside of the marriage relationship sex destroys (**1 Corinthians 6:15-20**).
- Girls in the church can easily flow along with the world's provocative dress fashions. Guys in the church have enough of a battle keeping their minds pure with what the world throws at them so girls in the church need to be sensitive to this and dress modestly (**1 Timothy 2:9**).
- Young people must not just make a commitment not to engage in sex before marriage, they also need to commit to not getting involved in those physical intimacies that are meant to lead into sex such as prolonged kissing, necking and petting with a girl or guy they might get involved with.
- Some principles of good money management include tithing and being generous to others (**Proverbs 11:24-25**), developing a savings habit (**Proverbs 24:27**), avoiding credit as much as possible (**Proverbs 22:7**), being careful of impulse buying and having a good budget that you stick to and you're putting aside for upcoming bills and not taking a a reactionary approach to your expenses.
- Peer pressure is that persuasive force that causes a teenager to go with his or her friends - to do what they want to do - to have the same attitudes they have - to behave the way they behave - to go where they want to go - to dress the way they want to dress - listen to the same tunes they listen to and to have the same likes and dislikes they have. God singles it out as the main problem or the single greatest pressure that a teenager or a young person is up against in living a good life (**Proverbs 1:10-15**).
- You don't have to experiment with sin to find out that sin brings penalties! You don't have to experiment with drugs to know the terrible results of drug addiction. You don't have to experiment with pre-marital sex to know the miseries of unwanted pregnancies, the horrors of sexually transmissible diseases, the anguish of the mental problems that stem from the feelings of guilt you go through afterwards. God simply says look around you (**Proverbs 1:20**). Observe the results and the tragic lives of those who didn't know the difference between right and wrong, who didn't have the wisdom to make the right decisions when they were young and who didn't have the courage to say no.
- There are often more subtle forms of wrong behaviour where we can be influenced by friends **IN** the church to do the wrong thing (**3 John 11**). Such things can be bad language, dirty jokes, seeing movies that are too filled with sex or violence or wrong values, listening to music that have immoral lyrics and going along with the wrong kind of trends and fashions of worldly young people.



## 8] How do I know if or when I should be baptized?

- Being called by God is something completely different from being chosen (**Revelation 17:14**). The calling is a general invitation to all our young people in the church from God where God gives them a partial understanding of His truth. It's a partial opening up of their minds with an invitation to become a converted member. It's then up to those who are called to respond to that calling at their own pace and if they respond enough then God chooses them and gives them a much fuller understanding of His truth (**Matthew 20:16**).
- How can you tell whether you are merely accepting the doctrines of the church and God's way of life because your parents believe them or because you believe in them? Well, ask yourself a simple question, "**Is what you believe a conviction or is it merely a preference?**" A conviction is a belief or a standard of behaviour that you will hold to no matter what (**Luke 14:26-33**). A preference is merely something you prefer to do that you might change under different circumstances.
- If God's way of life and the teachings of the truth are something that you are committed to, no matter what, then you do have the repentance required for baptism no matter how you feel. Of course, like with romance and marriage, we can fool ourselves into thinking we're ready so it is good to get counsel from the ministry to help make sure of your commitment level.



## 9] What does God say about building friendships?

- True friendship is a relationship where there is mutual giving and receiving and the giving is done purely for the good of the friend - NOT to gain something in return. **The secret to happiness is best summed up in the old saying - to love and to be loved.**
- Those who are deeply loved believe that people are the basic source of happiness. Deep friendship requires cultivation over the years - evenings before the fire, long walks together, etc. and lots of time for talk. Significant relationships come to those who assign them enough importance to them to cultivate them. Give your relationships the high priority that they deserve.
- The twelve disciples of Jesus who later went on to become apostles were close friends of Jesus (**John 15:15**). Amongst those friends Jesus was particularly close to Peter, James and John who saw His transfiguration (**Matthew 17:1-2**). Of those three John was probably Jesus' best friend. He was called the disciple Jesus loved (**John 13:23**) and was asked by Him to take care of His mother after His death (**John 19:26-27**). Jesus also had a special bond of friendship with Moses (**Exodus 33:11**) and Abraham who was called the friend of God (**James 2:23**).
- God emphasizes the importance of building and maintaining our friendships in **Proverbs 27:10** where He encourages us to maintain our friendships and not neglect them. If you want to have friends then you must make the effort to show yourself friendly and reach out to others (**Proverbs 18:24, KJV**). Good friends stimulate us (**Proverbs 27:17**) and help and encourage us when we are feeling down and give us needed support through life (**Ecclesiastes 4:9-10**).



## 10] What are the keys to a happy marriage?

- Why did God ordain the human relationship of marriage? Animals reproduce but animals do not marry. Animals are born with instinct. They need little or no teaching but with humans all this is different. The newborn human does not get up and walk immediately to its food. The tiny baby is helpless. It has mind—but at birth there is NO KNOWLEDGE as yet in its mind. It must be taught. It needs parents to teach it! It is far more dependent than other creatures yet its potential is infinitely higher!
- God is seeking godly offspring (**Malachi 2:14-15**). For this higher purpose, parental guidance and FAMILY LIFE are NECESSARY. The FAMILY relationship demands the HUSBAND-AND-WIFE relationship and that demands MARRIAGE and faithfulness to that matrimonial bond.



- Ten keys to a happy marriage include:
  - 1) Be committed to one another (**Matthew 19:4-6, Genesis 2:24, Proverbs 18:22**).
  - 2) Have good, open communication with your spouse (**Proverbs 15:23, John 15:15, Ephesians 4:15**).
  - 3) Give plenty of quality time to our spouse (**Genesis 2:18, Ecclesiastes 4:9-10**).
  - 4) Give generously to your spouse (**Acts 20:35, Ephesians 5:25-30, 1 Corinthians 13:4-7**).
  - 5) Be forgiving (**Matthew 6:14-15, 18:21-22**).
  - 6) Develop romance and fun in your marriage (**Genesis 29:20, Ecclesiastes 9:9, Song of Solomon 1-7, 1 Corinthians 7:3-5**).
  - 7) Live by godly financial principles (**Proverbs 11:24-25, 22:7, Luke 12:13-15**).
  - 8) Understand the differences between men and women (**1 Peter 3:7**).
  - 9) Fulfill your godly roles (**Ephesians 5:21-32, Titus 2:4-5, Proverbs 31:10-31**).
  - 10) Centre your lives on God (**Matthew 6:33, 22:37-40**).
- Faithfulness in marriage in its truest sense means therefore sexual fidelity and much more. It means the faithful discharge of duties by husband and wife. It means dependability, trustworthiness of character, strength in adversity, and loyalty.
- Three things each husband should aim to do every day for their wives include:
  - 1) Tell her you love her
  - 2) Do something nice for her
  - 3) Pay her a compliment.
- As Paul puts it, the husband must love his wife in the same way as Christ loves His bride (**Ephesians 5:25-29**). This provision is all-inclusive. It is material (**Matthew 6:26-32**), spiritual (**John 3:16**), emotional (**Ezekiel 16:6**) and intensely practical (**John 13:5**).
- Just as Jesus donates all He is and all He has to the Father, so the Christian wife is required to offer her whole self to her husband (**Ephesians 5:22-23**). For this paradox, equality with headship, extends to marriage. Husband and wife are equals, but the husband is the divinely-appointed chief amongst equals.
- Love implies that I am ready and willing to forgo my own convenience, to invest my own time, and even risk my own security to promote my spouse's satisfaction, security and development. That is the love and submission to one another's needs both husband and wife are to extend to one another (**Ephesians 5:21**).
- Marriage truly is a training ground to learn the depths of the love of God. The deep, mature, unconditional love of God in all its multi-faceted aspects (**1 Corinthians 13:4-7**) is what God wants us to learn through the gift of marriage. Without this kind of mature love marriages can easily fail but with it marriage truly becomes a little piece of heaven right here on earth.

### 11] What are the keys to raising godly children?

- In **Malachi 2:14-15** God tells us one of the main reasons for parents to raise children properly. We read: "The Lord has been witness between you and the wife of your youth...she is your wife and your wife by covenant. But did He not make them one having a remnant of the spirit? And why one? **He seeks godly offspring.**"
- Twelve keys to raising godly children include:
  - 1) Build a good marriage (**Ephesians 5:21-30**).
  - 2) Set the right example (**1 Timothy 3:4-5, 5:8**).
  - 3) Don't argue in front of your children (**Genesis 13:8, 2 Timothy 2:24**).
  - 4) Fathers, don't leave most of the disciplining and loving of your children to your wife (**Malachi 4:6**).
  - 5) Be consistent at all times with your children (**James 2:1-9**).
  - 6) From an early age, teach your children to work (**Proverbs 10:4, 13:4, 22:29**).
  - 7) Maintain a right balance between love and law (**Ephesians 6:4, Romans 12:10, Hebrews 12:5-8**).
  - 8) Discipline promptly and appropriately (**Proverbs 22:15, Ecclesiastes 8:11**).
  - 9) Eat, work, and play together as a family (**1 Corinthians 16:15**).
  - 10) Control what goes into your child's mind (**2 Corinthians 6:17-18, Philippians 4:8-9**).
  - 11) Teach your children good manners and the social graces of a prince or princess in Israel (**Isaiah 32:1, 1 Peter 2:9-10**).



12) Teach your children to believe and obey God ([Deuteronomy 6:6-9](#), [Proverbs 22:6](#), [Ephesians 6:4](#)).

- **DISCIPLINE plus AFFECTION equals obedient, secure, balanced children. DISCIPLINE minus AFFECTION equals provoked, deceitful children. AFFECTION minus DISCIPLINE equals insecurity and role reversal. And NO AFFECTION plus NO DISCIPLINE equals rebellion and anarchy.**
- The most valuable contribution a parent can make to his child is to instill in him a genuine faith in God. What greater ego satisfaction could there be than knowing that the Creator of the universe is acquainted with me personally ([Matthew 18:10](#)), that He values me more than the possessions of the entire world; that He understands my fears and my anxieties; that He reaches out to me in immeasurable love when no one else cares and that His only Son Jesus, actually gave His life for me.
- How do you 'raise kids' for independence? It is done by incrementally releasing control over your children's lives to enable them to learn how to make right choices. By this means, you will help your children develop self-discipline in obeying the moral principles you have taught them from the Holy Bible and traditional family culture.

## 12] What is christian maturity?

- **Christian maturity is practicing what you hear ([Romans 2:13](#), [James 1:21-27](#)). Through practice you become mature. You see, it is one thing to grow old in the Lord, but it is another thing to grow up in the Lord!**
- Another aspect of christian maturity is being balanced and not going to extremes. In [Joshua 1:7](#) Israel's leader Joshua was encouraged to walk in God's ways and to "turn neither to the right nor to the left"(KJV). In other words, don't go to extremes!
- **Character is best seen when tough choices are made by people ([Luke 14:26](#)). You don't really know someone deeply until they have to make those kind of tough choices. Character and christian maturity is seen when someone is selfless enough to defer to the will and good of others when it conflicts with what they would prefer to do ([Philippians 2:1-4](#)). This is how you can get a good idea of just how mature someone is, whether they are a friend or a potential mate.**
- God's way of life is all about relationships and the way that we treat and value our friendships and the way that we respond when people bring things to our attention that need improvement are a reflection of our character. Are we sensitive to do the right thing by God or do we excuse "little" sins?
- Christianity is a way of the heart. It is something that is meant to operate within our deepest inner feelings and thoughts. God has been searching the hearts of men ([Proverbs 20:27](#)) since He first created Adam. Like David we should strive to be "a man (or woman) after God's own heart" ([1 Samuel 13:14](#)).