

DISPENSATIONALISM AND THE RAPTURE

Article from Advent Messenger

<http://adventmessenger.org/israel-hamas-and-the-seven-year-deception-are-you-deceived/>

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Overview:

Seventh-day Adventists historically have never accepted “the Rapture” doctrine for a number of reasons, the otherwise great expectation of a great many Evangelical Christians today, nor have Adventists subscribed to the “Dispensational” theory or doctrine, and rightly so, as held by mainstream Christians today. These two popular doctrines today go together, both supporting each other. That teaching in mainstream Christian circles today goes back well over 150 years. The “rapture” as it is called, is the soon expectation of a secret “taking away” of ‘believers’, a supernatural event of all rapture believing Christians suddenly disappearing in a “secret” invisible going up – gone in an instant of basically all Evangelical Christians by Jesus Himself to protect them from the terrible events of the “time of trouble” soon to break upon the whole Earth. None of the historical THREE major Message-Movements of Adventism since 1844 (Rev. 3:12, quoted in Early Writings 15) have accepted this long-time dispensational teaching so prevalent today. The reasons for this rejection by Adventists in general are presented in the following article. There is a serious counter reformation history behind this teaching which was originally established by Rome. Most Christians today are not aware of the history behind Dispensationalism or the Rapture, where these ideas originated, and most of all – WHY they originated. The Advent Messenger article presented here presents an important general history considering recent events in the State of Israel as of October 2023.

In the article, the idea of political “Zionism” is raised and the founding of the State of Israel as well as the current state of war between Zionism and Hamas, or the Palestinian cause seeking complete political independence.

The two main take-aways from this this discussion are this:

1. Although Dispensationalism is not Scriptural, such as the false application of the Daniel 8:14 prophecy of the 2300 days, but also in the New Testament, the doctrine of the “Rapture”, proponents of this doctrine, do use NT verses in at least one of the Gospel Books, the verse that reads “one taken and another left” (Luke 17), definitely NOT the second VISIBLE coming of Jesus, and in the two Books of Thessalonians that is, in reality, a counterfeit application for another event, or another major truth facing the

Remnant Church. Adventists believe that the Rapture verses are simply a false application without any true application, just leaving the discussion there. Some SDAs believe those verses just simply foretell Jesus second coming. There is a true application to these rapture verses applied in the overall judgment message that the SDA Church has proclaimed since 1844. These verses cannot point to Christ's second coming, the context does not support it, but rather pointing to a special act of judgment or separation of the Firstfruit harvest class as shown in the Matthew 13 parable.

2. In the article below, the topic of historical political "Zionism" in Adventism is treated as an offhand point, as an unimportant historical development, or even simply dismissed as without any Scriptural basis. This is not true. SDA theology has missed the boat, as it were, on this historical topic as applied to latter-day events. The further expansion on this topic includes or should be expanded to modern day Messianic Zionism to some extent, those Jews who believe in "Jesus" (Yahshua) and even "Christian Zionism", which is a real belief and a key topic in many Christians circles today. One example of several latter-day verses in the last few books of the Old Testament mentions a "[O] nation not desired", what we would certainly see as the "Jewish" nation that arose out of World War 2 in 1948 is a major historical event. Even though political Zionism was not a religious movement, its culmination as the Jewish State came out of necessity and Jewish survival for the WW2 Holocaust survivors. It was a matter of personal and collective survival of the European Jewish community survivors of the Holocaust. Most of the citizens of the original State of Israel were secular Jews, not religious, however, always carrying with them the spirit of "Ethical Monotheism" personally, in some form, the original truth of Scripture since the time of Moses. The primary verses in question here, while apparently for the "latter days" as related in prophecy for our time, are found in the latter OT Book of Zephaniah, which state:

2:1 Gather yourselves together, yea, gather together, O nation not desired;

2:2 Before the decree bring forth, [before] the day pass as the chaff, before the fierce anger of the LORD come upon you, before the day of the LORD'S anger come upon you.

2:3 Seek ye the LORD, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the LORD'S anger.

2:4 For Gaza shall be forsaken, and Ashkelon a desolation: they shall drive out Ashdod at the noon day, and Ekron shall be rooted up.

Even the historical land of the ancient Philistines is mentioned in verse 4, the Gaza strip in southern Israel, at the border of Egypt. This is a present truth topic for today. A great war is foretold in the modern-day Holy Land which we can see beginning today. Although the following article has controversial aspects, in light of the modern application of the Zephaniah prophecy, not mentioned in the article, one thing is for certain, the prophecy of a “people not desired”, who “gather together” in the latter days must refer to the identifiable Jews of today, who did make a mass migration back to their ancestral home before, during and after World War 2, declared in May of 1948 as the State of Israel, to escape their European persecutors, the attempted mass extermination of the whole Jewish race by Hitler and the Nazis, while the USA and Europe effectively turned a blind eye to the horrific events of those events of the late 1930s and the first half of the 1940s during and at the start of WW2. Yet, the USA, in 1948, was the first nation to diplomatically recognize the new State of Israel in the Land of Promise given to Abraham and his descendants, through the lineage of Isaac, still relevant today. The Jordanian Arabs of the Trans Jordan region of the Holy Land, as described in the Balfour declaration, never migrated to Palestine/Israel, later the State of Israel, but were inhabitants of the general region throughout the centuries since the time of Abraham, recognized in the Balfour Declaration of 1917 as having homeland rights in modern “Palestine”. These inhabitants are historically called “Arabs”, of the many tribes that constituted ancient and modern Arabia, not as “Palestinians”, which was a term not used until long after the 1948 war of independence of Israel, actually since 1967. This was so even as there were always a significant number of Jewish inhabitants living in the area called “Palestine” for the last 2000 years and were the majority population since Old Testament times, up until the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple in 70 A.D. by the Roman army, led by the Roman General Titus, long before political Zionism developed in the late 1800s.

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[My comments are added in red to this article for clarification, correction or supportive history of the State of Israel, otherwise known as “Palestine” historically for the last 2000 years since the time of the Roman occupation of the Jewish homeland, as so named by the

Roman army procurator of that time. The Roman name attached to the Land of Promise, as it is called today after the destruction of the Temple in 70 A.D. was meant to be an insult to the exiled Jewish population of the time. The geographical name stuck since then. TL Caldwell]

Israel, Hamas, and the Seven Year Deception: **Are you Deceived?**

November 9, 2023

By Pastor Aubrey Duncan

A Most Solemn Warning

In one of His last discourses with His disciples before His crucifixion, Jesus Christ prophesied of the events that would take place just prior to His return to planet earth. When asked by His closest companions what would be the signs of His return, the Savior responded, "Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many" (Matthew 24:4-5).

He proceeded to talk about all the signs that we find so easy to identify with: pestilences, disturbances in the natural elements, and strife between tribes and nations. But, as if He wanted us to focus on the greatest sign of all, He reiterated: "And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many" (Matthew 24:11). He reemphasized: "For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect" (Matthew 24:24).

The apostle Paul, confirming the Savior's admonitions, warned: "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works" (2 Corinthians 11:13-15). As certainly as was foretold by the Messiah and corroborated by His servant Paul, deception is rampant in the world.

Deception, by its very nature, is dangerous and deadly. Simply put, deception is sincerely believing something to be true when, in fact, it is patently false. Such is the popular notion of the Seven-Year Tribulation, which occurs after the Secret Rapture.

Neither of these concepts can be found anywhere in the Holy Scriptures. But where did they come from, and why are they so popular? The answer to those questions is that, sadly, an overwhelming majority of people who identify as Christians do not study the [Bible for themselves](#). Rather, they parrot the ideas of popular charismatic teachers who themselves have a perverse understanding of God's plan of redemption and the Holy Bible, which reveals it.

Their understanding of and reaction to the current Middle East conflict between Israel and Palestine reveals that. That situation is more political than prophetic. To best understand the Mideast crisis and the Seven Year Tribulation Theory to which it is connected, one must go primarily to recent secular history rather than heeding popular prophetic utterances.

Examining the Root

Zionism, the Jewish [nationalist movement](#), has had as its goal the creation and support of a Jewish national state in Palestine, the ancient homeland of the Hebrews. Sources abound, often conflicting, on the origin of the Zionists. Some argue that it originated in eastern and central Europe in the latter part of the 19th century. Others claim that Zionists are the descendants of the [Khazars](#). These warring people ruled an empire encompassing sections of modern European Russia, Southern Ukraine, Crimea, and Kazakhstan until it was overcome by Russian and Byzantine forces in the latter part of the tenth century.

What is not in doubt, however, is the Zionists' belief, which has indoctrinated almost the entire world with the idea that Zionism is a continuation of the Biblical narrative of the Hebrew nation and religion. Their fervent claim is that they are descended from the historical region of Palestine, where one of the hills of ancient Jerusalem was called Zion. Their determined plan is to reclaim it at any cost necessary.

Whatever their origin, Zionists settled in Europe, primarily Austria, England, and Germany, with a significant number in the United States. As a movement, the Zionists managed to accumulate enormous wealth and powerful political influence wherever they settled. Their astute financial acumen is felt primarily in the areas of banking and the media around the world.

Then came the First World War. England, France, and Russia were fighting against Germany and its confederates. The Zionist presence was significant in all those regions. England and its allies were losing to Germany and its allies. The United States was not

originally involved, holding a policy of neutrality. The crisis provided the platform for the advancement of the prevailing Zionist narrative on the Israeli-Palestine conflict.

The now very well established and financially powerful Zionists persuaded, some say blackmailed, the United States under the presidency of [Wilson Woodrow](#) to enter the war on the side of England. America intervened, and as a consequence, the British prevailed. The Zionists now demanded their payback from the English for having America come to their rescue. The price: support for the establishment of the Nation of Israel in the land of Palestine. England's acquiescence came in the form of the [Balfour Declaration on November 2nd, 1917](#).

This document was a public statement issued by the British government announcing its support for the establishment of a "national home for the Jewish people" in Palestine, then an Ottoman region with a small minority Jewish population. The declaration was contained in a letter from the United Kingdom's Foreign Secretary Arthur Balfour to [Lord Rothschild](#), a leader of the British Zionist community, for transmission to the [Zionist Federation of Great Britain and Ireland](#). It's the basis upon which the Zionists were patriated to Palestine, igniting the bloody confrontation that started in 1948 and continues today with Israel and Hamas.

Connecting Grand Ambitions with Deceptive Biblical Theories

The Seven Year Tribulation Theory is intricately entwined with this Zionists' narrative of having established themselves as the custodians of the ancient Hebrew faith and rightful owners of the land of Palestine; it has the right to reclaim that territory, even to the extent of genocide of its current occupants. Its source is not the Bible, as so many are deceived into believing, but the same from which all false teachings of Christendom originate: the Roman Catholic Church.

[Comment : Now here we have a bit of a historical problem by the author of the article as far as point of view in a modern perception in the use of the words "even to the extent of genocide of its current occupants" – or, the Palestinians of today. The term "occupants", as a modern term, is a controversial term with both positive and negative connotations in present day media reporting, which I will not discuss in my response here. The Palestinians of the Land of Israel demonstrated last October 2023 a clear intent to commit "genocide" which was done to a Jewish/Israeli city in the south of Israel and at the Kibbutz farms that the attackers invaded that horrific day of unprovoked massacre on civilian Israelis. One point of correction that is needful to clarify here first is that the current geographical conflict in the area generally regarded as "Palestine" is legally and diplomatically called by the name of Israel since 1948, the modern State of Israel, not by the antiquated Roman term of "Palestine".

'War is war' at anytime in history. When the very platform of the "PA", the Palestinian Authority government, located in Gaza City, FROM ITS INCEPTION under Yasser Arafat, has been their prime objective in their written political or military platform, clearly affirming their intentions toward the "State of Israel" (the Jews) in their ongoing popular slogan "FROM THE RIVER (Jordan) TO THE SEA (Mediterranean Sea) Palestine will be free" -- meaning to push the Jews out of their historical homeland "into the sea", an act of genocide in an original context in modern times, which has been well publicized since the founding of the State of Israel in 1948.

That Palestinian slogan was recently repeated by a member of the House of Representatives of the U.S. Congress, Reshida Tlaib, at a political rally in support of the Palestinian cause in recent weeks (October/November 2023) after the Palestinian attack on the Israeli settlements just outside of Gaza City. She is Palestinian by birth. The U.S. congress voted a congressional "censure" on Rep. Tlaib shortly after her statement to the American press. A great deal can be said about this popular perception in the mainstream press today. This act of "censure" was in respect of the European Jewish Holocaust of the first half of the 1940s by the Nazi Germans but not restricted to just the German Holocaust but committed in many of the countries of eastern Europe and Russia well before, and during, World War 2.

The Israeli Army, the IDF (Israel Defense Forces) in their policy does not target the Palestinian people, that is, non-combatants or general population in their military actions presently which is not publicized in the mainstream press. It has always been the standard practice in IDF operations to MINIMIZE casualties, a fact of war nevertheless, in their defensive operations when they plan to drop destroy a building in Gaza where they have scattered warning leaflets in and around the building to be targeted well before the time of the event, but also to ring all the cell phones of that immediate block or immediate area to warn the occupants to GET OUT, also as a final warning to the people of the target area the IDF Airforce will detonate an airburst warning well above the building, to shake the building sufficiently to warn any occupants inside to evacuate immediately. The above statement by the author of the article is politically charged and very slanted in fact and in spirit. As Adventists, they should know better, to know the history and know the wartime policy of the Israel Defense Forces. The terrible reality of war is that innocent victims are killed. War is ugly business, and like the saying goes, "war is hell". The IDF does not target civilians. However, Hamas operatives ALWAYS target Jewish civilians, as well as Americans.

The whole paragraph presents a historical bent, a misperception, by the Adventist writer, of just who the true owners of the Land of Promise are today, presumably, which is not helpful and very regrettable since Adventists have long claimed to be

“people of the Book”, which for the most part they are, but often times they like to ignore or dismiss certain passages and the direct latter-day prophecy meaning which begins in the Book of Genesis, the promises made to Abraham AND his descendants.

Here is the full quote again:

“The Seven Year Tribulation Theory is intricately entwined with this Zionists’ narrative of having established themselves as the custodians of the ancient Hebrew faith and rightful owners of the land of Palestine; it has the right to reclaim that territory, even to the extent of genocide of its current occupants. Its source is not the Bible, as so many are deceived into believing, but the same from which all false teachings of Christendom originate: the Roman Catholic Church.”

True, there is a major historical or rather international diplomatic controversy in modern times since early in the last century, the 1900s, over who belongs in the land called “Palestine”, the land promised to Abraham and his descendants in Genesis 26, and although the “Palestinian” Arabs have occupied some areas of the Land of Israel for a very long time, but certainly NOT all of the Land of Israel, promised to the Twelve Tribes historically, we who uphold the Judeo-Christian belief are confronted with the legal covenantal realities first presented in the Book of Genesis, but in many other OT passages as well. It is as if the whole world wants to ignore the events of World War 2 and the Holocaust and think to give the “Palestinian” cause a great diplomatic and military advantage over the Jewish state – splitting the State of Israel in half, so they, the Palestinian Arabs, can finally finish what the Nazis of the 1940s started. It really does come down to this end, as if the State of Israel is required to cut in half what the original Balfour Doctrine had determined for there to be a viable Jewish State, with, most of all, DEFENSABLE borders. Since 1948 the Palestinians have been offered a direct two state solution as was described in the 1917 Balfour Declaration and since 1967, two times in peace talks with Israel, but the Palestinians refused. This is a matter of historical record. The current “peace plan”- two state solution, does not address these realities. Adventists as well do not know, nor care to know, nor seek to know, the prophetic plan for the end times for that land which is clearly revealed in many of the latter Old Testament books, covered in part by the two additional studies at the end of the AM article here.

A final key point of fact here, that the Jews, and all of “modern Israel”, spiritual or literal, for that matter all Twelve Tribes as described in the Book of Revelation chapter 7, still includes the “lost ten tribes” scattered abroad since the Assyrian Captivity in 722 B.C., those Ten Tribes who never returned from captivity. We must be reminded that the seed of Abraham through the lineage of Isaac **have the Scriptural charter to the Promised Land, a Grant Deed by the written Word of Yahshua (Jesus) Himself in**

the Book of Genesis chapter 15 verse 18, and confirmed in Deuteronomy 1:7 as well as Joshua chapter 1:1-4, as well as other OT verses, given as “the Everlasting Covenant” by the Creator Himself to Abraham AND his descendants through Isaac. These Scripture verses constitute legal title from a Book that is over 3,500 years old. No legal title of the Land of Promise was ever given to the descendants of Ishmael or to the Arab people, but a promise was made to them that they would be a “great nation” – Genesis 17:20 who would nevertheless inhabit all the surrounding nations of the near east. Whoever the descendants of Abraham are today, the True Israel of YHVH, they will be under the Blood of the Covenant, in the Messiah – The Branch, The Son of the Most High Father. This group of Modern Israel will be proclaiming the Three Angels Messages, EVEN all SIX Angels brought to view in Revelation 14, the whole chapter. In the current war in the State of Israel, there will be no winners, whatever the outcome, both sides loose. There is no real diplomatic solution to be seen or enacted. There is written in Old Testament prophecies that there will be a great war to purge the Land. That time, apparently, is at hand.

The remainder of this historical expose is nevertheless accurate overall.

Continuing with the article:

[The Protestant Reformation](#) dealt a severe blow to the power of the Roman Papacy. In response, the Council of Trent was commissioned and deliberated between 1545 and 1563. High on the agenda was the need to counter the inroads of this God-inspired, Bible-believing movement. As part of the church’s Counter-Reformation efforts, the Jesuit Order was established in 1540 with the main objective of stamping out the light that was being brought to the princes and masses of Europe by the Protestant Reformers, such as Luther, Calvin, Knox, and others.

Two outstanding Jesuit scholars were charged with negating the claim of the Reformers that the papacy is the antichrist power of Bible prophecy. One of them, Louis de Alcazar, developed the doctrine of Preterism, postulating that the prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation, which undeniably identify the Roman Papacy as the antichrist, be relegated to the first century of the Christian era. The other Jesuit scholar, Francisco Ribera, generated the concept of Futurism, an idea placing the coming antichrist as someone arriving on the world stage sometime in the distant, unknown future. Together, Preterism and Futurism, in the minds of their adherents, shielded the papacy from the clear revelation of God’s word which reveals its role in [salvation history](#). Futurism, unlike its twin sister Preterism, has captivated the minds of most of Christendom and continues to accomplish its purpose of taking the focus away from the Biblically revealed anti-Christian entity of the Apocalypse. Ribera’s clever misapplication of the final verses of the ninth chapter of the book of Daniel remains

the foundational teaching of end-time prophecies in most Christian schools. Therefore, it has become the belief of the masses, who, not studying the Bible for themselves, are instructed by the graduates of those institutions.

Following Ribera, numerous Roman Catholic scholars continued to advance this teaching. Cardinal Robert Bellarmine of Rome further embellished and advanced this heresy during the late 1580s and early 1590s. It soon became widespread throughout the Catholic empire and finally found its way into the psyche of Christendom world-wide, particularly here in America.

The famous Texas attorney turned theologian, Cyrus Ingersoll Scofield, was largely responsible for spreading the false doctrine of Futurism across the United States through his very popular [Scofield Study Bible](#). He inherited the doctrine of the Seven Year Tribulation from John Nelson Darby, an influential English pastor who visited the United States and taught Futurism across America in the mid- to late 1800's. Then came Hal Lindsey and his popular fictitious account of end-time events entitled 'The Late Great Planet Earth'. The sensational and commercially successful 'Left Behind' books and movies have adopted this abomination and taken it to an unbelievably high level of acceptance and reverence among Christians, leaders, and laymen alike. These vehicles, rather than sharing Bible truth, are serving to bring the 'separated brethren' back to the fold of the 'mother church.' Their effects are evident in the [papal-inspired ecumenical movement](#).

The Seven Year Tribulation Theory, the bedrock of futurism, centers on the last four verses of the ninth chapter of the book of Daniel, where the prophet foretold the prophetic ministry and death of Jesus Christ. Daniel also prophesied of the anti-Christian power that would be in existence from the days of the early church until Jesus' second coming. He writes:

"Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy. Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to

cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate" (Daniel 9:24-27).

It is almost universally agreed that the seventy weeks mentioned in this passage of scripture (verse 24) are referring to 490 years based on the year/day principle found throughout the Bible (Numbers 14:34, Ezekiel 4:6). It is also generally agreed, and correctly so, that Jesus began His Messianic ministry at the end of the 69th week (483 years) of the prophecy (verse 25).

The Seven Year Tribulation Theory can better be called the Seven Year Deception, for it takes the final 70th week (seven years) of Daniel's prophecy and places it sometime in the unknown future (Daniel 9:26). Nowhere else in the Holy Writ, nor in the corridors of human history, nor in the vast expanse of space and limitless time does such a concept exist. It is patently unrealistic and irrational to take a specified period of time, cut out a portion of it, and then reconnect it at some later date. That's like saying I am 50 years old today but will not be 51 until some undetermined time in the future. **The reckoning of time has always been continuous.**

Expansive Old Ladies' Fables

The Seven Year Deception has been enhanced to include the Secret Rapture, a Millennium of Peace on Earth, a rebuilt temple in Jerusalem, the reinstatement of animal sacrifices, and the antichrist making a covenant for seven years with the Jews, then breaking it after 3 ½ years. No such revelations are given in the word of Almighty God.

Jesus educates us on the nature of His return to planet earth: "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other" (Matthew 24:30-31).

Paul confirms: "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17). There is no secret rapture here. **When was the last time you heard the sound of a secret trumpet?**

This brings us to the falsity of a millennium of peace on earth. We just saw very clearly what happens when Jesus returns. He will raise the righteous dead and, together with the transformed righteous living, transport them to His heavenly courts. John the Revelator elaborates: "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years" (Revelation 20:4). Clearly, not on earth but in heaven.

So much for the righteous. But what about the wicked? Paul and John both explain: "And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming...But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection" (2 Thessalonians 2:8, Revelation 20:5).

How plainer can it be? And how can so many be deceived by this plain teaching of the Scriptures? Jesus knew well what He was warning against. The righteous are in heaven; the wicked are destroyed. The earth will be desolate for 1000 years.

The apostle Paul rightly identifies the antichrist and his work in the temple of God. It's not a physical temple rebuilt in Jerusalem, but rather the body of Christ, His church: "And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people" (2 Corinthians 6:16).

He further warns: "Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God" (2 Thessalonians 2:3, 4). For those that are awaiting the secret rapture, a millennium of peace on earth, and a rebuilt Jewish temple in Jerusalem, Paul has a warning: "And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness" (2 Thessalonians 2:10-12).

While the Seven Year Deception proponents are looking for the antichrist to make and break some covenant with the Jews in their rebuilt temple, he is dwelling comfortably

amongst and quite easily deceiving those claiming to be God's people. He is demanding that he be worshipped as God. He claims to change God's holy Sabbath day to Sunday. He's offering salvation in sin. He's denying that Jesus is the Only Mediator between God and man. He opposes the one and only sacrifice for the human race. Innumerable souls are all deceived—the very thing that Jesus so passionately warned about. But you don't have to be deceived.

The Truth

Jesus confirmed the covenant exactly as Daniel prophesied (Daniel 9:27, quoted above). In order for a covenant to be confirmed, it must have been in place already. The covenant referred to by Daniel is not some agreement made between the Jewish nation and a yet-to-appear antichrist. Rather, Daniel is referring to the everlasting covenant made by the God of Creation after our first parents fell into sin. It was His promise that a Redeemer would be sent to rescue, ransom, and restore fallen humanity back to their Creator (Genesis 3:15). This was the message of the ancient sacrificial system that Jesus' forerunner John the Baptist recognized: "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29).

Jesus declared in His inaugural sermon: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised" (Luke 4:18). Mark affirmed: "Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel" (Mark 1:14–15). God's covenant was confirmed.

Messiah did come as Daniel prophesied, ministered for 3 ½ years (middle of the week), and was indeed cut off (Daniel 9:27). His ministry, though on behalf of the entire human race, was almost exclusive to the Jewish nation at first. He instructed His disciples as He sent them out on their missionary journey: "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel (Matthew 10:5–6). Not until some 3 ½ years later (last half of the 70th week, Daniel 9:27), with the stoning of Stephen, the Jews' rejection of Jesus as their Messiah, and the conversion of the apostle Paul, did the gospel begin to spread to the Gentiles (Acts 13:46). The seventy weeks (490 years, Daniel 9:24) determined upon the Jewish nation were

thus completed. God's plan was to take His message of human redemption to the entire world through the Jewish nation (Isaiah 49:6).

Proponents of the Seven Year Deception look at the unfolding world events and then try to apply them to their preconceived notions of the Apocalypse. Over the years, their yet-to-appear anti-Christ has shifted from former British Prime Minister Tony Blair to Kofi Anan, former General Secretary of the United Nations, to former George W. Bush, and then they thought they found the perfect candidate, former President Barak Obama. Only God knows who will be next.

This false theory, which mentions nothing about Jesus, the pillar and chief personality of end-time prophecy, constitutes the foundation upon which religious leaders and their followers support Israel's genocide of the Palestinians. Regardless of the abundant financial, mighty military, propagandist media, and fervent evangelical support, acts of genocidal proportions will not lead to the liberation of Israel, the rebuilding of their temple, or a millennium of peace on earth. More likely than not, it will engender devastation like we have never seen. In such a moment, the true antichrist will be revealed as he offers his solution for the end of the crisis and world peace. This will be an infinitely greater deception than the Seven-Year Deception.

God's covenant with the fallen race is all about Jesus Christ and not about the restoration of a temple in Jerusalem. We must be looking for New Jerusalem and not at a political movement that promises to rebuild a temple in the land of Palestine: "And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away" (Revelation 21:2-4).

[Don't be deceived.](#)

[A couple of studies for this time on this topic:](#)

BUILD THE CITIES, COMFORT ZION, CHOOSE JERUSALEM

In our last Sabbath's study we learned that the prophecy of Zechariah is applicable to two peoples at two different times: first to the Jews while they were returning from Babylon to Jerusalem, and second to those who in the time of the end are to come out of all nations. (Rev. 7:9; 18:4). We also learned that the revival and reformation which took place in Zechariah's day, is a type of a revival and reformation that is to take place in our day, and that the people's returning anciently from Babylon is a type of the people's returning in the latter day Babylon (Rev. 18:4). {1TG11: 3.1}

Let us turn to-- {1TG11: 3.2}

Zech. 1:1 -- "In the eighth month, in the second year of Darius, came the Word of the Lord unto Zechariah...."

Here we are told that the prophet Zechariah was called to his prophetic office in the second year of Darius, the king. Why was he called in that particular year? -- For the answer, we shall turn to Ezra. "Then ceased the work of the house of God which is at Jerusalem. So it ceased unto the second year of the reign of Darius king of Persia." Ezra 4:24. {1TG11: 3.3}

Obviously Zechariah was called at that particular time because the work of the temple at Jerusalem was curtailed and abandoned. The Lord, therefore, through the prophets Zechariah and Haggai sent a message of rebuke to the builders and asked them to quickly resume building. {1TG11: 4.1}

Zech. 1:2-6 -- "The Lord hath been sore displeased with your fathers. Therefore say thou unto them, Thus saith the Lord of hosts; Turn ye unto Me, saith the Lord of hosts, and I will turn unto you, saith the Lord of hosts. Be ye not as your fathers, unto whom the former prophets have cried, saying, Thus saith the Lord of hosts; Turn ye now from your evil ways, and from your evil doings: but they did not hear, nor hearken unto Me, saith the Lord. Your fathers, where are they? and the prophets, do they live for ever? But My words and My statutes, which I commanded My servants the prophets, did they not take hold of your fathers? and they returned and said, Like as the Lord of hosts thought to do unto us, according to our ways, and according to our doings, so hath He dealt with us."

The builders were first reminded that they were in Babylon because their fathers had not obeyed the Word of the Lord that came to them through His prophets; that for their sins the temple and their kingdom were destroyed. The

builders were plainly told that if their project was ever to prosper, they would have to avoid the course pursued by their fathers, and give special heed to the prophets Zechariah and Haggai. The builders promised that they would not walk in the ways of their fathers. {1TG11: 4.2}

It was in the eighth month that Zechariah delivered to them this reformatory message. The Jews' hearty acceptance of it prepared the way for another message and it came within the space of three months. Here it is: {1TG11: 4.3}

Zech. 1:7, 8 -- "Upon the four and twentieth day of the eleventh month, which is the month Sebat, in the second year of Darius, came the Word of the Lord unto Zechariah, the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo the prophet, saying, I saw by night, and behold a man riding upon a red horse, and he stood among the myrtle trees that were in the bottom; and behind him were there red horses, speckled, and white."

For the interpretation of this symbolism we shall read the prophet's interrogation and the angel's explanation of it in {1TG11: 5.1}

Zech. 1:9-11 -- "Then said I, O my Lord, what are these? And the angel that talked with me said unto me, I will shew thee what these be. And the man that stood among the myrtle trees answered and said, These are they whom the Lord hath sent to walk to and fro through the earth. And they answered the angel of the Lord that stood among the myrtle trees, and said, We have walked to and fro through the earth, and, behold, all the earth sitteth still, and is at rest."

Since the horses are sent by the Lord to walk to and fro through the earth, and since they have the ability to speak, all this very obviously reveals that the horses are symbolical of the Lord's messengers, of those whom He sends to the nations. {1TG11: 5.2}

The red, speckled, and white -- several species of horses, depict a group of servants of varied races and nationalities. The horses, therefore, cannot be taken to symbolize either the Hebrew servants of Zechariah's day, or those of Christ's day because the Lord's servants in those days were all of one race -- Jews, not red, speckled, and white. Having fulfilled their mission, the horses reported that they "have walked to and fro through the earth" and that in spite of it the earth is sitting still and at rest -- doing nothing about it. {1TG11: 5.3}

Since it is a known fact that in Zechariah's day the message bearers were all Jews (a people of one race and one nation), the symbolism is positively applicable to a day in which God appoints evangelists of various races and nationalities, whom He send to and fro through the earth -- to all nations. {1TG11: 6.1}

All these positive identifications clearly point out that the horses represent the First-day Adventists who arose between the years 1833 and 1844 and who then fulfilled this symbolical prophecy by proclaiming the second advent of Christ to every Christian mission, world over, but having confused the cleansing of the sanctuary (Dan. 8:14) -- the purification of the church, the work of the Judgment, harvest, by separating the wheat from the tares (Matt. 13:30), the good fish from the bad (Matt. 13:47, 48), the wise virgins from the foolish (Matt. 25:1-12), the sheep from the goats (Matt. 25:32), the wedding garment dressed guests from those who had not the garment (Matt. 22:2-13). This Judicial work commences first among the dead (book work only, of course -- Dan. 7:10), then among the living (actual bodily separation -- cleansing -- Ezek. 9). {1TG11: 6.2}

As Daniel's prophecy of chapter eight, namely the 2300 days, pointed out that the Judgment work was to commence in 1844 A.D. but as it was mistakenly understood that the world was to come to an end instead, they were greatly disappointed when the set date came and nothing happened. So it was that as the set date approached they returned from their mission fields with full confidence that they had finished their mission, -- that they had "walked to and fro through the earth" -- and that there was time no longer, that the world was then to end. {1TG11: 6.3}

Concerning the scope of their work The Great Controversy, page 368, has this to say: "The writings of Miller and his associates were carried to distant lands. Wherever missionaries had penetrated in all the world, were sent the glad tidings of Christ's speedy return. Far and wide spread the message of the everlasting gospel, 'Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come.'" {1TG11: 7.1}

Thus it was that the horses (messengers) thought their work was finished, but the angel who really knew the facts, and saw God's people still in captivity, still away from their homeland, while the heathen were at ease, pleaded for action: {1TG11: 7.2}

Zech. 1:12 -- "Then the angel of the Lord answered and said, O Lord of hosts, how long wilt Thou not have mercy on Jerusalem and on the cities of Judah, against which Thou hast had indignation these threescore and ten years?"

The prophet Jeremiah's prediction that the Jews were to spend seventy years in Babylonian captivity had ended although they were still in Babylon. But since this symbolical prophecy finds its fulfillment in our day instead of in Zechariah's day, the angel's plea for "mercy on Jerusalem and on the cities of Judah," therefore, finds its direct application in this day. There is, however, this parallel: The time of the Babylonian captivity overlapped some years the time of returning to Jerusalem, in like manner John's prediction that the church should return to the vineyard after having spent 1260 years in the wilderness (in the lands of the Gentiles) (Rev. 12:6), had ended and even overlapped since the year 1798 and there was no sign as yet for her returning. And as the Denomination was in no condition to accept additional Truth, the results are that the church is still in the wilderness concerning which Inspiration said, "If the people of God had gone to work as they should have gone to work right after the Minneapolis meeting in 1888, the world could have been warned in two years and the Lord would have come." -- General Conference Bulletin, 1892. {1TG11: 7.3}

This message now positively declares that her wilderness sojourn is about to end and that soon will she stand on Mt. Zion with the Lamb (Rev. 14:1). From this analytical point of view is again seen that the angel's plea for mercy on Jerusalem and the cities of Judah is applicable directly to the people in our day, and only indirectly to the people in Zechariah's day. {1TG11: 8.1}

Zech. 1:13, 14 -- "And the Lord answered the angel that talked with me with good words and comfortable words. So the angel that communed with me said unto me, Cry thou, saying, Thus saith the Lord of hosts; I am jealous for Jerusalem and for Zion with a great jealousy."

Rather than saying, "Zion...shall be plowed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps" -- Mic. 3:12, the Lord expressed His great jealousy for them, and commanded His servants to "cry yet" and say: {1TG11: 8.2}

Zech. 1:16, 17 -- "Therefore thus saith the Lord; I am returned to Jerusalem with mercies: My house shall be built in it, saith the Lord of hosts, and a line shall be stretched forth upon Jerusalem. Cry yet, saying, Thus saith the Lord of hosts; My

cities through prosperity shall yet be spread abroad; and the Lord shall yet comfort Zion, and shall yet choose Jerusalem."

Since the light on these prophecies is now shining on our pathway for the first time since Zechariah wrote them, and since this message is now being broadcasted throughout Laodicea, the Truth that the Lord, at long last, has returned (visited) with mercies is very obvious. {1TG11: 9.1}

After the disappointment in the year 1844 the messengers of Truth in Christ were told to "cry yet" (continue to preach) and say "Thus saith the Lord of hosts; My cities through prosperity shall yet be spread abroad; and the Lord shall yet comfort Zion, and shall yet choose Jerusalem." {1TG11: 9.2}

So it was that just as soon as the set date in 1844 passed and the peoples' hopes failed, the Lord encouraged them by giving to Sister White a vision of the ingathering of the first fruits, the 144,000, the first to get to Mount Zion and there to stand with the Lamb (Rev. 14:1), the comfort of Zion and of Jerusalem. So they started out again with a set goal to gather the 144,000 guileless servants of God, those who were to be used for the ingathering of the second fruits, the innumerable multitude out of all nations (Rev. 7:9). But as time went on rather than working with God the Denomination backslid by unbelief in the Spirit of Prophecy (Testimonies, Vol. 5, pg. 217) and thus lost sight of the Truth that was yet to be unfolded, and the which is now brought to light. {1TG11: 9.3}

So it was that as soon as the disappointment in 1844 came, which is represented by the little book's turning bitter after having been eaten, the angel declared: "Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings." Rev. 10:10, 11. The second advent movement was then reorganized and the title Seventh-day Adventists given to it. Thus the Lord charged His messengers to "cry yet," to proclaim again, to continue preaching the additional light -- the Judgment for the Dead. The cleansing of the sanctuary (Dan. 8:14), the purification of it by blotting out from the books (Dan. 7:10) the names of those who are found not eligible to come up in the first resurrection, the resurrection of the holy ones (Rev. 20:5, 6). {1TG11: 10.1}

Here is seen that Inspiration does not at once lighten our path clear to the end, but that It does so step by step; that God's Truth is progressive; that we can never

really say we have all the Truth to carry us clear through to the Pearly Gates.
{1TG11: 10.2}

As to the means which are to make possible the return of God's people to their own land, we shall read-- {1TG11: 10.3}

Zech. 1:18, 19 -- "Then lifted I up mine eyes, and saw, and behold four horns. And I said unto the angel that talked with me, What be these? And he answered me, These are the horns which have scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem."

Anciently the kingdom of Israel occupied the northern portion of the promised land, and the kingdom of Judah occupied the southern portion of it. The former was scattered by the kings of Assyria and the latter by the king of Babylon. Those who returned to Jerusalem in the days of Zechariah were from the kingdom of Judah, the Jews, but as the kingdom of Israel was assimilated by the nations, it consequently lost its racial and national identity. The powers that scattered both Judah and Israel are, you note, symbolized by the four horns. {1TG11: 10.4}

Zech. 1:20, 21 -- "And the Lord shewed me four carpenters. Then said I, What come these to do? And he spake, saying, These are the horns which have scattered Judah, so that no man did lift up his head: but these are come to fray them, to cast out the horns of the Gentiles, which lifted up their horn over the land of Judah to scatter it."

Here the same powers which scattered Judah and Israel are again seen, not as horns, but as carpenters; not to scatter God's people, but to build for them, and to cast out the horns (powers) of the Gentiles -- those who rule the land. Plainly, then, on one hand the nations which do not rule Palestine are to arise as "horns" against those who rule it, and on the other hand they are to rise as carpenters for the people of God. Thus will "the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." Lu. 21:24. So, only those who survive the Judgment for the Living, in the house of God (1 Pet. 4:17), those whose names are not blotted out from the Book (Rev. 3:5) will comprise the church, among whom are to be 144,000 sons of Jacob (Rev. 7:3-8), and when Michael stands up then those whose names are left in the Book will be delivered from the "trouble such as never was" (Daniel 12:1). They are "the remnant," the ones who escape alive from the Judgment for the Living in the House of God. Thus the antitypical temple is to be built (Ezekiel chapters 40-43) and the cities are to be spread abroad. {1TG11: 11.1}

Then these guileless servants of God, the first fruits, are to be sent to the nations that have not heard of God's fame (the non-Christian), and they shall declare His glory among the Gentiles and shall bring all their brethren, the second fruits, all that are to be saved, to the house of the Lord (Isa. 66:16, 19, 20), to the purified church of God, where there shall be sin no more and no chance taking of being hit by the plagues (Rev. 18:4). {1TG11: 12.1}

Blind to this Truth, to the Judgment for the Living, "the great and dreadful day of the Lord," the day in which all things are to be restored, the Laodiceans are seen to be in a sad deception. Read Testimonies, Vol. 3, pg. 253 and Testimonies, Vol. 5, pg. 217. Unless they awake to their plight they will be found wanting and spued out. {1TG11: 12.2}

The Jews became blinded because they closed their ears to the prophets and took no heed to what they said. The angel of the Laodicean church today is boastingly saying, "I have need neither of prophets nor of more Truth" -- rejecting the prophecies and the messages even before they come, though he well knows that the message of the Judgment for the Dead is not the last. The Judgment for the Living is the last. {1TG11: 12.3}

The book of Zechariah in its entirety has always been a closed book, but as its deep spiritual meaning is now unsealed and clearly brought to the attention of the church, then those who reject it and work against it are doing even worse than the Jews' killing the prophets and the Lord. {1TG11: 12.4}

It is now clearly seen that God's Word lives forever. Man may slay the messengers of God, but they cannot destroy His Word. It is indeed like the mustard seed. Though It be trodden under foot so that It can no more be searched out than can a mustard seed after it is cast into the ground, yet as soon as the Scroll unrolls, It springs out anew. {1TG11: 12.5}

When this message began to unfold, the Laodiceans tried desperately to kill it, yet it still lives on and grows the faster. They are still trying to kill it, but since they were unable to do so when it was as small and as weak as a tiny blade of a mustard seed, how can they do it now since it has grown and borne fruit?

{1TG11: 13.1}

We are therefore not to worry about a possibility of anyone's hurting the work of God. Neither are we to worry about how we are to get to Mount Zion, but are to make sure to be ready to board the chariot of God when the angels cry out, "All aboard!" Let us ever remember that those who once wrecked the ancient kingdom and cast out its people, shall now come to build it up and to cast out the horns of the Gentiles who now rule the land, so even our enemies of yesterday God puts working for us today. {1TG11: 13.2}

KEEPING THE COMMANDMENTS, THE STONY HEART AND THE CARNAL MIND

Our text of Scripture is found in Revelation 22:14, 15. {2TG23: 3.1}

Rev. 22:14, 15 -- "Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie."

Here we see that only those who do His commandments have the right to enter the City. When the work of salvation is finished and the people gathered home, they will be those who will still keep the commandments of God, even after sin is eradicated. Sin nevertheless cannot be eradicated while the law is transgressed, for the transgression of it is sin. (1 John 3:3, 4.) The Commandments of God, you see, are eternal, and only when Christians begin to live the life which the Word of God advocates, will they find themselves living above the law; then only will they be free from transgression. {2TG23: 3.2}

Finally, if the commandments of God are eternal, then they must have always existed. The Sabbath that was made and hallowed in the week of creation, before sin came, is contained in the commandments. And, too, Adam could not have sinned if the commandment, "Thou shalt have no other gods before Me," had not then been in existence. {2TG23: 4.1}

Rom. 7:7 -- "What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet."

Saint Paul's inspired statement places the ten commandments, you see, in the very framework of the Gospel. Without the commandments, he declares, the followers of the Gospel would not know what sin is. {2TG23: 4.2}

Rom. 7:8-10 -- "But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead. For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died. And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death."

Here we see that the law does not save but it condemns; and that without the law there would be no sin. The law did not save Adam and Eve, but it judged them unworthy of the Tree of Life and of a home in Eden. In fact, it sentenced them to death. The law is only a teacher of righteousness. That is all. It is not a saviour. {2TG23: 4.3}

Rom. 7:12-14 -- "Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good. Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful. For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin."

The people who obey a state law think it an excellent statute of liberty, but those who delight in sinning, to them the law is anathema. Any murderer who by law has been sentenced to death, naturally does not delight in the law that sentenced him, nor in the people that executed his sentence. If such a one had his own way, he would abolish the law. All criminals would do away with the law of God, too, for the law is spiritual, and they carnal, sold under sin. {2TG23: 5.1}

What would happen if there were no law in the Kingdom of God, no law against murder and theft, or against envy and jealousy? Who would want to be in the Kingdom even for a time? If such were the case, then, of course, we would be better off in the kingdoms of the world. {2TG23: 5.2}

The Decalogue, moreover, is not only a moral code, but also a physical one, for sin against the law involves the sinner's descendants, too. It visits the "iniquities of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation." Ex. 20:5. {2TG23: 5.3}

Then, too, every descendant of Adam is naturally born in sin, is given to sin:
{2TG23: 5.4}

Rom. 7:15 -- "For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I."

Such being man's lot, the carnal man hates the law of God, and more so because it crosses his will. 2TG23: 6.1}

Rom. 7:16 -- "If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good."

If one abstains from theft, he consents that the law is good and effective, although by nature he might like the idea of stealing. 2TG23: 6.2}

Rom. 7:17-23 -- "Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members."

Here, you see, we are born with the law of sin within us, and so it is absolutely necessary for the law of God to restrain us from sinning. {2TG23: 6.3}

Rom. 7:24, 25 -- "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin."

Yes, God and His law in our minds, which we acquire only by the study of the Word of God are our only hope for victory over the law of sin and the flesh.
{2TG23: 6.4}

Rom. 8:1 -- "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

The moment we accept Christ as our Savior, all of our trespasses against the law are blotted out, and paid for by the death of Christ. Were this not the case we ourselves would have to pay the penalty of death, from which there is no resurrection to eternal life. {2TG23: 7.1}

Rom. 8:2 -- "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

Here the apostle introduces another law, the law of the Spirit of life -- three laws in all: (1) the law of ten commandments, (2) the law of the flesh, (3) the law of the Spirit of life. But this third law, let us remember, is in Christ, and it makes us free from the law of sin and death only if we be in Him. {2TG23: 7.2}

Rom. 8:3-11 -- "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His Own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

"Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you. " {2TG23: 7.3}

It is our privilege to have the same Spirit that was in Christ. In fact, we must have this Spirit if we are to walk in newness of life, and if we are to have a part in the resurrection of the just. {2TG23: 8.1}

From Paul's discourse you see that to be a Christian means to watch every step you make, and to war against your own flesh, lest you willfully fall into the pit from which there is no escape. The Christian, moreover, cannot sin; his righteousness in Christ is absolutely secured, for Christ has paid the penalty for his

past sins. Moreover, if he should accidentally sin again, he has an Advocate to plead his case, even Jesus Christ, the righteous. Thus it is that though a righteous man fall seven times a day, he rises up, still continues the race and finally wins. {2TG23: 8.2}

But suppose that you should have to struggle to keep the commandments of God in the Kingdom of God throughout eternity, should have to struggle as you struggle now? Suppose the law of the flesh should stay with you forever? – What then? Would you then be as anxious as you are now for a place in the Kingdom? God tells us what to expect. {2TG23: 8.3}

Jer. 31:31-34 -- "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which My covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord: but this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put My law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be My people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know Me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."

Here is a promise of a new contract, a new covenant. It is not the kind God made with our predecessors in the day they came up out of Egypt, the day He wrote the commandments on tables of stone and thus to keep them. Instead He makes a new covenant, a covenant to write them on our very hearts. Then every one of us will consequently know Him without having to be taught. {2TG23: 9.1}

Take notice, though, He is not to make a new law, but a new covenant, a new contract for keeping the law. The difference is that rather than His writing the law on tables of stone, He will write it on the fleshly tables of the heart, the seat which the law of sin now occupies. {2TG23: 9.2}

This covenant, you see, is to be made with both the house of Israel and the house of Judah, -- with all God's people. {2TG23: 10.1}

The scripture, remember, does not say that we cannot keep the law while it is written on the tables of stone, but it definitely says that we can, for those who broke the law are reprov'd for so doing. We can, therefore, even now inconveniently keep the commandments though they be still written on stones. For convenience sake most Christians wish the law were abolished, and some make themselves believe that it has been abolished, although the only law that has been abolished is the ceremonial, sacrificial law, the shadow of the Lamb of God. {2TG23: 10.2}

What difference would there be whether the law be written on stone, or on our hearts? -- The experience of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon reveals the answer. {2TG23: 10.3}

Had the king by force been made to live with the cattle, in a stable or in a field, he would have committed suicide if possible. But as soon as God took his human heart away from him, and put the heart of an ox in him, the king was perfectly contented to be with the cattle, and altogether discontented to live in his palace. {2TG23: 10.4}

Were the same thing done to anyone of us, our desires would be the same as the king's. In like manner, when the stony heart is taken away from us, and the heart of flesh with the law of God written on it put in us, we shall then find it altogether too inconvenient to sin, and most delightful to keep the commandments of God. And so you need not fear having to struggle to keep the law of God in the Kingdom, as you do here. You will then be perfectly contented to live a sinless life. In fact you will want to sin no more than you would now want to die. {2TG23: 10.5}

Wonderful indeed! but when may we expect this miracle to take place? To find the answer to this question, we need connect Jeremiah's prophecy with Ezekiel's prophecy of the same event: {2TG23: 11.1}

Jer. 31:8 -- "Behold, I will bring them from the north country, and gather them from the coasts of the earth, and with them the blind and the lame, the woman with child and her that travaileth with child together: a great company shall return thither."

Ezek. 36:24-28 -- "For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land. Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put My Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in My statutes, and ye shall keep My judgments, and do them. And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be My people, and I will be your God."

The records from both prophets clearly point out the time in which this miracle will be performed on the hearts of all God's people. Both prophets make it as clear as can be made, that this change of heart takes place in the Holy Land, Palestine, at the beginning of the kingdom which God promises to set up "in that days of these kings" (Dan. 2:44), not after their days. He moreover says that He will take us from among the heathen and gather us from all countries, and take us into our own land (Ezek. 36:24), the land in which our fathers dwelt (Ezek. 36:28). "Then," at that time, says Inspiration, not before, will He sprinkle clean water upon us, cleanse us from all filthiness, and from all idols. Also, a new heart will He then put in us (Ezek. 36:26). He will give us His Spirit and cause us to comply with His statutes, and to keep His judgments (Ezek. 36:27). Read these scriptures for yourself and see if they say all I am trying to tell you they say. {2TG23: 12.1}

Jer. 31:35-40 -- "Thus saith the Lord, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; The Lord of hosts is His name: if those ordinances depart from before Me, saith the Lord, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before Me for ever. Thus saith the Lord; If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the Lord. Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that the city shall be built to the Lord from the tower of Hananeel unto the gate of the corner. And the measuring line shall yet go forth over against it upon the hill Gareb, and shall compass about to Goath. And the whole valley of the dead bodies, and of the ashes, and all the fields unto the brook of Kidron, unto the corner of the horse gate toward the east, shall be

holy unto the Lord; it shall not be plucked up, nor thrown down any more for ever."

People can believe anything they wish to believe, but we will believe the Bible. I know that this is what the Bible teaches, and that this is God's schedule for these events. And since this is God's program for the cleansing of His people, and for their receiving the new heart, our message becomes exceedingly important to all who wish to be in the Kingdom. We can but put our heart and soul in the work, though, and leave the results to God. If we ever had to be all out for God and none for self, it is now. {2TG23: 13.1}