

*The teaching of  
the wise is  
a fountain  
of life.*

*Proverbs 13:14*



**Sabbath Service**  
**Saturday, February 10, 2007**  
**“Why the Law?” — Part 1**



## Sabbath Service — Saturday, February 10, 2007

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### CALL TO WORSHIP

We gather today, seeking the peace God gives.  
We gather, longing for the breath of God's Spirit  
to give us courage and renewal.

**We gather, in spite of many a conflict, many  
a doubt, within our souls.**

**Come, Father, be our guest. Bless us through  
the power of your Spirit, and give us the courage  
to live as your disciples day by day. Amen.**

### INVITATION

God, you change our lives with mystery and hope. We come to this place today, ready to see your power working through us. Meet with us here and help us to be open to your Word, and to answer your call among us. Through Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.

### OPENING HYMN #1

*"Blest And Happy Is The Man"*

*Psalm 1*

*Dwight Armstrong*

Blest and happy is the man Who does never walk astray,  
Nor with the ungodly men Stands in sinner's way.  
All he does prospers well, But the wicked are not so;  
They are chaff before the wind, Driven to and fro.

Ne'er in scorner's chair he sits, For he places his delight  
In God's law and meditates On it day and night.  
All he does prospers well, But the wicked are not so;  
They are chaff before the wind, Driven to and fro.

He shall be a tree that grows, Planted by the river's side,  
Which in season yields its fruit; Green its leaves abide.  
All he does prospers well, But the wicked are not so;  
They are chaff before the wind, Driven to and fro.

### OPENING PRAYER

God of everlasting mercy, hear our prayer today, as we bring our lives before you. We come as people who dwell on the past. We want to face your new day with life and hope

in our hearts, but many times the events of our own lives weigh us down. We forget to forgive one another. We dwell on our own past mistakes. We refuse to bury dead issues and worn-out memories. Free us, free us from ourselves, God, so that we might walk you new pathways, alive with grace, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

## **MOMENTS OF SILENCE**

## **PERSONAL PRAYER**

### **HYMN # 155**

*“How I Love Thy Law, O God”*

*Psalm 119*  
*The Psalter, 1912, alt. 1950*  
*Har. David Evans, 1927*

How I love Thy law, O Lord! Daily joy its truths afford;  
In its constant light I go, wise to conquer ev’ry foe.  
Sweeter are Thy words to me than all other good can be;  
Safe I walk, Thy truth my light, Hating falsehood, loving light.

Thy commandments in my heart truest wisdom can impart;  
To my eyes thy precepts show wisdom more than sages know.  
Sweeter are Thy words to me than all other good can be;  
Safe I walk, Thy truth my light, Hating falsehood, loving light.

While my heart Thy word obeys, I am kept from evil ways;  
From Thy law, with Thee to guide, May I never turn aside.  
Sweeter are Thy words to me than all other good can be;  
Safe I walk, Thy truth my light, Hating falsehood, loving light.

## **PRESENTATIONS BEFORE GOD**

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Today we are going to begin a three-part study, “Why the Law?,” written by Neville V. Stevens. It is a long study, broken into shorter segments over the next three Sabbaths, and will serve as an introduction to an in-depth study of Passover, why and how we are to keep it, coming in March. Mr. Stevens’ material may often break all the rules of politically-correct discourse we are familiar with in the modern world today, but it is necessary to remember that God was not always politically-correct in his Word on the nations that he gave through his prophets. There is much of importance in this message for those of us who are preparing for the Kingdom, so we ask that you work hard not to be offended by anything you may perceive as racist, prejudicial, or otherwise politically incorrect in this message. There has been no modification. It is offered exactly as he wrote it, with a link to his website added at the bottom.

## **COLLECT**

How shall we grow in faith if we forget to express our gratitude? How shall we rise with Christ if we are not ready to die with Him? How shall we hear your Word if we are ashamed to be seen with a Bible in our hands? How shall we trust you, God, if there is no integrity in us? O God, let us hear even the word we do not wish to hear, and the

challenge we would just as soon forget. Open us to hear this message today, even when we hear those words we wish not to hear. Bless us with your presence and instruction today and forever. Amen.

## THE LESSON

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# Why the Law?

## Part 1

***The Bible says Christ is the end of the LAW. What does it mean? Did He bring the LAW to an end? Did He repeal all LAWS? Is LAW still necessary today? Or should we be living LAWLESS lives. You need to understand what the Bible MEANS!***

**By Neville V. Stevens**

**New International Version used throughout unless otherwise stated.**

Almost 1,900 years ago **THE GENTILES HIJACKED THE WORD OF GOD** and converted it to their own use. What emerged was a ‘gospel’ that is virtually unrecognizable. The **LAWS** of God were greatly diminished in importance, and in their place emerged a pseudo-sanctimony that emphasised the importance of the religious leaders. The Holy Scripture was displaced as the overall authority of human conduct, and in its place a bizarre ritualistic form of worship developed which emphasised the serendipitous use of the word ‘love’. But this ‘love’ was not directed towards the Heavenly Father—the One whom Christ directed us to worship, but towards men—and more particularly towards those who sought to replace the Father’s authority and name, and claim it for themselves.

Were the **GENTILES** ever given **AUTHORITY** to determine spiritual matters or dictate policy in regard to God’s Law? **THE ANSWER IS NO! THEY NEVER WERE!** The Gentiles cling tenuously to a privilege that was granted them, and only on stringent conditions. Christ made it clear to whom He had come: **Matt 15:24** *“I was sent **ONLY** to the **LOST SHEEP OF ISRAEL.**”* This clearly precludes the Gentiles! But what about the many scriptures that prophesy of salvation for Gentiles? **CHRIST’S WORDS STILL STAND!** **ALL** Gentiles who desire to participate in salvation must also comply with all the conditions God appointed for the **WHOLE HOUSE OF ISRAEL.** The Bible makes this very clear! This is what it says: **Rom 11:1** *“...Did God **REJECT** His people? **BY NO MEANS!**”* **V13** *“I am **TALKING** to you **GENTILES.**”* **V17** *“If some of the **BRANCHES** have been broken off, and you, though a wild olive shoot, have been **GRAFTED** in among the others and now **SHARE** in the nourishing sap from the olive root, **DO NOT BOAST***

over **THOSE BRANCHES**. If you do, consider this: You do **NOT** support the root, **BUT THE ROOT SUPPORTS YOU.**"

What are the branches of this olive tree? Are they the Churches? No! This is a reference to the **HOUSE OF ISRAEL** in contrast to the rest of the world who are **GENTILES**. Notice **V24** "*After all, if you were cut out of an olive tree that is wild by nature, and contrary to nature were **GRAFTED** into a cultivated olive tree, how much more readily will these, **THE NATURAL BRANCHES**, be grafted into **THEIR OWN OLIVE TREE!***" The olive tree **BELONGS TO** and **REPRESENTS** the **HOUSE OF ISRAEL**.

So did God ever entrust His Words to the Gentiles? This is what the Bible says: **Rom 3:1** "*What advantage, then, is there in being a Jew, or what value is there in circumcision? **MUCH IN EVERY WAY!** First of all, they have been **ENTRUSTED WITH THE VERY WORDS OF GOD.***" Nothing anyone can say or do will diminish the intent of these words. Long after Christ's departure, Paul affirmed that the Jews (that is, the southern kingdom which also included the Levites, and some Benjamites) were **ENTRUSTED** with the **VERY WORDS OF GOD**.

Not surprisingly, most professing Christians severely downgrade the importance of the **HOUSE OF ISRAEL**, and some, who are descendants of the English-speaking nations, actually believe themselves to be **GENTILES**. The nation that has spawned more variations of Christianity than any other on earth, the U.S., is in fact of the tribe of Joseph, but more particularly, the Nation of **EPHRAIM**. **EPHRAIM** has been entrusted with authority over all the lost tribes, and **EPHRAIM** is also **GOD'S FIRSTBORN SON (Jer 31:9)**. **ALL THE BROTHERS**, that is, the **SONS** of **ISRAEL** (Jacob) are referred to in Bible prophecy as the **PEOPLE OF EPHRAIM (Jer 7:15)**.

There is good reason why God refers to **EPHRAIM** as **HIS FIRSTBORN SON**. The Book of Matthew records this: **Matt 2:15** "*...And so was fulfilled what the Lord had said through the **PROPHET**: "Out of Egypt I called My Son."* And the **PROPHET** was **HOSEA**. This is what he recorded: **Hos 11:1** "*When **ISRAEL** was a child, I loved him, and **OUT OF EGYPT** I called My son. But the more I called **ISRAEL**, the further they went from Me."* **V3** "*It was I who taught **EPHRAIM** to walk, taking them by the arms; but they did not realize it was I who healed them."* So did Matthew misquote this scripture? No, he didn't! You will soon learn that the whole of the House of Israel is the physical embodiment of Christ and this is why Christ came **ONLY** to the **LOST SHEEP OF ISRAEL!** The Olive Tree that Paul referred to is not only the whole House of Israel, it also represents Christ. **TWO BRANCHES (Zech 4:12)** will become prominent in the last days. These will represent the tribes of **LEVI** and **JUDAH**. These two representatives are also called witnesses or prophets. They also represent the **MUSTARD SEED** which Christ referred to. This is the very embryo of the **KINGDOM OF GOD** which will **GROW** into a giant tree that will **FILL THE EARTH**. They will also prepare the way for the

**KING OF KINGS**, and the **LORD OF LORDS**. There is good reason why they are also called both **OLIVE TREES (Zech 4:11)** and **OLIVE BRANCHES (V12)**.

Of the **MUSTARD SEED**, Christ said this: **Mark 4:30** *“Again He said, “What shall we say the **KINGDOM OF GOD IS LIKE**, or what **PARABLE** shall we use to describe it? It is like a **MUSTARD SEED**, which is the smallest seed you plant in the ground. Yet when planted, it grows and becomes the largest of all garden plants, with such big **BRANCHES** that the birds of the air can perch in its shade.”* Christ also made another reference in **PARABLE** form to the **MUSTARD SEED**. This is what He said: **Matt 17:19** *“Then the disciples came to Jesus in private and asked, “Why couldn’t we drive it [the demon] out?” He replied, “Because you have so little faith. **I TELL YOU THE TRUTH**, if you have **FAITH AS SMALL** as a **MUSTARD SEED**, you can say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there’ and it will move. **NOTHING WILL BE IMPOSSIBLE FOR YOU.**”* Christ said He was telling the truth! He was not lying! Many of the frauds are now teaching that the **KINGDOM OF GOD** will be established **ONLY** when Christ returns. They believe and teach that Christ will return as **AN INSIGNIFICANT MUSTARD SEED**. This sort of madness borders on blasphemy, and at very least is a denial of the might and power of Christ. And they know better! They have no excuse! They are determined to twist the scriptures to conform to their own doctrine.

Christ said the **KINGDOM OF GOD** was established by John the Baptist whom Christ said was the Elijah to come. This is what He said: **Matt 11:11** *“I tell you the truth: Among those born of women there has not arisen anyone greater than John the Baptist; yet he who is least in the Kingdom of heaven is greater than he. From the **DAYS OF JOHN THE BAPTIST** until **NOW**, the **KINGDOM OF HEAVEN** has been **FORCEFULLY ADVANCING**, and **FORCEFUL MEN** lay hold of it. For all the **PROPHETS** and the **LAW PROPHESED UNTIL JOHN**. And **IF YOU ARE WILLING TO ACCEPT IT**, he is the **ELIJAH** who was to come. **HE WHO HAS EARS, LET HIM HEAR.**”* (As an interesting aside, a certain Gentile and his minions quote this verse to say the Law is done away. You will notice that it says the **‘PROPHETS** and the **LAW prophesied...**’ Yes indeed, the **LAW also PROPHESES!**)

Christ conditioned His remarks with **‘IF YOU ARE WILLING TO ACCEPT IT’**. If we are willing to accept that John the Baptist was the Elijah who was to come, then we must accept that the **KINGDOM OF GOD** began with John the Baptist. Christ also used His famous words: *‘he who has ears let him hear’*, indicating a parable. John the Baptist was killed without fulfilling all that is prophesied for the endtime Elijah. What is more, when asked if he was the prophet Elijah, John said **‘NO’ (John 1:21)**. John recognized that he was a **forerunner** of that prophet; he knew that he prepared the way for Christ’s **FIRST** coming. He denied being the prophet that precedes the **GREAT AND TERRIBLE DAY OF THE LORD (Mal 4:5)**.

But Christ confirmed that the **KINGDOM OF GOD** would begin with the endtime **ELIJAH** and continue until ‘now’ or until Christ’s presence was once more on the earth—that is, when He returns as **KING OF KINGS** and **LORD OF LORDS**. The **FORCE** that this **ELIJAH** will use to **ESTABLISH** the **KINGDOM OF GOD** is evident in many of the **PROPHETS** and the **LAW**. One of the Olive trees or lampstands is the endtime Elijah, and of these two witnesses or prophets the Bible says this: **Rev 11:6** “*These **TWO MEN** have **POWER** to shut up the sky so that it will not rain during the time they are prophesying; and they have **POWER** to turn waters into blood and to **STRIKE THE EARTH** with **EVERY KIND OF PLAGUE AS OFTEN AS THEY WANT.**”*

When the Churches of God stop listening to Gentiles, and when they cease pondering such questions as ‘How many angels can stand on the head of a pin?’, they might begin to understand something about the Bible.

It’s a strange thing that so many professing Christians believe that God wants them to live **LAWLESS** lives. They think that God’s **LAWS** were no good because no-one wanted to keep them. They insist that only when God writes the **LAWS in their hearts** will they have any relevance. To all you doubters of God’s Word, which **LAWS** do you suggest God will write in your hearts? According to *your* reasoning, when God writes them in your hearts, you *still* won’t need to obey them! And your stated reasons are that God’s **LAWS** are no good! You think that God had a change of mind and ‘*did away*’ with them.

Among all the tribes of Israel, the *laws of the land* require obedience. And for those who don’t seem to have noticed, all the *laws of the land* are fashioned on the principles of **GOD’S LAWS**. Yet they say **GOD’S LAWS** are no good! Try telling that to your country’s legislators! Why don’t they tell them to remove, for instance, the law that says murder is wrong! These free-thinking hypocrites wouldn’t want that law removed, would they? They know that law protects them from being killed by a lunatic.

They become outraged when crime and lawlessness effects their lives. They make demands for justice and insist that the law protects them—but they don’t agree with God’s law! In a civilized society our lives are governed by law—for the benefit of all the people. If everyone obeyed the *laws of the land*, then all citizens could live in peace. And even though all these laws are based on the principles of God, and many parliaments and courtrooms consider the Bible the ultimate **LAW BOOK**, they still insist they are exempt from obedience to **GOD’S LAW!** Are they crazy?

Let it be irrevocably stated: except for God’s **CHOSEN** people, that is, **ALL THE 12 TRIBES OF ISRAEL (Amos 3:1-2, Deut 7:6, 2Sam 7:23)**, all the other kingdoms or nations of the world belong to Satan the devil! **(Matt 4:8)**. They are his, and he controls them. The whole world lives under the **PRINCIPLES OF THE WORLD (Col 2:8, 20-22)**. And these principles are

**NOT GOD'S LAWS!** The Apostle Paul said this: **Rom 2:12** *“All who sin apart from the **LAW** will also perish apart from the **LAW**, and all who sin under the **LAW** will be **JUDGED** by the **LAW**. For it is not those who **HEAR** the **LAW** who are righteous in **GOD'S SIGHT**, but it is those **WHO OBEY THE LAW** who will be **DECLARED RIGHTEOUS**.”* And whose law will we be judged by? Man's law or **GOD'S LAW**? Don't think for one moment that God would honour man's law above His own!

Paul also had something to say about the **REQUIREMENTS** of the **LAW** being *written on the heart*: **V14** *“(Indeed, **when Gentiles, who do NOT HAVE THE LAW**, do by **NATURE** things **REQUIRED BY THE LAW**, they are a law for themselves, even though they do **NOT HAVE THE LAW**, since they show that the **REQUIREMENTS** of the **LAW ARE WRITTEN ON THEIR HEARTS**, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts now accusing, now even defending them.) This will take place on the **DAY** when God **WILL JUDGE** men's secrets **THROUGH JESUS CHRIST, AS MY GOSPEL DECLARES**.”* Yes, the 'end' or the **FINAL JUDGMENT BY THE LAW** will be **THROUGH JESUS CHRIST**. It is He that will examine men's secrets and the **LAW** will be applied. The **FATHER**, Himself, will pass the **JUDGMENT!** **Matt 12:36** *“But I tell you that men will have to give account on the **DAY OF JUDGMENT** for **EVERY CARELESS WORD THEY HAVE SPOKEN**. For by your words you will be acquitted, and **BY YOUR WORDS YOU WILL BE CONDEMNED**.”*

But Paul also makes the point that Gentiles, *who don't have the law*, are also aware of the **REQUIREMENTS** of the **LAW** because of conscience which, by the very **NATURE** of humanity is evident. Some might imagine that the hacking to death with machetes whole villages in black Africa is being done by ignorant savages who don't know any better. Paul does make the point of saying *‘WHEN Gentiles...’*. He does **NOT** by any means suggest that **ALL** Gentiles follow the **NATURAL** dictates of their hearts. Most people, whether Israelite or Gentile, who have reasoning minds, know that the slaughter of defenseless people, including women and children, is not according to the **REQUIREMENTS** of **NATURAL LAW**. Such conduct reflects the minds of animals—**PREDATORS OR BRUTE BEASTS!**

There was a time when God decided to erase humanity off the face of the earth. There was no justifiable reason to keep them alive. God hated the whole generation of them. Only Noah and his family were spared. God wiped them all out; man, woman and child. The **APOSTLE PETER** reveals why. It was because of the evil influence of the **RULERS OF THE HEAVENLY REALM (2Pet 2:4)**. And those who had **SINNED** were locked up in gloomy dungeons to await **JUDGMENT**. God killed all these human beings and they are never to rise again (**Isa 14:20-21**). Regardless of what you have been told, the seed of Satan will never rise again—their only reward is in this life (**Ps 17:14**). There is no resurrection for them! But David speaks of his resurrection: **Ps 17:15** *“And I—in righteousness I shall see Your face when I awake, I shall be satisfied by*

**SEEING YOUR LIKENESS**" (see also **Rev 22:4**). But the real criminals, the **RULERS OF THE HEAVENLY REALM**, were locked up to await judgment. And herein lies the real purpose of judgment. God plans to **JUDGE** the **SPIRITUAL REALM**. In the meantime, those who have sinned are **LOCKED AWAY IN PUNISHMENT**, but still yet, they **FACE THE JUDGMENT**. And God makes it clear that **PUNISHMENT IS NOW**, and the **FINAL JUDGMENT IS LATER**: **2Pet 2:9** "... the Lord knows how to rescue godly men from trials and to **HOLD THE UNRIGHTEOUS** for the **DAY OF JUDGMENT, WHILE CONTINUING THEIR PUNISHMENT.**"

We'll shortly examine the strong link between the angels that sinned and the human beings that continue to sin, but first notice the very next verse: **V10** *"This is especially true of those who **FOLLOW** the **CORRUPT DESIRE OF THE SINFUL NATURE** and **DESPISE AUTHORITY.**"* Here is the classic verse quoted by those who would have their followers reverence them as 'authorities.' Authorities! They actually call themselves authorities! Not only are the 'authorities' spoken of here **CELESTIAL BEINGS**, they also have **AUTHORITY TO RULE THE EARTH**. And they not only rule over all humanity, they also rule over all the animals.

Most people, who have any wisdom at all, know that human beings suffer penalties for wrong-doing. They know they suffer punishment for grave injustice and selfish indifference to the suffering of others. They also know there is a Rewarder for those who seek and apply the principles of God; those who show mercy and kindness and generosity to others (**Heb 11:6**). There is little point in being a **HEARER** of God's Word—you must be a **DOER!** (**James 1:22-25**). James also added this: **V27** *"Religion that **GOD OUR FATHER** accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being **POLLUTED BY THE WORLD.**"* Strangely, being **POLLUTED BY THE WORLD** is what so-called 'christians' do best these days! And they actually claim virtue for doing it!

In the past there were people outside of, and apart from, God's chosen people whom God targeted for a specific purpose. Christ made mention of these. In the **NORTHERN REALM**, He mentioned a city—Nineveh, and in the **SOUTHERN REALM**, He names a queen—the Queen of Sheba. This is what He says: **Matt 12:41-42** *"The **MEN OF NINEVEH** will stand up at the **JUDGMENT WITH THIS GENERATION** and **CONDEMN** it; for they **REPENTED** at the preaching of Jonah, and now one greater than Jonah is here. The **QUEEN OF THE SOUTH** will rise at the **JUDGMENT WITH THIS GENERATION** and **CONDEMN** it; for she came from the ends of the earth to listen to Solomon's **WISDOM**, and now one greater than Solomon is here."* These verses tell us a lot about how God views the races of the world, but it's the next verse that identifies the theme of Christ's remarks: **V43** *"When an **EVIL SPIRIT** comes out of a **MAN**, it goes through arid places seeking rest and does not find it. Then it says, 'I will return to the **HOUSE** I left.' When it arrives, it finds the **HOUSE** unoccupied, swept clean and put in order. Then it*

*goes and takes with it **SEVEN OTHER SPIRITS** more **WICKED** than itself, and they **GO IN AND LIVE THERE**. And the final condition of that **MAN** is **WORSE** than the **FIRST**. **THIS IS HOW IT WILL BE WITH THIS WICKED GENERATION.**"*

These verses raise some major questions! The theme of this chapter from **V15** to **V48** is about a wicked generation—the seed of Satan. Again and again, the Bible identifies this wicked seed—the evil generation. It was so prominent in the world at the time of Noah, that God destroyed the whole world except for eight people. And Noah was a teacher of righteousness, and a faithful believer of God! From earliest times, God sent teachers and prophets to instruct in God's ways and to warn. Most of them were called to duty as the need arose. But in the endtime, when things will be as they were **IN THE DAYS OF NOAH**, God appoints two prophets to arise, and prophesied of them thousands of years ago. The **TEACHERS OF THE LAW** who were **APPOINTED BY GOD** are **LEVITES**. Christ said this: **Matt 13:52** *"He said to them, "Therefore **EVERY TEACHER OF THE LAW** who has been **INSTRUCTED** about the **KINGDOM OF HEAVEN** is like the **OWNER OF A HOUSE** who brings out of his **STOREROOM NEW TREASURES AS WELL AS OLD**." It's hardly strange that those who refuse to obey **GOD'S LAW** never come up with any **NEW TREASURES**—nor do they retain the **OLD**! No, only the *true* **TEACHER OF THE LAW** has been **INSTRUCTED** concerning the true riches or treasures! And in case you haven't noticed, this **EXCLUDES** 99.9% of all Christianity, because these all refuse to **TEACH** God's **LAW**! And as long as you listen to them you will understand nothing! And the reason is they know nothing! And even *when* they are instructed by a **TEACHER OF THE LAW** concerning **GOD'S KINGDOM** (which includes all endtime prophecies), they cannot retain it: **Matt 13:19** *"When anyone **HEARS THE MESSAGE** about the **KINGDOM** and does not understand it, the **EVIL ONE COMES AND SNATCHES AWAY** what was **SOWN IN HIS HEART**." And anyone who doesn't honour God's Law cannot understand, and what is more, what they hear is actually removed from their consciousness. But the Bible also speaks of **OTHER SEED** sown by God. Some fell on barren rock and took root for a short while but later died: **Matt 13:6** *"But when the **SUN CAME UP** (see **2Pet 1:19-21**), the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root." Christ gives a further explanation of this: **V20** *"What was sown on rocky places is the man who **HEARS THE WORD** and at once receives it with joy. But since he has **NO ROOT** (the root of the olive tree—**Rom 11:17**), **HE LASTS ONLY A SHORT TIME**. When trouble or persecution comes because of the Word, **HE QUICKLY FALLS AWAY**."****

**TEACHERS OF THE LAW** are very familiar with these people. These are the 'good-time' Christians. They like to hear God's truth during the good times and drink it all in, but at the first sign of heat they turn away. Many of these people rush out to dazzle others with their new-found knowledge, but because they have not taken the time to fully understand what they are talking about, they are quickly rebuffed by others. And so they die spiritually. **THEY ARE**

**NEVER TO BE THE GOOD SEED!** Of course these people don't believe this! They think that at some later time, they will again approach the Throne of Grace and be accepted—even though they have died—spiritually! It's strange that they **WON'T** believe Christ!

And Christ also speaks of other seed. This seed is sown among thorns: **V22** *“What was sown among the thorns is the man who **HEARS THE WORD**, but **WORRIES OF THIS LIFE** and the **DECEITFULNESS OF WEALTH** choke it, making it **UNFRUITFUL**.”* God has a policy whereby any plant that is **UNFRUITFUL** is thrown into the fire and burnt up. And for those who think God is obligated to give them special treatment in view of past 'righteousnesses', read **Matt 7:21-23**. Notice what it is that makes this seed **UNFRUITFUL**—it's the **DECEITFULNESS OF WEALTH!** These people are more concerned with this present life than with their duty to God. These people can never fulfill the role of the faithful described in **Mal 3** and especially in regard to wealth and obedience to God. These people will listen to the Word of God until doomsday, but they only pay lip-service. There is an uncrossable threshold which they will not breach. This involves their riches (including God's tenth) and they would rather be **UNFRUITFUL** than to **HONOUR GOD!** And whether you want to believe it or not, this is the big test for those who want to receive the reward of a prophet (**Matt 10:41**). The love of money rather than the love of God was also used as a test by Christ (**Matt 19:16-24**), and notice that he said how hard it is for some to **ENTER** the **KINGDOM OF GOD**. Those who feel they are **FIT FOR SERVICE** in the **KINGDOM OF GOD** so often fail the crucial test used by Christ Himself. They balk, not at handing over **ALL** their possessions, **BUT AT HANDING OVER GOD'S TENTH**. By their own actions, they have already foreshadowed the fate of all their possessions—in the very near future! Christ recognized that the willingness of this young man's desire to follow Him was not matched by the desire of his heart. Christ requested he give all he had to the poor and to follow Him. The rich, young man immediately turned away. If this young man refused the very **ROOT** (see **Rev 22:16**) of the **OLIVE TREE**, how much more would he also refuse the **MUSTARD SEED** and the **BRANCH OF THE OLIVE TREE**.

And finally, Christ mentions the good seed. **Matt 13:23** *“But what was sown on good soil is the man who **HEARS THE WORD** and **UNDERSTANDS IT**. He produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown.”* Here are those who **HEAR THE WORD** and **UNDERSTAND** it! And out of all the seed, they alone produce a crop! And those who **HEAR THE WORD** and **FAIL** to **UNDERSTAND** it are **NOT THE GOOD SEED**. This is not to say that occasionally they will have questions about certain things, but **THEY MUST GRASP THE OVERALL MESSAGE** and recognize it as the **WORD OF GOD**. At this time Christ's disciples asked Him a question: **V10** *“The disciples came to Him and asked, “Why do you speak to the people in parables?” He replied, “The **KNOWLEDGE** of the **SECRETS** of the **KINGDOM OF HEAVEN** has been **GIVEN TO YOU**; **BUT NOT TO THEM**. Whoever **HAS** will be **GIVEN MORE**, and he will have an*

**ABUNDANCE.** *Whoever does not have, even what he has **WILL BE TAKEN FROM HIM.***” All those who showed an interest in Christ and His message, who travelled out to hear Him speak, and who listened to His **PARABLES** for hours, **NEVER UNDERSTOOD!** And neither did Christ intend them to! He spoke in **PARABLES** so they **WOULDN’T** understand. The **KNOWLEDGE of the SECRETS of the KINGDOM OF HEAVEN** was only given to Christ’s **TRUE DISCIPLES.** And Christ explained why: **V13** *“This is **WHY I speak to them in parables:** “**Though seeing, they do not see; though hearing, they do not hear or understand. In them is fulfilled the PROPHECY of Isaiah:** “You will be ever **HEARING** but never **UNDERSTANDING**; you will be ever **SEEING** but never **PERCEIVING.** For this people’s **HEART** has become calloused; they hardly hear with their ears, and they have closed their eyes. Otherwise they might **SEE** with their eyes, **HEAR** with their ears, **UNDERSTAND** with their hearts and **TURN, and I WOULD HEAL THEM.**”“*

In fact, the **KNOWLEDGE OF THE SECRETS OF THE KINGDOM** is reserved until the endtime.

It’s an unwritten law that people who spend all their time searching the Bible for ways to disobey God never understand anything! They seize on anything that can be twisted or perverted to equate to their ‘no-law’ doctrine. Those who have left their first love, and have returned like dogs to their vomit, and have immersed themselves in the basest and most degenerate of human behaviour, and disguise it as righteousness, also develop the strangest demeanour. They acknowledge that it took a long time to totally sear their consciences, but once done, they emerge as ‘enlightened ones’. They herald their new ‘enlightenment’ as a triumph—a victory **AGAINST** the **FATHER** and **HIS LAWS.** Such people actually believe that Christ defeated the Father at the crucifixion, seized power, and relegated everything that the Father said and did to the dustbin of obscurity. There are many scriptures that show **WE MUST WORSHIP THE FATHER!** He is the primary object of our worship, and everything He has said will be fulfilled exactly as He says, and everything He has promised is affirmed in Christ: **2Cor 1:20** *“For no matter how many promises God [**THE FATHER**] has made, they are “Yes” in Christ. And so through Him the “Amen” is spoken by us to the glory of God [**THE FATHER**]. Now it is God [**THE FATHER**] who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He [**THE FATHER**] **ANOINTED** us, **SET HIS SEAL OF OWNERSHIP ON US,** and put **HIS SPIRIT** in our hearts as a deposit, **GUARANTEEING WHAT IS TO COME.**”* Yes, we are guaranteed of **WHAT IS YET TO COME—BY THE FATHER!** All that the **PROPHETS AND THE LAW PROPHESED** about **IS YET TO COME (Matt 5:17)**, and this will happen, **EVEN IF HEAVEN AND EARTH WERE TO PASS AWAY!** And soon you will understand that **GOD’S PURPOSE IS FAR GREATER THAN THE SALVATION OF HUMAN BEINGS!**

There are many Gentiles and Gentile nations that see the value of a well-ordered society. And God has by no means rejected all Gentiles. Rather, He has made provision for many of them to rank among His chosen people—**THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL! (Eze 47:22).**

The Bible speaks of two Covenants, and it also speaks of two peoples. It also refers to a great harvest and a lesser harvest. God speaks of a harvest of human beings who will return to the promised land and will live in peace, and build houses and bear children. And these will be God's people, and yes, they will be His children—His physical, human children **(Isa 65:17-25).**

But God also speaks of another people—a holy nation **(1Pet 2:9)**—who are governed by a different Covenant and different responsibilities. The major difference being, this holy nation has a High Priest that performs all the rites of the Temple. No longer does our High Priest stand in the Sanctuary offering animal sacrifices because by His own sacrifice He has made redundant the need for further sacrifice—but for whom? For those whom He has called: **Heb 9:15** *“For this reason Christ is the mediator of a **NEW COVENANT**, that those **WHO ARE CALLED** may receive the promised eternal inheritance—now that He has died as a ransom to set them free from **THE SINS COMMITTED UNDER THE FIRST COVENANT.**”*

In relation to the population of the world, these people **(WHO ARE CALLED)** are relatively insignificant, but in this vast sea of humanity, they must shine like a beacon. Have they achieved this? Absolutely not! And neither can they until God opens their minds to see and understand the meaning of His great Plan. For nearly two millennia they have been required to live according to the knowledge given by God. God will judge them according to the knowledge that He gave them—provided they accepted it without question. But the understanding of prophecy was not given to them. The understanding of prophecy is reserved for God's prophets, and God makes this very clear: **Amos 3:7** *“Surely the Sovereign LORD will do **NOTHING** without **REVEALING HIS PLAN** to **HIS SERVANTS THE PROPHETS**. The **LION HAS ROARED**—who will not fear? The Sovereign LORD has spoken—**WHO CAN BUT PROPHECY?**”* **ANSWER: ONLY GOD'S PROPHETS!**

Which **LION** is this that **ROARS**? This is the **LAMB OF GOD** when He becomes the **LION OF THE TRIBE OF JUDAH** and begins to open the **SEVEN SEALS (Rev 5:5)**. This speaks of the endtime when **GOD REVEALS HIS PLAN** to **HIS SERVANTS THE PROPHETS**, and this is also when the **FORCEFUL** take the **KINGDOM OF GOD** by **FORCE**. All the former prophets spoke of the mayhem and destruction that will be inflicted on all those who have desecrated God's Holy Mountain. And vengeance will be God's! Of this embryo Kingdom, God says this: **Isa 54:17** *“No **WEAPON** forged against you will prevail, and **YOU WILL REFUTE EVERY TONGUE THAT ACCUSES YOU**. This is the **HERITAGE** of the*

***SERVANTS OF THE LORD, and this is THEIR VINDICATION FROM ME.***

A reward is something that is given in return for an outstanding service. When Christ returns He will have a reward for those who have faithfully served Him, and **THAT REWARD WILL BE WITH HIM (Rev 22:12)**. And people must earn that reward! Christ Himself earned His reward by going like a Lamb to the slaughter **(Acts 8:32)**. So must all those who claim rights under the New Covenant be willing to emulate their Saviour.

But why **LAW**? As the Apostle Paul said: *“it is those who **OBEY THE LAW** who will be **DECLARED RIGHTEOUS**.”* So the **LAW** must be **OBEYED**. And anyone who does **NOT** obey it, will **NOT** be **DECLARED RIGHTEOUS**. So all of you who *think* you are righteous, yet refuse to **OBEY** God’s **LAW**, are **NOT RIGHTEOUS**, and neither will you ever be declared so! Let’s be clear about one thing: **1John 3:4** *“**SIN is the TRANSGRESSION of the LAW.**”* Where there is no **LAW** there is no **SIN**. In fact, **SIN** is **LAWLESSNESS!** If Christ did away with the Law, or the Law was *‘nailed to the cross’* as some believe, then there is no sin! If this is so, then no-one has sinned for nearly 2,000 years. So why do counterfeit ‘christians’ talk about repentance? Repentance from what? According to their **DECEPTIVE PHILOSOPHY** there is nothing to repent of!

But what did Paul mean in reference to what was *‘nailed to the cross’*? His explanation begins in **Col 2:8** *“See to it that **NO-ONE TAKES YOU CAPTIVE** through **HOLLOW AND DECEPTIVE PHILOSOPHY**, which depends on **HUMAN TRADITION** and the **BASIC PRINCIPLES OF THIS WORLD** rather than on Christ.”* You don’t have to dig too deep to learn of **HUMAN TRADITION** which Paul linked to the **PRINCIPLES OF THIS WORLD**. What was that again? Was it the **PRINCIPLES OF GOD**? No! It’s the **PRINCIPLES OF THE WORLD** through which **HUMAN TRADITION** has become **HOLLOW AND DECEPTIVE PHILOSOPHY!** And in this regard, Paul says to see that *“no-one takes you captive”*

God’s **WAYS** are different to the **PRINCIPLES OF THE WORLD**. Among the world’s principles are many pagan observances. No-one bothers to examine these principles for logic, or for compatibility with God’s Word. If they did, they would soon find they have nothing in common with God’s instruction. At the other end of the spectrum, Paul makes this statement: **Col 2:16** *“**THEREFORE** do not let anyone **JUDGE YOU** by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a **RELIGIOUS FESTIVAL**, a new moon celebration or a **SABBATH DAY**. These are a shadow of the things that [are] to come, the reality [of which] is found in Christ. Do not let anyone who delights in **FALSE HUMILITY** and the **WORSHIP OF ANGELS** disqualify you for the prize.”* And who was Paul warning **AGAINST**? Wasn’t it those most likely to **JUDGE** a **TRUE** Christian? He says it’s those who delight in **FALSE HUMILITY** and the **WORSHIP OF ANGELS!** These are the ones who have traditionally

**JUDGED** true Christians! These are the ones who speak endlessly of grace and love, yet by their actions show no love at all for God. They teach disobedience to God and entice all others to do the same. They are foremost in advocating friendship with the world, and they lavishly adopt this **WORLD'S PRINCIPLES**.

Paul also said this: **Col 2:13** *“WHEN you were **DEAD IN YOUR SINS** and in the uncircumcision of your **SINFUL NATURE**, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, having cancelled the written code, with its **REGULATIONS**, that was **AGAINST** us and that stood **OPPOSED** to us; He took it away, **NAILING IT TO THE CROSS**. And having **DISARMED** the **POWERS AND AUTHORITIES**, He made a **PUBLIC SPECTACLE** of them, triumphing over them [in Himself] (margin).”* Paul was speaking to Gentile Christians who were converted long after Christ's death and resurrection. When they were called, they were **DEAD IN THEIR SINS**, and they still had a **SINFUL NATURE**. What did Christ disarm? Was it the laws of God? Did He actually make a public spectacle of the Laws of His Father in heaven? No! He made a **PUBLIC SPECTACLE** of the **POWERS AND AUTHORITIES**, and it was these He **TRIUMPHED** over! Paul makes the point that we were formerly **UNDER THEM!**

Can we be sure? Paul emphatically states just that! **V20** *“Since you died to the **PRINCIPLES OF THE WORLD**, why as if you belonged to it, do you submit to its **RULES?**”* Paul goes on to explain a little about the **PRINCIPLES OF THE WORLD**. And those whom Paul warned true Christians against, that is, those who delight in **FALSE HUMILITY**, are described again, as those who are aligned with the **PRINCIPLES OF THE WORLD: V22** *“These are all destined to perish with use, because they are based on **HUMAN COMMANDS** and **TEACHINGS**. Such **REGULATIONS** indeed have an **APPEARANCE OF WISDOM**, with their self-imposed **WORSHIP** (of angels—see **V18**), their **FALSE HUMILITY** and their harsh treatment of the body, but they lack any value in **RESTRAINING SENSUAL INDULGENCE**.”* Most people know very well that the **PRINCIPLES OF THE WORLD** make no attempt to inhibit indulgence of the basest kind. In fact, the main reason for teaching *against* God's Laws are so they can institute their own **RULES**. It's hardly surprising that so many of these 'wacko' groups eventually decide that 'love' means free sex with other members in their congregation. And among the more bizarre, they even believe that 'love' encompasses homosexual sex. Little wonder they object to God's Laws. In the absence of God's Laws they can make it *seem* respectable. And it's always shrouded in the **APPEARANCE OF WISDOM**, but **NOT** the **WISDOM OF GOD!** And their '**WISDOM**' has no value in **RESTAINING SEXUAL INDULGENCE!** And in this regard, they are generally slavering animals!

But why Law? Shouldn't God just trust humanity to come up with all the right answers? The historical record of human conduct is sufficient to understand why God does not! Concerning humanity, the Prophet David said this: **Ps 8:4**

*“What is man that you are mindful of him?”* Indeed, what is man! These very words evince graphic depictions of the utter depravity of the human mind. David envisioned the utter cruelty and depravity of human beings in unrestrained circumstance and wondered why God was even mindful of mankind. But he says this in **V2** *“From the lips of children and infants You have ordained praise **BECAUSE OF YOUR ENEMIES, to SILENCE THE FOE AND THE AVENGER.**”* God has not called the mighty and powerful of this world. Instead He has called the little ones, those who are child-like in obedience and love for Him. And because of His might and great Power, God will use these little ones to **‘SILENCE THE FOE AND THE AVENGER.’** And neither has God organized these people into a powerful organization that is publicly visible to the world. They are a scattered people, principally from the nations of the Tribes of Israel, but also from every continent on earth. God is shielding them from the excesses of the madness of this world. He is training them for the work that He has planned for them. And this is in accordance with God’s **PLAN** and **PURPOSE**.

At the appropriate time, these people *will* be very visible to the world. This is what God says: **Jer 3:14** *“Return, faithless people,” declares the LORD, “for I am your Husband. I will **CHOOSE one of you from every town and two from every clan and BRING YOU TO ZION. Then I will give you SHEPHERDS AFTER MY OWN HEART, who will LEAD YOU WITH KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING.**”* Out of the vast sea of humanity among the Tribes of Israel, God is only going to **CHOOSE** one from every town and two from every clan. And the world will then know whom God has **CHOSEN**. They will be brought to **ZION—BY GOD!** God is clearly **NOT** talking about a mass migration of **ALL** the tribes **AS HE DOES ELSEWHERE IN THE BIBLE**; He is speaking of a **PRIOR** event.

Because they are scattered, they are a hard target for the enemies of God. Satan likes his enemies to be gathered together in one place, so he can incite his evil brood against them. He has already incited his Moslem brood against Christians in Egypt and throughout the Middle East. They love to kill, loot and burn anything to do with Christianity. Lately, the Moslems have begun a practice run of killing Christians, and looting and burning Churches in Indonesia. He first set his hordes against the wealthy Chinese, and rewarded them with plunder. With the bloodlust flowing freely, he then set them upon Christianity (many of the Chinese were of Christian religion anyway). You’ve seen the media footage, you’ve been warned in the past, now you are about to see it with your own eyes.

Perhaps some of you even got a sense of satisfaction from seeing the Catholics tormented and killed because you believe it to be the hand of God. In the twisted madness of your mind you have believed the Catholic Church to be the Beast power. And on what evidence? Was it the comments of the KJV translators? Or was it Alexander Hislop’s book ‘The Two Babylons’? Or did it

emanate from the scrambled-egg brain of Herbert Armstrong? One thing is certain! **YOU DIDN'T READ IT IN THE BIBLE!**

Consistently, and throughout the entire Bible, God has referred to Babylon—the city on the Euphrates River. God has clearly stated that the great harlot will set up his seat of power in this city. Can God be trusted to state what He means? Or did He deliberately set out to deceive everyone? Was God relying on the scrambled brains of morons to interpret His meaning? Did He really mean Rome or Berlin or Moscow or New York? If you think God has deliberately set out to deceive, then you are calling Him a liar? In that some of you dare to contradict what God Himself has said, you've as good as called Him a liar anyway. Be warned that you are placing yourselves in very great peril!

Some people who have never believed God, but have chosen to believe proven liars who regularly contradict themselves and change their doctrine almost weekly. These people are in for the shock of your lives.

*(Continuing with Part 2 next week.)*

For this and other articles by Neville V. Stevens, see [www.zionministry.com](http://www.zionministry.com)

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## **CLOSING HYMN # 165**

*“Be Still, My Soul”*

*Katharina von Schlegel, 1697-?*  
*Trans. by Jane L. Borthwick, 1813-1897*  
*Jean Sibelius, 1865-1957*

Be still, my soul: the Lord is on thy side.  
Bear patiently the cross of grief or pain.  
Leave to your God to order and provide;  
In every change, He faithful will remain.  
Be still, my soul: your best, your heavenly Friend  
Through thorny ways leads to a joyful end.

Be still, my soul: your God will undertake  
To guide the future, as He has the past.  
Your hope, your confidence let nothing shake;  
All now mysterious shall be bright at last.  
Be still, my soul: the waves and winds shall know  
His voice Who ruled them while He dwelt below.

Be still, my soul: the hour is hastening on  
When we shall be forever with the Lord.  
When disappointment, grief and fear are gone,  
Sorrow forgot, love's purest joys restored.  
Be still, my soul: when change and tears are past  
All safe and blessed we shall meet at last.

**CLOSING WORDS**

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope. Amen.