

A Book about God's Ordained Order

God Made Them Male and Female

What the Bible Says

by

Colin Winfield

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As the world questions the reality of gender, this booklet considers what the Bible says on this topic. Is there more to this challenge to the natural order as ordained by God? What lies at the centre of this truth many wish to silence, a truth that the Bible says will affect everyone differently depending on their choice?

God Made Them Male and Female

Introduction

Jesus said, “Have you not read, that He who created them from the beginning made them male and female?” (Matthew 19:4) Jesus was referring to the First Book of Moses, known as ‘Genesis’, where Moses wrote, “God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our image,’” and so, “‘God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created them; **male and female He created them.**” (Genesis 1:26-27) Telling of mankind’s beginning Moses wrote, “In the day when God created man, He made them in the likeness of God. **He created them male and female.**” (Genesis 5:1-2)

In this twenty-first century, we now live in a world where the existence of God is denied by many, and therefore His word is discounted in unbelief despite the Bible being more widely available in numerous languages than ever it has ever been.

We now live in a world where men increasingly consider themselves as authors of their own salvation, and therefore free to be in what amounts to rebellion against God’s due order that He ordained from the very beginning. Considering it to be modern-day enlightenment, the rebellious would not consider it to be so, of course.

But God has given mankind free-will, and having granted mankind free-will it might seem that he is free to chose what is truth and what is error, what is good and what is evil, with no consequences. This discounts, however, the certainty that all will eventually come before the Judgment Seat of God to give account for their deeds in this life.

Perhaps the reader of this booklet has already decided that God does not exist and His word is of no account, and that there will not be such a judgment. This booklet, however, will consider what the Bible says regarding the issue of gender and morality, and the godly order that God designed for mankind to live by. It will also look at the reason for His commands.

This is more than a consideration of God's ordained order, it is a book about mankind's restoration to his Maker. It is a book about eternal life, and for those being saved, it is a book about hope. The opposite to eternal life is spiritual death. In His love God wants all men to choose life, but will they?

The conclusion we come to is a personal one.

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Chapter One

God's Plan for Mankind - His Restoration

In the beginning God made man perfect, and he was able to commune with His Maker in God's creation which was good. But God also gave man free will, enabling man to turn his back on this perfect state should he chose to understand about both good and evil.

This choice came with a warning and command. To chose to understand both good and evil would cause man to lose his eternal state of communion with His Maker. God warned Adam that if he disobeyed he would surely die.

This death meant that a separation came between man and his Creator. Man did not cease to exist, but from that moment man was separated spiritually from God and in due course this brought death into the natural world.

From that moment on God has been in the process of restoring man back to Himself, not by His own power but bringing man to that place where he will choose life by denying himself out of love for the One who made him.

This is where our story begins.

The Righteousness of God

The Apostle Paul, when writing to the church in Rome, taught them about the righteousness of God, righteousness that is revealed, he explained, from "faith to faith, as it is written, 'But the righteous man shall live by faith.'" (Romans 1:17)

Righteousness does not come by works, Paul explained, but by faith, although our faith has to be manifest by our deeds. (see James 2:14)

Speaking about the righteousness of God, Paul also makes reference to the ‘wrath of God’, His wrath which will come against “all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness.” (Romans 1:18) So it is, judgment will not be avoided by any, for God’s own righteousness cannot be compromised! God is not only a God of love, He is also just.

Without Excuse

Paul begins his teaching by explaining that mankind is without excuse because, “since the creation of the world *God’s* invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made.” (Romans 1:20)

Paul explains, however, that men, “even though they knew God they did not honour Him as God, or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened.” (Romans 1:21)

In this teaching of Paul’s we see how mankind has succumbed to his own wisdom causing God “to give men over in the lusts of their heart to impurity, having exchanged the truth of God for a lie.” (Romans 1:24)

This is the sad reality even to this day, as men deny the existence of God and seek after their own will, but there is good news. The way of salvation has been provided by God through Jesus Christ, but men need first to realise their need of a

Saviour. To bring this realisation God has poured out His Spirit on all mankind. This is not a hopeless story. This is one of hope. God, in His love for mankind, has provided man with the means of restoration and salvation from his unhappy state. God by His grace has provided not only forgiveness of sins but the power to walk in His righteousness.

However, because mankind has been given free will, God has no choice but to give men over to their own conclusions. The result, Paul explains, has been that mankind can be seen to have exchanged the “glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man, of birds, of four-footed creatures and crawling creatures,” and then “worshipped and served the creature rather the Creator,” (see Romans 1:22-25) and evidence of this is clearly seen in the differing forms of religions around the world with their outward forms that they consider holy and to be worshipped.

God’s Due Order

We see in this teaching of the apostle Paul, the conflict between what is truth and what is error, what is according to God’s original order and what mankind has replaced it with.

In the very beginning the Bible says that God expressly forbade man to seek after a knowledge of good and evil. In this first command of our Creator we see that the command was for man’s own good, that he might remain in the perfection into which God had created him.

It was for loves sake God gave mankind the freedom to choose, however, that man might love Him of his own free will. It was this that enabled Satan to tempt Eve and cause Adam to sin when he chose to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. To

this day men still have the right to choose, to choose life or to choose death, to choose God or to choose their own selfish way.

The Mosaic Law

The story of mankind that begins in the book of Genesis continues with a focus on the nation of Israel in the books of Exodus, Numbers, Leviticus and Deuteronomy, the five books of Moses telling us of the commands of God that He gave to the Israelites in the form of the Law - the Torah - after they had been brought out of the land of Egypt where they had been slaves for four hundred years. (see Genesis 15:13)

The Law was made up of commands and ordinances that the Israelites were not be able to fully obey but which God allowed to be covered by sacrifices and offerings that would enable Israel to be counted righteous before their Maker and so have limited communion with Him, not just for their own sake but for the sake of all mankind.

God was not putting stumbling blocks before Israel, but was providing the means by which His chosen nation could walk in relationship with Himself.

The real solution to mankind's condition had to wait, however, until God sent His only begotten Son to pay the price for our sins and also bring new life to enable those who believe in Him to walk in God's righteousness.

This is the gospel, the good news, that is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes. It is not obtained by good works but by faith, that by grace any who come to Jesus might be saved. (see Romans 1:16-17)

In our attempt to understand God's ordained order, therefore, we need to realise that this does not come with inevitable condemnation, but with the good news that there is a means of escape from man's inner condition. This is available through faith by which we can walk in the righteousness of God that by man's own efforts is otherwise impossible. In His love and grace, God not only provides the means of salvation but also the ability to walk in His commands. God does not just forgive our sins yet leave us in our fallen condition, He also provides new life in Christ through which we can walk without sin.

What the Law did, exposing as it does, man's inability to comply with the commands of God, also exposes his susceptibility to sin which lies within the heart of all mankind. In this way the Law was as a schoolteacher to lead us to Christ. (see Galatians 3:24)

Whether understood or not, this is the reality of mankind's complaint, and mankind's means of salvation. It is not addressed by man seeking salvation by means of good works - good deeds - that he might be considered as righteous; nor by false worship, nor by holding to some false belief that denies the condition he was born into this world with. The Bible tells us that salvation can only come by one means - through God's solution - that provided by His Son, Jesus Christ!

The Bible says, "There is salvation in no one else; **for there is no other Name under heaven that has been given among mankind by which we might be saved.**" (Acts 4:12)

Amazing Grace - God's Unmerited Favour

We see, therefore, that salvation does not come through works of the flesh - good deeds - but, as the apostle Paul explains, the

righteousness of God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. (see Romans 3:22) In God's wisdom salvation is thus available to all, because salvation comes by His free gift of grace.

Not Just a List of Rules

Before we look at the commandments of God, including those which impact on gender and morality, we need to also consider God's ordained order as regards gender as described for us in the Bible. To tell men to do what they are unable to do, because of the nature of sin that lies within their hearts, only magnifies their fault.

The gospel of Jesus Christ is good news, for it tells, not only that salvation can be found in Him, for all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God, (see Romans 3:23) but also that this offer of the free gift of righteousness is available by grace - God's undeserved favour - to all mankind.

Because salvation does not come through works, but by grace, it does not mean that the Law is nullified, however. The new life available in Christ Jesus by faith enables men to obey the requirements of the Law and the commands of God. But this can only be achieved by receiving the Holy Spirit, for then the requirements of the law are written upon our hearts.

Good News

This is the good news. Not only did Jesus, the Son of God, die for the sins of the whole world, but He was also raised from the dead to give new life to all who might believe, that we might walk in newness of life having victory over sin.

Mankind's Fallen Condition

As we consider the actions of men that result from his fallen state we have to realise that these all result because he is already separated from God. The sinful actions of mankind do not separate him from God. **He is already separated from Him!**

All religions endeavour to find a way back to God by works but, none of these will suffice. Even false forms of Christianity won't change us. True Christianity is not a religion but a relationship and fellowship with God by His Spirit, for God puts His Spirit within those who believe.

This is the wonderful revelation revealed in Jesus Christ, that is about far more than 'do's and don'ts'. "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that everyone who believes in Him would not die but have eternal life." (John 3:16)

Can we therefore ignore God's commandments? No we cannot. The law is not only our tutor to lead us to Christ, that we might be made righteous by faith, (see Galatians 3:24) but the commandments of God, if ignored, are the means of us sinking deeper and deeper into the the consequences that these sins bring.

The Sad Reality of Man's Fallen State

Paul explains, as we have seen, that when men turned from God, they were given over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, and this resulted in even their bodies being dishonoured among them. (see Romans 1:24)

This consequence does not absolve those who do not carry out such deeds, and such cannot judge those who do, for those

who judge have the same fault within that separates them from God as well. (see Romans 2:1) The apostle Paul makes it clear, **“there is none righteous without Christ, not one!”** (Romans 3:10)

The Judgment of God

Despite the riches of God’s kindness and His forbearance and patience, in the name of righteousness the day of wrath and the judgments of God still awaits those who remain with unrepentant hearts. (see Romans 2:4-5)

Paul concludes, that through the Law and commandments of God, comes a knowledge of sin, (see Romans 3:20) and the Law is not nullified through faith, but on the contrary the Law is established. (see Romans 3:21)

So it is that we are able to look at God’s commandments with an understanding as to why He gives them to us.

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Chapter Two

The Ordained Order of God

God Made Man Male and Female

In the account of creation, the Bible says that God “formed man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living being.” (Genesis 2:7)

God then said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make him a helper suitable for him.” The biblical account tells us that the LORD God fashioned into a woman, the rib He had taken from the man. (See Genesis 2:18 & 22)

Having created man, male and female, God then declared, “For this cause a man shall leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.” (Genesis 2:24)

So it is that we see that marriage, the joining of a man to a woman, is God’s plan for all mankind, male and female becoming as one flesh.

When writing to the church in Ephesus the apostle Paul says, “I bow my knee before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and earth derives its name.” (Ephesians 3:14 & 15) It is God’s ordained order that male and female be joined together in what we may term, ‘holy matrimony’. In the modern-day challenge to marriage it is not some invention of mankind that is therefore being threatened, attacked and denied by many, it is an attack on God’s due order.

Acknowledging God's plan for male and female to be joined together as one, we see that when Jesus was questioned regarding divorce by some Pharisees who came to test Him, Jesus quoted from this account of the creation of male and female found in the Book of Genesis, adding, "**Whom therefore, God has joined together, let no man separate,**" (Matthew 19:6) a command incorporated into many marriage ceremonies.

These Pharisees then pressed Jesus as to why Moses permitted a man to divorce his wife, and Jesus replied; "Because of the hardness of your heart, Moses permitted you to divorce your wives, **but from the beginning it has not been this way.** I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for the cause of immorality, and marries another commits adultery." (Matthew 19:8)

In this account we see Jesus confirming God's standard, His will for all mankind.

The Commandments of God

"The Law of the LORD is perfect," the Psalmist declared, (see Psalm 19:7) and this Law that God gave to Israel through Moses is therefore referred to as the 'Mosaic Law'.

Under the Mosaic Law, that God gave on Mount Sinai, the LORD stated, "You shall not commit adultery." (Exodus 20:14) When questioned, Jesus admitted regarding His declaration about adultery, "Not all men can accept this statement." (Matthew 19:11)

Although this sadly might be so, the consequences of us changing or falling short of God's commands are not avoided.

We will also see that the commandments God gives us are for our own good.

The importance of God's commandments was made clearer when on one occasion Jesus was approached by a rich young ruler who had come to Him asking what he might do to obtain eternal life. Jesus said to him, "**If you wish to enter into life, keep the commandments.**" Jesus then reminded the young man of the 'Ten Commandments', the ten foremost commandments of the Mosaic Law. In this story told in the gospels we see that for those seeking the Kingdom of God our deeds have a bearing on our finding God. (see Matthew 19:16-26)

On another occasion Jesus was questioned by some Sadducees, the sect that existed at that time that did not believe in the resurrection of the dead. (see Matthew 22:23) One of them, an expert in the Mosaic Law, asked Jesus which was the greatest commandment of the Law. Jesus said to him, "**You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind,**" adding, "This is the greatest and foremost commandment, and the second is like it, **You shall love your neighbour as yourself.** On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets." (Matthew 22:37-40)

It's All About Love

We see from Jesus' response to the Sadducees that the commandments of God are all about love - our love for God and our love for one another.

The Results of Man Turning from God and His Commands

The apostle Paul explained that it was the consequence of men acting according to their own desires and opposing God's commandments, that caused God to **'give them over'** to their degrading passions, passions they had already allowed to control their actions. Paul describes these as "women exchanging their natural function for that which is unnatural, and in the same way, also," Paul said, "men exchanged the natural function of the woman and burned with desire toward one another, men with men, committing indecent acts and receiving in their own persons the due penalty of their error. And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God therefore **'gave them over'** to a depraved mind to do those things that are not proper," acts they had already decided to do. (Romans 1:24-28)

No longer looking to God and His righteous commandments Paul says that men become "filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, greed and evil, full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice, gossips, slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil and disobedient to parents." (Romans 1:29-30)

Turning away from God, and without understanding the consequences that their unrighteous deeds might lead to, Paul continues, saying, they become unloving, untrustworthy and unmerciful. Despite knowing the ordinances of God, and knowing that the result for those who practice these things are worthy of death, men not only do the same but giving hearty approval to those who practice such things! (see Romans 1:31-32)

The Inevitable Consequence of Sinning

What Paul describes is the consequence of sin, not the direct judgment of God, but God permitting them - giving them over - to suffer the consequence of their sin! By sinning men step outside the protection of God and are susceptible to sink lower and lower into unrighteousness.

Denying God's commands, men may wish to ignore the inevitable result of their actions but history stands as a testimony to the fact that as society descends into sin it inevitably brings the breakdown of society.

Sundry Laws

In addition to the Ten Commandments, God also gave ordinances to set before the Israelites that detail sundry laws. Laws about animals and food, the avoidance of that which is unclean so as to protect health, laws to benefit new mothers, and laws to minimise its spread by those who have contracted leprosy. God gave detail regarding the avoidance of immoral relationships, many now counted acceptable, but then counted as deserving of death.

Many today consider these various laws to be of no account, despite God telling Israel their prosperity depended on them obeying "all the commandments" that He had given them. (see Deuteronomy 8:1)

The Covering of Sins

Knowing the power of sin God also provided ordinances to hold feasts and give offerings, providing a means to cover their inevitable failure to comply with the righteous standard of God.

In some circumstances, however, where men's actions were so evil, God declared penalties that would deserve death so as to protect the majority.

Moses was given exact detail as to how a Tabernacle was to be constructed in which to offer the sacrifices and offerings necessary to cover the people of God when these laws were broken.

Today, as men discount these various laws as being insignificant, denying God's commandments, and preferring to hold to a standard of their own design that permits them to continue in the way of their own hearts, the consequences of their actions still remains, and in due course will bring about the direct judgments of God.

Israel, of course, was in a special covenant relationship with God, a covenant that offered prosperity and well being for obedience to God's Law and judgment for disobedience. Nevertheless God's standard of righteousness still applies to all mankind for the inevitable consequence of sinning still has its sad result. Those who do not acknowledge or know God are not exempt from the inevitable.

Sins that Lead To Death

Writing to the church in Corinth, Paul made it clear to them that, although they had come to know God, the "unrighteous would *still* not receive the Kingdom of God." Paul listed the sins that would result in them being separated from God's Kingdom, saying, "**Do not be deceived, neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor revilers, nor swindlers, shall inherit the Kingdom of God.**" (1 Corinthians 6:9-10)

Paul was not being judgmental in stating this reality, but with this warning was wishing to make it clear that there was a way provided by God to enter His Kingdom through repentance and forgiveness. The good news of the true Christian faith is that Jesus has paid the price for all the sins of the whole world! Paul stated; “Such were some of you, but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God.” (1 Corinthians 6:11) So too, any may likewise be cleansed from these sins today.

In the same way that Paul was not writing in condemnation, this study is also not intended to judge the actions of any, but only to identify mankind’s problem and declare the answer to it. Unless our fault is acknowledged the solution is lost to our detriment. Without repentance, a turning away from sin and a turning towards God, there can be no forgiveness of sins.

Let us be clear, **“God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through Him.”** (John 3:17)

Jesus, the Answer to All Sin

After He had been raised from the dead, Jesus declared before He ascended to heaven, **“Repentance for the forgiveness of sins** should be proclaimed in His Name to all nations, beginning in Jerusalem.” (Luke 24:47) In this, the love of God is revealed to all mankind. In His love God has provided the means by which mankind may be freed from the power of sin?

Good News

It is in Jesus alone that the way has been revealed for all mankind to be freed from the power of sin that separates mankind from their Maker. Unlike the Law which was given only to Israel, in Jesus new life is available to all mankind that makes it possible for those who believe to be given a new heart and a new spirit, and the power to overcome those sins that so easily beset us all.

This is the good news, not condemnation!

And God's promise is available to any who might come to Jesus to find this salvation and freedom from sin. God's promise is to all who will believe and this is His promise; **"I will give you a new heart and I will put a new spirit within you, and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances."** (Ezekiel 36:26-27)

Not Just a List of 'Thou Shall Nots'

This good news is misconstrued if it is thought of as just a list of 'Thou shall not's'. Rather, it is the offer of new life once one acknowledges one's own sad condition, mankind's condition that is common to all. Without this solution to the sad reality of mankind's fault, our cry can only be like that of Job who declared, "If I am wicked, woe is me!" (Job 10:15)

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Chapter Three

Past Judgments of God

Having considered that the commandments that God gives mankind are for his own good, we next look back in history to see how past necessary judgments of God emphasise the fact that despite having free will mankind is not absolved from the consequences of his actions.

The Foreknowledge of God

The Bible, we have seen, tells the story of God's plan and purpose to restore mankind to Himself. It is a story of love, but also one of a fight against wickedness which inevitably brings judgment upon evil.

We find in history, times when God has stepped in to prevent mankind being completely lost due to his own actions, actions so wicked and evil that God's judgments were necessary to stop mankind totally destroying himself, or becoming totally enveloped in evil and wickedness.

Such interventions by God do not come without God warning man what the consequences of his actions will bring. God has not left man without a realisation of His will, and what the consequences would be if he failed to obey His righteous commands. God has always forewarned men of the consequences for disobedience. Through prophecy, God also tells us what has yet to take place to bring about mankind's ultimate restoration. **God does nothing without first revealing His secret to His servants, the prophets.** (see Amos 3:7)

So it is through prophecy of scripture we know and can discern the very days we are now living in, days that will lead to the Kingdom of God being established upon the earth when Jesus, the Son of God, returns to set up His Kingdom on earth, and ultimately bring us to a new heaven and new earth.

As an example to ourselves upon whom the end of the ages have come, we are told of God's dealings with Israel that are recorded in scripture. (see 1 Corinthians 10:11) We may therefore look to the past to help us walk into the future.

The Wider Effects of Sin

Having given Israel a list of His commands, God explained to Israel that by walking in wickedness their defilement would also defile their land. Speaking of His moral laws God stated, "Do not defile yourself with any of these things, because by all these things the nations which I am casting out before you have become defiled, for the land has become defiled, therefore I have visited its punishment upon it, so the land has spewed out its inhabitants." (Leviticus 18:24-25)

So it is we live in a world that is defiled by our sins, and although men might seek to find a life they consider will bring them lasting happiness, this cannot be found except by walking in the righteousness of God.

So it is we are not left in darkness regarding God's plan and purpose in restoring that which man has lost, and in the foreknowledge of God He tells us the end from the beginning.

This is the story of a battle, for Satan is still endeavouring to hinder mankind from finding his way back to the perfection into which he was created at the beginning.

It is with this understanding we look back at the past judgments of God knowing that without God's righteousness we cannot enter His Kingdom.

Past Judgments of God

When man was first created, "God saw all that He had made, and said, "Behold, it was very good." (Genesis 1:31) Falling from this perfect state we read of the history of mankind in the Bible and see that there have sadly already been previous judgments of God because of man's wickedness.

The Flood

When men began to multiply on the face of the earth "the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great", and that "every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." (Genesis 6:1&5) The earth was "corrupt in the sight of God, and the earth was full of violence." (Genesis 6:11)

Such was the wickedness and violence into which mankind had sunk that God brought a flood upon the earth to destroy all mankind except righteous Noah and his family. (see Genesis 7)

Wrongly interpreting the geological record men discount this cataclysmic event.

Having survived the flood God reassured Noah saying, "I establish My Covenant with you and all flesh to never again cut off by the water of the flood, neither shall there be a flood to destroy the earth." (Genesis 9:11) As a sign of this covenant God for the first time set a rainbow in the sky, His sign of this promise that remains to this day.

The Destruction of the Tower of Babel

Such was the state of men's hearts, however, men still strayed from the will of God. After the flood mankind once again began to multiply upon the face of the earth, but still without a cure for his inner condition. Men continued to rebel against their Maker just as they continue to do to this day. Men said, "Come let us build for ourselves a city and a tower whose top will reach into heaven, and let us make for ourselves a name, lest we be spread abroad over the face of the earth." (Genesis 11:4)

This unity of purpose and intent of mankind, seeking his own plan and purpose without God, can still be seen today, and increasingly so.

So it was that in the days when men built the Tower of Babel God said, "Behold, they are one people, and they all have the same language, and this is what they began to do." (Genesis 11:6a)

Seeing the ability of mankind to act together outside His will God said, "Now nothing they propose to do will be impossible for them." (Genesis 11:6b)

So it was, God stopped the building of this city they had conspired to build, and scattered mankind abroad over the face of the whole earth, confusing their language so they would not be able to understand one another, and so hinder their development. (see Genesis 11:7-8)

It was God who called the city, 'Babel', or 'Babylon', meaning 'confusion', because there it was that the LORD confused their language, as He scattered them abroad over the face of the whole earth. (see Genesis 11:9)

The apostle Paul makes reference to this amazing act of God many years later when preaching to the Athenians on Mars Hill. Paul explained that God **“made from one, every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed times and the boundaries of their habitation.”** (Acts 17:26-27)

This is why we exist today as separate nations with differing languages; because God is holding mankind back from destroying himself. Yet, just as in the days when men tried to build the Tower of Babel, mankind continues to seek to unify the nations with a single purpose. The same spirit of rebellion that existed in the city of Babel we still see today as we observe this very same intent today, men thinking they can be the author of their own salvation without God, taking no account of their sin.

When we consider what the Bible foretells of future judgments we will see that the coming judgments that scripture speaks of are inevitable, as men march on in blind disobedience.

Sodom and Gomorrah

Despite the intervention of God, when God had to destroy the tower of Babel, men still erred in the way of their heart, descending again into wickedness and evil, and the Bible describes the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah among other judgments which were the result.

Before Israel became a nation, God spoke of Abraham; **“Abraham will surely become a great and mighty nation, and in him all the nations of the earth will be blessed.”** (Genesis 18:18) Although men kept erring in the way of his heart, God’s plan of salvation for all mankind was nevertheless being brought about.

It was in the days of Abraham, however, that the LORD said, “The outcry of Sodom and Gomorrah is indeed great, and their sin is exceedingly grave.” (Genesis 18:20)

Abraham’s nephew, Lot, was living in Sodom at this time, and the Bible tells of two angels coming to the city and being invited by Lot to stay the night with him and his family. But that night the men of Sodom, both young and old, surrounded the house and called to Lot, “Bring them out to us that we might have relations with them!” (Genesis 18:5)

These angels sent by God were therefore forced to act, and so it was that the men of the city were struck with blindness and the angels enabled Lot, his wife and his daughters to escape before they destroyed the city, saying of the city, “Their outcry has become so great before the LORD that the LORD has sent us to destroy it!” (Genesis 19:13)

The LORD rained brimstone and fire on the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. The Bible records that “He overthrew those cities and all the valley, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and what grew on the ground.” (Genesis 19: 24-25) Lot looked down toward Sodom and Gomorrah and behold, “the smoke of the land ascended like the smoke of a furnace!” (Genesis 19:28)

The ash-like remains of these cities remain to this day still testifying to this awesome event.

We might not understand the process of God that is in progress to have men turn back to Himself of their own free will, but the rise and fall of nations is recorded in history and in the biblical accounts of God’s dealings with Israel, and in these we can see the fall of nations being always linked to the corporate sin of those nations.

God's Judgments Are Always Just

In the account of God's judgment upon Sodom, before His righteous judgment, Abraham had asked God if He would "sweep away the righteous with the wicked?" (Genesis 18:23) Questioning the justice of God, Abraham pleaded for mercy upon the city and God replied that He would not destroy the city if just fifty, then forty, then thirty, then twenty, and then if just ten righteous men were found there. God said that He would relent of His purpose to destroy the city if any were found. (see Genesis 18:23-33) But there were none except Lot and his family found within the city. God's judgments are always just.

Showing God's willingness to show mercy, we read of another occasion when God sent the prophet Jonah to warn the city of Nineveh, the inhabitants of which had sunk into wickedness and violence so that He was going to destroy their city. On hearing of this forthcoming judgment through the prophet, Jonah, however, "the people of Nineveh believed God's warning and they called a fast and put on sackcloth, from the greatest to the least of them," and when God saw that they had "relented of their wicked way, then God relented concerning the calamity which He had declared that He would bring upon them, and He did not do it." (Jonah 3:5 & 10)

The Bible account of these past major judgments of God - **the Flood, the destruction of the Tower of Babel and God dividing mankind into different nations with different languages, and the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah** - may perhaps be considered by some as irrelevant in our day, even discounted as just fables. In similar fashion they may also discount what the Bible tells of future judgments that awaits this present wicked generation that has turned from Almighty God and whose sins are again piling up just as in days of Noah!

Unbelief, however, will not prevent the inevitable. God, however, wants all to be given the chance of mercy but who will listen?

Nevertheless the offer of mercy will still come.

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Chapter Four

The Future Judgments of God

Having considered the past judgments of God we now turn to the Bible to discover what events have yet to unfold before Jesus returns to set up His Kingdom upon the earth, after which God's final judgment of all His creation will come.

The Judgments to Come

We will consider the coming judgments in their chronological order and we begin with the judgment of our present world system.

Just as God was forced to destroy the old world order when men decided to build a city and tower to reach up to the heavens, mankind today is again seeking to unify the nations in a single purpose whilst denying the existence of Almighty God in whom they live and move and have their being.

Just as God declared of mankind when He destroyed the Tower of Babel, that "nothing which they purpose to do will be impossible for them," (Genesis 10:6) so it is now that men are devising ever more amazing schemes. In his bid to be the means of his own salvation men even have their sights set on colonising other planets!

Coming, therefore, the Bible tells us, is the destruction of the world system as we know it in order to prevent the new world order that mankind is wanting to create. The plan for a new world order is already far advanced in its building, one that denies God and acts as if mankind is the author of his own

destiny, just as it was in the time when men built the first city of Babel.

This coming destruction of the present world order is not the end of the world, but only the end of the world system as we know it, and it is not carried out directly by God, but will be carried out by the last Empire that Daniel was shown and prophesied would arise before Jesus returns to establish His Kingdom upon the earth.

The Coming Beast With Ten Horns - the Last World Empire

In the days of Israel's banishment into the land of Babylon following their rebellion against God, God spoke to the prophet, Daniel through dreams and visions about the kingdoms that would arise upon the earth. Daniel was shown a vision of four great beasts that would arise on the earth before "one like the Son of Man" would come from heaven to set up an everlasting Kingdom, (see Daniel 7:13-14) a Kingdom that "the saints would possess for ever, for all ages to come". (Daniel 7:18)

Bible scholars interpret the first beast as being the Empire of Babylon where Daniel and his fellow Jews were in exile.

History tells us that the second empire that arose after the Babylonian Empire was the Medo-Persian Empire, the empire that subsequently replaced Babylon as the major empire upon the earth in Daniel's lifetime.

Replacing Medo-Persia, The Empire of Greece was the next to arise as the foremost empire on the earth.

Exactly as Daniel was shown, these prophecies have proved to be true, as our history books show.

But Daniel was shown that there would be a final world empire, another beast, a dreadful and terrifying beast with iron teeth, one having ten horns that would be replaced by the Kingdom of God upon the earth. (see Daniel 7)

Bible scholars have speculated as to the identity of this fourth empire that the prophecies and visions of Daniel spoke about.

History would suggest to many that this was the Roman Empire, the empire that followed Greece, but as this empire declined it is supposed that this empire must be reestablished for it to be the fourth empire that is ruling upon the earth at the very end of the age.

The Fourth Empire Like No Other

The Revelation of Jesus Christ, the last book in the Bible, also speaks of this final beast, describing it as “having ten horns and seven heads,” (see Revelation 13:1-6) a beast given its power by a great dragon, described also as “the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who will deceive the whole world.” (Revelation 12: 7-8)

Having been given its power and great authority by Satan, the whole earth will be amazed and follow after this beast, worshipping the dragon because he gives his power to the beast.

Worshipping the beast, men will say, “Who is like the beast, and who is able to wage war with him.” (see Revelation 13:3-4)

The Harlot that Rides the Beast

The Revelation tells of a woman sitting upon this beast, a harlot described as being “clothed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a gold cup full of abominations, and of the unclean things of her immorality, and on her forehead a name was written, a mystery, ‘Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots and of the abominations of the earth.’” (Revelation 17:4-5)

In this vision that the apostle John was shown on the isle of Patmos, this woman was “drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the witnesses of Jesus.” (Revelation 17:6)

This ‘revelation’ that was shown to John, tells us that the beast with ten horns will “hate the Harlot and will make her desolate”, her demise being described in scripture as “making her naked, eating up her flesh and burning her up with fire,” suggesting total destruction. (see Revelation 17:16)

The Destruction of the Present World System

Although this beast, with the ten horns, are empowered by Satan himself, the Bible says that “God has put it in their hearts to execute His purpose, by having a common purpose,” to destroy the Harlot! (Revelation 17:17) This is the destined judgment of God upon the present world system!

So it is that the Bible speaks of the destruction of the Harlot, a Harlot that is given the name, “Babylon the great,” the name of that city of old, the city where mankind decided to build a tower reaching up to heaven, and where men thought they could be as God.

The Harlot is described as having “become a dwelling place of demons, and a prison of every unclean and hateful bird, for all the nations have drunk of the wine of her passion, of her immorality, and the kings of the earth have committed immorality with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich by the wealth of her sensuality.” (Revelation 18:2-3)

This describes her sorry state before her final judgment, a judgment, carried out by this beast with ten horns, permitted because it is “**the Lord God who judges her.**” (see Revelation 18:8a)

Sudden Destruction

This judgment will come suddenly, we are told, for “in one day her plagues will come, pestilence and mourning and famine.” (Revelation 18:8b) Then the kings of the earth will lament over her, and the merchants of the earth *will* weep and mourn over her, because no one buys their cargoes any more, cargoes of gold and silver, and precious stones and pearls, fine linen and purple and silk and scarlet, and every kind of citron wood, and every article of ivory, and every article made from very costly wood and bronze and iron and marble, and cinnamon and spice and incense and perfume and frankincense, and wine and olive oil and fine flour, wheat and cattle and sheep, and cargoes of horses and chariots and slaves and human lives. The fruit you long for has gone from you, and all things that were luxurious and splendid have passed away from you and men will no longer find them. The merchants of these things, who became rich from her, will stand at a distance because of the fear of her torment, weeping and mourning, saying, ‘Woe, woe, the great city, she who was clothed in fine linen and purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls; for in one hour such great wealth has been laid waste!’ And every

shipmaster and every passenger and sailor, and as many as make their living by the sea, stood at a distance, because of the fear of her torment... for in one hour such great wealth has been laid waste!" (Revelation 18:9-17)

The World Economy to Change

The judgment of the Harlot, we see, will change the economy of the world completely. When this happens **"no one shall be able to buy or sell except the one who has the mark, the name of the beast, or the number of his name."** (Revelation 13:17)

The rise of the final beast empire and the man who heads up this empire, will bring about a change politically, economically and religiously, "and all who dwell on the earth will worship him, everyone whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life." (Revelation 13:8)

The beast will make war with those "who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus," (Revelation 12:17) for it "is given to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them", and to him is given "authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation." (Revelation 13:17)

It is the saints who hold to the testimony of Jesus - the true church who are the body of Christ on earth - who will preach the good news of the Kingdom of God in the whole world at this time, as a witness to all the nations before the end of the age comes and God finally pours out His wrath in the final judgment of this age against evil and wickedness.

A Multitude Will Be Saved

Not all will succumb to this dreadful beast, for many will be saved in this time of great tribulation, “a great multitude which no one could count”, we are told, “from every nation, and tribes, and peoples, and tongues,” these being “the ones who come out of the great tribulation” who are afterwards seen in heaven. (Revelation 7:9 and 14)

Physical death is not the end our being. In the Revelation that the apostle, John, saw, “the souls of those who had been beheaded because of the testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and those who had not worshipped the beast or his image, and had not received upon their foreheads and upon their hand”, these being raised from the dead, coming to life and reigning with Christ for a thousand years. (see Revelation 20:4)

What is described is a time of the greatest of all tribulations since ever there was a nation upon the earth. It is the final battle of this age between God and Satan, exposing the wickedness of mens hearts, but also the love of God shed abroad in the hearts of His people, His true church, who “love not their lives, even unto death” so as to preach the good news of eternal life to enable this multitude to be saved. (see Revelation 12:11)

In God’s mercy all on the earth will be given the opportunity to believe and so be saved from the wrath of God which is still to come!

Mankind Turning Away from God Again

So it is, the Bible forewarns us that the last generation of this age will display wickedness and evil just as he did in days of old, the days of Noah and Lot. The Bible describes this battle

between good and evil, between Satan and Almighty God, as being more terrible than has ever occurred before. Such is the growing wickedness and rebellion against God that we now see in the world, that this suggests that time is short!

Satan, we need to realise, has deceived mankind from the very beginning, and Satan continues to turn mankind away from his Creator, tempting and deceiving men to act wickedly, and justifying themselves by calling 'evil', 'good'.

The heart of mankind can once more be likened to when men built the tower of Babel, thinking that he, himself, is the author of his own salvation, so denying God. Ignorant of God's loving purposes, men are again joining together to try to save themselves from what they believe could come upon the planet in foolish ignorance of God's sovereignty.

Deceived and having their minds blinded by Satan, false prophets may come in the guise of wise and kindly old men, or young innocents concerned for the future of the earth, but these are the voices of deception. The worlds leaders, motivated by mammon and power join in the deception as mankind once more joins together in unison, believing what is in essence a lie orchestrated by the master of deception, Satan, his plan designed to lead all to destruction.

The Sins of Mankind

In the days in which we live, as men consider what is good, no account is being taken of the fact that men are lovers of self, that immorality abounds, aborting babies by the million, innocent bloodshed defiling the world as never before. Discarding God's holy standard, men legalise their illicit unions in the name of love that is in essence a love of self. With the loss of millions of lives

to sexually transmitted diseases, children are left as orphans, and poverty increases. Men even seek death, falsely thinking this to be a way of escape from their condition.

With violence increasing within society, violence sees nation turning against nation and kingdom against kingdom, with man turning against his fellow man in wars, conflicts and bloodshed. In various parts of the world whole societies are being destroyed with armies raping defenceless women and destroying all in their wake. As society crumbles murder and violence are seen in our towns and cities, as once more mankind's wickedness increases.

In the growing demise God is not silent, however. God is shaking the heavens and the earth and through this speaking to all mankind. But who can hear?

God is Shaking the Heavens and the Earth

More pertinent today than when it was first written, the writer of the letter to the Hebrews prophesied of God speaking through the shaking He brings; “**See to it you do not refuse Him who is speaking**, for if they did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, much less will they escape who turn away from Him who warns them from heaven.” (Hebrews 12:2)

Referring to God's past judgments the letter-writer to the Hebrews says, “And His voice shook the earth then, but now He has promised saying, ‘**Yet once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heaven.**’” (Hebrews 12:26)

In explanation of this prophecy, first spoken by the prophet Haggai, (see Haggai 2:6) “This expression, ‘Yet once more’ denotes the removal of those things that can be shaken, as of

created things, in order that those things that cannot be shaken may remain.” (Hebrews 12:27) **The one sure thing that cannot be shaken being the Kingdom of God.**

Speaking to those who know Jesus as their King, the writer to the Hebrews concludes, “Therefore, since we receive a Kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe, **for our God is a consuming fire!**” (Hebrews 12:28)

Deceived, mankind has considered the earth is in danger from global warming only to find it being shaken by colder weather. Changing the name of this concern from ‘Global Warming’ to ‘Climate Change’, to account for the anomaly, the seasons continue as God promised they would. God has promised, “While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.” (Genesis 8:22) Despite major earthquakes and volcanic eruptions men still do not turn back to their Creator who is speaking to all creation, our creation which is groaning and suffering the pangs of childbirth. (see Romans 8:20-22)

A New World Order

Spoken of for decades, the concept of a global plan for a One World Government of mankind has appeared to be a goal of many. There is now a call for a Global ‘Reset’ of the economic system of the world, a scheme that is far advanced and increasingly spoken of. Just as when men built the tower of Babel, mankind discusses plans to save himself with no reference to God or His commands!

This so called “New World Order”, linking the political, economic and religious agendas of mankind, we can see figured in the Bible as the ‘Harlot’, or ‘Mystery Babylon’. (see Revelation 17)

This spirit of the end of the age entices mankind into self gratification just like any prostitute. Feminine by nature, this spirit of harlotry empowers all that is outside God’s ordained order between male and female and denies that the earth is ultimately the Lord’s. (see Psalm 24:1)

So it is, as this conflict between Satan and Almighty God reaches ever nearer to its climax, in the foreknowledge of God, and in His permissive will, a judgment is coming from this final empire of this age, spoken of from antiquity, that will destroy the world system as we know it - the fourth beast that Daniel was shown.

Knowing When Events Will Unfold

Prophecy of scripture, the apostle Peter explained, is not “a matter of ones own interpretation for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.” (see 2 Peter 1:20-21) It has been calculated that over 26% of the Bible is prophecy. Much of scripture speaks of what is yet to happen, God explaining what is yet to come in His plan and purpose.

Jesus, by way of explanation, told us that just as we can forecast fair weather because the evening sky is red, so we ought to be able to discern the signs of the times by comparing scripture with what we see unfolding. (see Matthew 16:2-3)

Jesus told us to learn from the parable of the fig tree, explaining that “when its shoots become tender, and puts forth its leaves,

we know that summer is near,” so in the same way, Jesus continued, “When you see all these things” - referring to all the events that He said would unfold before His return - “recognise that *the Son of Man* is near; at the door.” (Matthew 24:32-33 and see Matthew 24:3-30)

Jesus explained that the day of His return is known only to the Father, but Jesus taught that although we might not know the day or the hour of His return, we can know the season when He will be at the very door. (see Matthew 24:33) It is for all to consider the signs of the times that are now unfolding, signs that would suggest this end-time season is soon to be upon us, signs becoming clearer each day through events now unfolding in the world, for those with eyes to see.

A Spiritual Battle

Just as the Bible tells us of these future events, it also describes the effects of the spiritual battle that accompany these times. The Bible describes this battle as bringing great tribulation caused by Satan having great wrath because he knows his time is short, (see Revelation 12:12) This time of great tribulation is not caused by God’s anger being poured out upon the earth. This will follow when the Wrath of God is poured out on this last wicked generation of this age, before Jesus returns to the earth and sets His feet upon the Mount of Olives. (see Zechariah 14:4)

Jesus said that before the day of God’s wrath being poured out **“this gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in the whole world as a witness to all the nations and then the end - of *this age* - will come.”** (see Matthew 24:14)

This will be the last ministry of the true church before Jesus returns in the sky to gather His elect from ‘the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other.’ (see Matthew 24: 31)

Jesus placed this preaching of the gospel as taking place during this time of “great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until *then*, nor ever shall.” (see Matthew 24:15-22)

Although men presently seek for peace without reference to God, there will be no peace until the Prince of Peace comes.

The Abomination of Desolation

Jesus taught that after the events He described as “birth pangs” to His disciples, (see Matthew 24:4-12) there would be seen “the abomination of desolation which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place.” (Matthew 24:15)

Jesus warned that those who are in Judea would have to immediately flee to the mountains, “for then there will be a great tribulation such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world, nor ever shall.” (Matthew 24:21)

Daniel also prophesied of this time, telling of “great distress coming, such as has never occurred since there was a nation.” (Daniel 12:1)

Jesus Is Still Lord

Let us be in no doubt, these coming events cannot take place outside the permissive will of God. It is the Lamb who was slain, who will break the seven seals that will usher in the last seven years of this age that see not only this time of great tribulation,

but also God pouring His wrath on those who will not respond to the gospel of the Kingdom. (see Revelation 6:1) The breaking of these seven seals will allow great tribulation to come upon the earth whilst the offer of salvation goes forth to its four corners. Then the wrath of God will follow. (see Revelation 6-9)

The Breaking of the Seals

As Jesus begins to break the seals we see increasing troubles, as the beast arises, going out “conquering and to conquer”. (Revelation 6:1-2) Peace is taken away from the earth as men are in conflict with each other. (see Revelation 6:3-4)

As a result, food will be in short supply as the cost of food increases. (see Revelation 6:5-6) A quarter of the population of the earth is killed by the sword, famine, pestilence and wild beasts,” such is the horror of this time. (see Revelation 6:7-8)

During this time the saints - the true church - are persecuted and killed for the testimony they maintain, but all will be given opportunity to repent. (see Revelation 6:9-11)

Mercy Always Precedes Judgment

When considering the judgments of God we might misunderstand God’s great love for mankind. In His love, God has always offered men the means of life and restoration to that condition into which He first made mankind. And in His mercy God has always had the way of righteousness declared by His prophets before bringing His judgments necessary to preserve righteousness upon the earth. And He will do so again.

As this time of tribulation comes to an end Jesus returns to catch away His elect, coming on the clouds, not to the earth

itself. The sky will split apart, “like a scroll when it is rolled up”, as great fear falls upon those remaining upon the earth, for the great day of God’s wrath has come. (see Revelation 6:12-17)

It is Time To Repent for Judgment is Coming

The day of salvation is always ‘Today’. Paul preached in his sermon on Mars Hill, “**God is now declaring to men that all everywhere should repent because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead.**” (Acts 17:30-31)

This is the urgency of this message.

In the next Chapter we will consider this day when the world will be judged in righteousness.

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Chapter Five

Immediately after the tribulation of those days when Satan's anger brings affliction upon the whole earth, the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky as Jesus returns to catch away His chosen ones, His elect. (see Matthew 24:29-31, 1 Corinthians 15:52 and 1 Thessalonians 4:17)

This is the time when the sixth seal is broken, when the sky *will* split apart like a scroll when it is rolled up.” (see Revelation 6:12-13) “Then the kings of the earth and the great men and the commanders, and the rich and the strong, and every slave and free man, *will hide* themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains; and they **will* say to the mountains and to the rocks, ‘Fall on us and hide us from the presence of Him who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, for the great day of their wrath has come, and who is able to stand?’” (Revelation 6:15-17)

The Day of God's Wrath

The Old Testament prophets speak of this day that follows the appearance of Christ as a day of judgment - the day of God's wrath - a day that has been preceded by the offer of mercy and salvation to those who will listen and respond, whilst Satan has done all he can to bring death to many.

The Old Testament prophets also refer to this coming judgment as the **Day of the Lord**, judgment that will come once more as destruction from the Almighty, as He has done before. (see Joel 1:15)

As in times past, men will be without excuse as they bring down upon themselves this righteous judgment of God, God in His

mercy having provided the means of escape through the offer of salvation brought forth through the true church that is the body of Christ, who have preached the gospel of the Kingdom to the whole earth, demonstrating its reality, offering eternal life and a part in His Kingdom.

The Apostle Peter's Warning

The apostle Peter wrote about God's coming judgments, pointing out that if God "did not spare the ancient world, but preserved Noah, a preacher of righteousness, with seven others, when He brought the a flood upon the world of the ungodly," He will again rescue the righteous. Peter pointed out that "if He condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to destruction by reducing them to ashes, making them an example to those who would live ungodly thereafter, and if He rescued righteous Lot, oppressed by the sensual conduct of unprincipled men, for by what he saw and heard among them, he felt his righteous soul tormented day after day with their lawless deeds, then **the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from temptation and to keep the unrighteous under punishment for the day of judgment.**" (2 Peter 2:5-9)

So it is we see that Peter describes the reason that causes God to bring about His awesome judgments, (see 2 Peter 2:10-22) going on to explain God is not slow in His dealings that have seen events unfold for thousands of years. Peter writes, "the Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward *us* **not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.**" (2 Peter 3:8-9)

In God's plan the earth will be cleansed from unrighteousness and wickedness before Jesus returns to set up His Kingdom on earth for one thousand years.

The First Resurrection

Jesus' return to catch away His saints, the true church alive at His coming, is also the day of the first resurrection, the resurrection of all the righteous who have ever lived from the foundation of the world. These are raised and caught up with all those who are alive and remain, and who are Christ's at His appearing, all changed in the twinkling of an eye, putting on immortality.

The great and awesome Day of the Lord has come!

The Day of the Lord

Along with the other Old Testament prophets, the prophet Zephaniah prophesied of the day of the LORD saying, "A day of wrath is that day. A day of trouble and distress. A day of destruction and desolation. A day of darkness and gloom. A day of clouds and thick darkness. A day of trumpet and battle cry against the fortified cities and the high corner towers. I will bring distress on men so that they will walk like the blind because they have sinned against the Lord; And their blood will be poured out like dust and their flesh like dung. Neither their silver nor their gold will be able to deliver them on the day of the Lord's wrath; And all the earth will be devoured In the fire of His jealousy. (Zephaniah 1:15-18a)

Jesus Coming as King

The severity of the wrath of God is perhaps beyond our imagination, almost too horrific to contemplate. Described in the seven trumpet judgments and the seven bowls of wrath, that the breaking of the seventh seal will bring, a third of the earth and a third of the trees are burnt up. A third of the creatures in the sea

will die and a third of mankind will be killed as those on the earth kill one another. (see Revelation 8)

Despite these awesome events men still do not repent of all their sin and wickedness, such is their hardness of heart. (see Revelation 9:20-21)

As this time of wrath comes to its end, the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies will assemble to make war with Christ as He returns to the earth with His saints. Christ, the Lamb of God, the Lord of lords and King of kings, will smite with the breath of His mouth all those who gather to make war against Him and His army, as He comes to reign upon the earth for a thousand years. (see Revelation 19:11-21)

The Survivors of God's Wrath

Amazingly some will survive this time time of wrath.. Those who are members of the twelve tribes of Israel, and who have been sealed on their foreheads before this awesome judgment is poured out, (see Revelation 7:1-8) and those deemed acceptable to remain upon the earth who will populate the earth during the reign of Jesus for one thousand years. These are figured as the sheep, who Jesus will separate from the goats, as He sits on His throne to judge all the nations gathered before Him when He comes in the clouds to catch away His elect. (see Matthew 25:31-46)

Satan Bound For One Thousand Years

With the Beast seized and cast into the lake of fire, Satan is bound for a thousand years, placed in chains during Christ's millennial reign on earth, before the second resurrection, the third and final judgment to come when all who have ever lived

will be raised and come before the Great White Throne of God, the final judgment that will see death itself and the place of the dead, Hades, banished to the lake of fire. Everyone who has ever lived will be judged for their deeds. (see Revelation 19::20-21 and 20:11-13)

The Consummation of the Ages

A new heaven and earth then lies ahead as God restores mankind to the state he was in, in the the very beginning. At the centre of the new earth will be the city of God that comes down out of heaven from God, (see Revelation 21:10) a city that God has prepared for all who have ever desired better than our fallen world could ever give. (see Hebrews 11:16)

So it is recorded for us, the words of Him who sits on the throne, the Alpha and the Omega, **“Let the one who does wrong, still do wrong; and the one who is filthy, still be filthy; and let the one who is righteous, still practice righteousness; and the one who is holy, still keep himself holy.”**

“Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.”

“Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter by the gates into the city.” (Revelation 22:11-12)

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Chapter Six

“The Lord our God made a breach upon us, because we sought him not after the due order.” (1 Chronicles 15:13)

Having considered the past and future judgments of God, so awesome that it is with great difficulty we contemplate such awesome events, we now turn back to our consideration of the commandments of God and God’s ordained order for all mankind.

God's Due Order

The above scripture from the Book of Chronicles refers to the occasion when King David intended to have the ark of the Covenant brought into Jerusalem, that God’s presence might be established there. Having succeeded Saul as King of Israel, David wished to lead his people back into a right relationship with God.

In their ignorance, the people of Israel, along with the priests and Levites, placed the ark on a cart, and with great rejoicing they made their way towards Jerusalem. Along the way, the oxen pulling the cart nearly overturned the cart, and a man named, Uzza, put his hand out to steady the cart.

What happened next brought a fear of God upon David for Uzza died instantly as a result of his action.

The Holiness of Almighty God

Our lack of understanding of the holiness of God can lead us to treat with contempt the reason for His commands that are necessary for us to approach Him in our fallen state.

For many who read this account of Uzza's death without proper understanding, they might misconstrue the significance of this grave mistake of disobeying God's commands that goes right to the heart of the consequences that bring God's judgments.

When God gave instructions regarding the construction of the ark, over which God's very presence would be manifest in the tabernacle, He also gave instructions as regards to how the ark was to be transported from place to place by the consecrated priests. God warned that no layman should touch the ark for if they did they would surely die. (see Exodus 25:10-22, Exodus 36-37 and Numbers 4:15) Such is the holiness of our holy God that cannot be tainted by sin.

The chasm that exists between God and evil is such that at its very heart is the chasm between life and death, the chasm that man created when he first disobeyed God who warned him not to eat of the knowledge of good and evil. (see Genesis 2:17)

The Blessing for Obedience

King David learnt that fateful day that he needed to understand the requirements of God's commandments better, and for a while the ark remained where it was.

Israel, as a nation, had wandered far from the commandments that God had set before them so that they could commune with Himself, laws that would bring blessing for obedience and inevitably penalties for disobedience. (see Leviticus 26)

King David had a humble heart that wished to learn, and as he took instruction from God David was able to lead Israel to defeat the Philistines who came searching for David as they had heard

he had been made king. (see 1 Chronicles 14:8-17) In these events we see mirrored the struggle between good and evil that exists to this day and our need to hear God's instruction.

What David discovered from the Law, David passed on Israel; "No one is to carry the ark of God but the Levites, for the LORD chose them to carry the ark of God." (1 Chronicles 15:2) And so "they carried the ark of God on their shoulders, with poles thereon, as Moses had commanded according to the word of the Lord." (see Exodus 25:14 and Numbers 4:15) In this way the ark was brought safely to the city of David at Jerusalem and placed in a tabernacle - the tabernacle of David - where God's presence would be established for a season before a temple was built. (see 1 Chronicles 16:1)

Having Humility of Heart

Through Jesus Christ, the Light of the world, God has given all men the ability to hear His voice. God has poured out His Spirit on all mankind. (see Acts 2:17) Jesus Christ, the living Word, being "the true light which coming into the world, enlightens every man." (John 1:9) Although God is speaking, however, the ability to hear depends on our humility of heart. Those who lean on their own understanding, ignoring the voice of God, cannot hear.

"The Lord does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart," the Bible tells us. (1 Samuel 16:7) So it is that men are "darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart." (Ephesians 4:18)

And through his deceptions and lies the god of this world, Satan, whether it is realised or not, “has blinded the eyes of the unbelieving, that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who s the image of God.” (2 Corinthians 4:4)

This is the sad reality of mankind’s complaint, caused by mankind’s fall from the state in which he was first created, and exacerbated by Satan’s continued deception.

God’s Order In the Beginning

In the beginning, as we have seen, God made man male and female, making man from the dust of the ground and forming the woman from the rib of the first man. The Bible says that “God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created him.” (Genesis 1:27)

In the account of the creation of man, scripture tells us that ”the LORD God formed man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living being.” (Genesis 2:7)

“Then the LORD God said, ‘It is not good for man to be alone, I will make him a helper suitable for him.’” (Genesis 2:18)

“So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept. Then He took one of his ribs and closed the flesh at that place, and the LORD God fashioned into a woman the rib that He had taken from the man, and brought her to the man.” (Genesis 2:21-22) **So it was that God created man male and female.** Just two genders.

“The man said of the woman, ‘This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh. She shall be called Ishshah (Woman)

because she was taken out of Ish (man). **For this cause a man shall leave his father and his mother and the two shall become one flesh.**” (Genesis 2:23-24) The institution of marriage is built upon this very fact, a fact and scripture referred to by Jesus.

We have seen that when Jesus was questioned by the Pharisees about divorce, (see Matthew 19:3-6) He explained regarding those who God had joined together; “Consequently they are no more two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate.” (Matthew 19:6)

So it is that we see God’s due order from the very beginning of creation, despite mankind not always following this ordinance, and even denying its necessity or relevance.

God’s Order Restated for the Church

This due order for mankind was restated by the apostle Paul when he exhorted the church in Corinth to be “imitators of *himself* as he was an imitator of Christ.” Paul stated that he wanted them to understand that “**Christ is the Head of every man (husband) and the husband is the head of a wife (woman), and God is the Head of Christ.**” (1 Corinthians 11:1-3)

In this context Paul is speaking about husbands and wives, not more generally about men and women. In Greek there is no separate word for ‘man’ and ‘husband’ or for ‘woman’ and ‘wife’, as there is in English. It is the context that makes the meaning clear. Obviously a man is not the head of every woman. Thus in other languages, as in Greek in which the New Testament was written, ‘my husband’ becomes ‘my man’ and ‘my wife’ becomes ‘my woman’.

Paul explains in his letter to the church in Ephesus that **“the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ is also Head of the church.”** (Ephesians 5:23) Paul is describing the relationship between the husband and the wife as being a reflection of Christ’s relationship to His church, and calls it ‘a mystery’. (see Ephesians 4:32)

The word ‘mystery’ as used in the New Testament does not denote the mysterious, as we would commonly use the word in English, but that which is outside our natural understanding which requires Divine revelation for it to be made known.

It is in this context that Paul tells us that **we should “be subject to one another, and that the wife should be subject to her own husband just as the husband loves his wife as Christ also loved the church, giving Himself up for her.”** Paul explains, **“husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies, for he who loves his own wife in this way loves himself. And a husband should love and cherish his wife just as Christ also does the church, and the wife should respect her own husband.”** (Ephesians 5:21-33)

By explanation Paul says that “man does not originate from woman, but woman from man,” for “man was not created for woman but woman for man’s sake.” (1 Corinthians 11:8)

Paul points out, however, **“in the Lord, neither is woman independent of man, nor is man independent of woman,” for the woman originates from man, so also the man has his birth through the woman, and all things originate from God.”** (1 Corinthians 11:11-12)

God's Order Reflected in Nature

Paul suggests that even in nature, a woman's long hair is "a glory to her", just as for a man with long hair, "it is a dishonour to him," (1 Corinthians 11:14-15) showing the distinction in gender according to creation. Many women, trying to emulate men, will therefore cut their hair short as a result.

Being male and female we see, therefore, is God's due order for mankind in the natural realm, not all men being over all women, but God's order in the family that extends to children being obedient to their parents as confirmed in the Ten Commandments, a commandment that comes with a promise; "Honour your father and your mother, that your days may live long on the earth." (Ephesians 6:2-3 and Exodus 20:12)

The Spiritual Contrasted with the Natural

However, in Christ, in the spiritual realm, Paul explained to the churches in Galatia, "You are all sons of God," (Galatians 3:26) both male and female being counted as 'sons' for there is "**neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.**" (Galatians 3:28) Unlike animals, mankind being made in the image of God, is also a spiritual being, and as such does not cease to exist after natural death.

Jesus explained that "in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are they given in marriage, but all are like angels in heaven." (Matthew 22:30)

For the naturally minded man, the reality of our eternal state perhaps remains of no consideration, or considered falsely with false expectations of life after death. In ignorance many hope their present deeds and lifestyle has no consequence and do not

recognise the effect of sin in their lives. Speaking of the future hope available in Christ, Paul describes the life to come as an “eternal weight of glory” that far outweighs any present temporal tribulation we might suffer, which he describes as “momentary light affliction” by comparison. For many this future reality and hope remains hidden. (see 2 Corinthians 4:17)

Of the Kingdom of God, in its present reality as well as in its future reality, we have seen that Paul clearly asserts that this reality shall not be inherited by the “unrighteous”, neither “fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals” amongst others. (see 1 Corinthians 6:9)

This statement of fact is not meant as condemnation, for only God can judge, but a call for any to come back into God’s due order and to seek God’s righteousness.

And as we have seen, that this is possible, is confirmed by Paul as he concludes, “such were some of you, but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the Name of the the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God.” (1 Corinthians 6:11) This is the wonderful good news the Bible speaks of, not condemnation, God desiring that all men might be saved from their fallen position.

Morality is Built On God’s Order

Just as morality is built on God’s ordained order, we see that immorality is built upon men straying from this ordained order of God, His due order that includes mankind being both male and female and them being joined together as one flesh, and through this God-ordained union, children can be nurtured.

Such is the attack upon morality that immorality is no longer considered to be immoral but described as 'love'. With God's standard as found in the Bible, being discounted, man's moral compass is lost and they act however they wish 'because everyone does it!'

The Bible describes sexual union outside of marriage as "**fornication**". This word is the English translation of the Greek word, "porneia" from which the word 'pornography' is derived, and describes illicit sexual relations from God's point of view.

An **adulterer** is one who has unlawful sexual relations with the spouse of another. (See Luke 18:11, 1 Corinthians 6:9 and Hebrews 13:4) It is the Greek word, "moichos" and is used in this way in the natural sense, but also used in scripture in the spiritual sense of one who is in breach of their relationship with God through idolatry.

To leave no room for doubt, the Law given by God to Moses details the sins of the flesh and the Bible tells of God's dealings with Israel who strayed from His commands and suffered the consequence of turning from Him. Thus mankind is left with no excuse.

Choose Life

The reality the Bible tells about our future will reflect our choice of heeding to God's word, or not. And our choices will directly impact our eternal future also.

God gave Israel of old this same choice. The Covenant God made with Israel also reflected the choice God has given to mankind from the very beginning, a choice which came with a warning of the consequences of taking no heed of it. The very

same choice remains for each one of us today. It has never changed.

Israel's Choice

Having told Israel of the blessings that awaited them if they obeyed God's commands, and warned them of the consequences for disobeying them, Moses concluded, **"See, I set before you today life and prosperity, death and destruction. For I command you today to love the Lord your God, to walk in obedience to him, and to keep his commands, decrees and laws; then you will live and increase, and the Lord your God will bless you in the land you are entering to possess."**

"But if your heart turns away and you are not obedient, and if you are drawn away to bow down to other gods and worship them, I declare to you this day that you will certainly be destroyed. You will not live long in the land you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess.

"This day I call the heavens and the earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live and that you may love the Lord your God, listen to His voice, and hold fast to Him. For the Lord is your life, and He will give you many years in the land He swore to give to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob." (Deuteronomy 30:15-20)

For Israel of old, the Covenant God made with them impacted on their life on earth but reflected the eternal consequences that all mankind has to face.

For Israel their choice affected the actions of their earthly enemies, and their protection from them, but it also affected whether they would be able to enter the 'Promised Land', a choice that speaks of mankind's eternal life.

A Choice in Favour of Good over Evil

Understanding the reality of evil and the death and destruction this brings, gives understanding to God's love that desires life for His creation in union with Himself.

The Tempter and the Temptation

From the beginning Satan has deceived man into thinking that evil is not how it really is. Appealing to 'self' that he himself succumbed to, Satan suggests evil is good and deceives men into choosing that which will lead them to death. What might at first give pleasure must have its inevitable result for evil is evil!

The story this booklet tells is about salvation. It is the story of a loving God paying the price Himself to save those who otherwise are already lost. And this is the sad reality, for unless God's offer of life is received only eternal death can result.

The Reality of Salvation

This reality of salvation does not come by some intellectual agreement but only by a new life imparted to the one who through faith believes and subsequently received the new life that only the Lord can impart.

Man's decision at the beginning had a spiritual effect. The offer of salvation must therefore reverse it and reinstate spiritual life.

The Wisdom of God

The apostle Paul wrote, “The preaching of the cross is foolishness to those who perish; but unto us who are saved, it is the power of God.” (1 Corinthians 1:18)

Jesus died on the cross to pay the penalty for the sin of all mankind. Paul said, “Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you thinks that he is wise in this age, he must become foolish, so that he may become wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness before God.” (1 Corinthians 3:18-19a)

God is Not Only Wanting Our Good Deeds

The wisdom of this world might conclude that God is just wanting our good deeds. Indeed, many think their lives are sufficiently good to secure their eternal future. All false religions offer ways of life - deeds considered to be good - to secure this very thing, and their adherents do not realise that these are all invented by Satan to deceive and prevent them finding new life.

The Law that God gave to Moses for Israel was not able in itself to give new life for they could never fully comply with the Law. Offerings and sacrifices had to be carried out to cover their continuing fault.

Addressing this reality, Moses writes this about the righteousness that is by the law: “The person who does these things will live by them.” But Paul explains that God’s righteousness comes, not by deeds but by faith, saying, “**If you declare with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.** For it is with your heart that you believe and are made righteous, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved.” (Romans 10:5,9-10)

This is Eternal Life

Jesus said, "You must be born again.", explaining to Nicodemus who came to Him at night seeking questions about God, that this new birth can only come by the Spirit. (see John 3:3-8) Nicodemus responded, "How can this be?" And Jesus replied, **"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the Name of God's one and only Son. This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but people loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that their deeds will be exposed. But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what they have done has been done in the sight of God."** (John 3:16-21)

Not Condemnation

These words of Jesus make this message clear. The commands of God do not bring condemnation, for man is already condemned. God is offering the free gift of His grace by which those who receive it might have eternal life. May we choose life.

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