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MISCELLANEOUS WRITINGS

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If, For The Child Of God

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INTRODUCTION

This is a miscellaneous collection of 8 articles that I have written, along with a revision I did of one of Rudyard Kipling's poem, giving it an emphasis for the child of God. There is really no single theme followed in this collection; hence the name: "Miscellaneous Writings." -- DVM

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01 -- WHY THOSE DOING A GREAT WORK SHOULD NOT COME DOWN

"And I sent messengers unto them, saying, I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down: why should the work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you?" (Nehemiah 6:3).

(1) BECAUSE THE WORK CEASES WHILE TIME FLEES FOREVER AWAY:-- Time taken to fight those who unjustly malign the great worker is often time which temporarily makes "the work cease," and Jesus said in John 9:4 "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work."

(2) BECAUSE "COMING DOWN" MIGHT TAKE ONE TO THE LEVEL OF HIS ACCUSERS:-- Yes, there are times when one should respond: Proverbs 26:5 "Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit." But, there are also times when a response lowers one to the level of his accusers: Proverbs 26:4 "Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest thou also be like unto him."

(3) BECAUSE "COMING DOWN" HIDES THE LIGHT OF THE GOSPEL:-- Matthew 5:14 "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is SET ON AN HILL cannot be hid." Jesus said in Matthew 5:16 "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." One doing a great work on the high hill where God has set him, will hide the light while he or she is taking time to "come down" to debate the validity of what they are doing. Those do sadly err who spend most of their time sounding forth their arguments instead of letting their lights shine by **STANDING STEADFASTLY ON THE HILL WHERE GOD HAS SET THEM**. Paul said of Christians in 2 Corinthians 4:3 "If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost," and will not Christian workers who spend more time debating than they spend time in shining for Christ, be called to give an account for the souls who were lost while they thus hid their light?

(4) BECAUSE "COMING DOWN" LEADS ONE INTO THE ENEMY'S TRAP:-- Sanballot and Tobiah intended to trap and slay Nehemiah, had he fallen for their invitation. They besought him four times to "come down" and meet them, but wise, old Nehemiah did not fall for their trap. If there ever was a day when Christian workers should avoid satan's snares and invitations, it is today. Jesus warned in Matthew 10:16 "Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves." Not all who wish to discuss a matter really want an honest exchange of ideas, but instead want a chance to destroy their target. Mark 12:13 tells us concerning Jesus that "certain of the Pharisees and of the Herodians" were sent to Him "to catch him in his words." A Christian worker who is doing a great work will not be "caught in his words" if he says nothing, but goes on about his business for God.

(5) BECAUSE MUCH REMAINS TO BE DONE:-- Have you ever heard it said, "After all is said and done, there is generally much more said than done!" Well, that is just the way it always turns out when Christians spend countless hours in conventions and debates arguing and passing their "Wherefores" and "Whereases" -- **THERE IS ALWAYS MORE SAID THAN DONE!** St. Paul admonished in 2 Timothy 2:14 "Of these things put them in remembrance, charging them before the Lord that they strive not about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers." When Nehemiah received his invitations to come down, one of the big reasons he refused was because there was still a huge amount of work to do, some of which might never have gotten done had he taken time out for their treacherous invitations. Wisely, he fulfilled the admonition of Ecclesiastes 9:10 "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest." At the close of His

earthly life, Jesus could say to the Father: "I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do" (John 17:4). Happy shall be the Christian Worker who is now also doing a great work, if he or she can say the same at the end of their days on this earth.

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02 -- TWELVE SOBERING FACTS ABOUT THE SIN OF HOPHNI, PHINEAS, AND ELI

1 Samuel 3:13 For I have told him [Eli] that I will judge his house for ever for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not.

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In the sin of Hophni, Phineas, and Eli, one can discover virtually every aspect of the Bible definitions for sin. In the following, I shall briefly discuss 12 Facts relative to the nature of their sin.

01 -- IT WAS "KNOWN" SIN -- James 4:17 declares: "...to him that knoweth to do good... to him it is sin. Eli KNEW about this iniquity, and if was for that very reason that God held both him and his sons accountable.

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02 -- IT WAS "LAW-TRANSGRESSING" SIN -- In Romans 4:15 St. Paul asserts: "where no law is, there is no transgression." In Romans 7:7 he wrote: "I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." In order to commit sin, first there must be a Law, a Divine Command or Principle that is violated. Where no such commands exists, there can be no sin. But in the case of Hophni and Phineas, Eli's sons, there WERE commandments of God that they wantonly and brazenly disregarded and broke. Therefore, their sin is that which is defined in 1 John 3:4, which states: "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law."

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03 -- IT WAS "UNRIGHTEOUS" SIN -- 1 John 5:17 goes beyond the scope of specifically written Divine Laws, and declares: "All unrighteousness is sin." In other words, whether an evil is specifically mentioned in the Bible, or not, is irrelevant; whatever is "not right" -- viz. "unrighteous" is, strictly speaking, both "wrong" and "sin" in God's sight. One can violate a Divinely ordained PRINCIPLE without breaking a specifically written PRECEPT! -- and, when one is persuaded of and by God that anything is "not right" -- that it is "unrighteous," then the violation of that Principle is as much a sin to that individual as it would be if God had written it out in detail in His Word! In the case of Hophni and Phineas, they were probably guilty of violating both known Precepts of God and known Principles of God. All of their acts that were "not right" were sin, whether spelled out in detail in the Law, or not.

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04 -- IT WAS "REVEALED" SIN -- One comes to "know" that a thing is sin by Divine Revelation. Jesus said in John 15:22, "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloak for their sin." A thing becomes sin to an individual WHEN GOD REVEALS THAT IT IS UNRIGHTEOUS, AND WRONG. A Christian may go along for some time doing, or not doing, this or that -- UNTIL CHRIST, IN THE PERSON OF THE HOLY GHOST, SPEAKS TO HIM OR HER, REVEALING THE EVIL IN IT. Thenceforward, that thing becomes a sin to the individual because Jesus has "come and spoken unto them" to that effect. Whether they listened, or heard His Voice or not, no doubt the Pre-Incarnate Christ DID speak to Hophni and Phineas about the evil of their deeds. John 16:8 declares that Christ, in the Person of the Holy Ghost, "will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment" (John 16:8). So, from this it is clear that Jesus is still "coming" and still "revealing" to the world those things that are "sin" -- whether they are written in the Bible, or not.

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05 -- IT WAS "GREATER" SIN -- It has been said: "There are NO LITTLE SINS, because THERE IS NO LITTLE GOD TO SIN AGAINST." This is true, but at the same time it cannot be denied that THERE ARE DEGREES OF SIN. No sin is little, but SOME SIN IS GREATER THAN OTHER SIN. How do I know that? Because Jesus Himself said so! In John 19:11 we read that, to the spiritually ignorant Pilate, "Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin." The sin of Eli's house was greater because of their greater privilege to know and discern between good and evil. It follows, therefore, that the greater one's knowledge and light, the greater is the sin in doing that which is known to be evil. In Romans 3:20, Paul stated: "by the law is the knowledge of sin," but as shown in the previous point, also "by the revelation of Christ through the Spirit," comes "the knowledge of sin." The House of Eli had much knowledge; therefore their sin was the greater.

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06 -- IT WAS "SHARED, RESPECT OF PERSONS" SIN -- The apostle said in 1 Timothy 5:22, "neither be partaker of other men's sins: keep thyself pure." Eli became a partaker of the sins of his sons, "because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not." No, he himself did not commit their deeds, but he could have, and should have, restrained them from doing those things. The Word is clear here on this fact: PARENTS PARTAKE OF THEIR CHILDREN'S SINS BY ALLOWING THEM TO DO EVIL WITHOUT RESTRAINING THEM FROM DOING SO! And, the Principle here goes even farther: Whoever has the power to restrain evil behavior, but who instead allows it, becomes a partaker in that sin, even though he (or she) would not dream of doing such himself (or herself). Another aspect of Eli's sin in allowing the evil conduct of his sons was the sin of showing "RESPECT OF PERSONS". James 2:9 says, "But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors." What Eli allowed in the lives of his sons he would probably have rebuked and condemned in the conduct of others. Such inequity in judgment by condoning evil behavior in one's family while condemning that same evil conduct in others -- is sin -- the sin of which Eli was guilty -- and he knew it.

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07 -- IT WAS "UNBELIEF, NOT OF FAITH" SIN -- In Romans 14:23 we read: "And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin." In 1 Sam 2:15-16 we learn of how Hophni and Phineas demanded that worshippers at the Tabernacle give them "raw" meat instead of that which had been burned in sacrifice, "And if any man said unto him, Let them not fail to burn the fat presently, and then take as much as thy soul desireth; then he would answer him, Nay; but thou shalt give it me now: and if not, I will take it by force." YOU CAN BE SURE THAT ELI'S SONS DID NOT "EAT OF FAITH" THAT MEAT WHICH WAS FORCIBLY STOLEN FROM THE LORD'S SACRIFICE! THEREFORE, THEIR SELFISH, SACRILEGIOUS INDULGENCE WAS SIN. One cannot knowingly violate God's will and still "have faith," and if one cannot do a thing and still "have faith in God," as Christ commanded, then that thing is sin.

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08 -- IT WAS "WILLFUL" SIN -- The awful fornication and indulgences of Hophni and Phineas were done "IN" THE BODY, but NOT "BY" THE BODY. 1 Corinthians 6:18 says "Flee fornication. EVERY SIN THAT A MAN DOETH IS WITHOUT THE BODY; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body." It is not the body of the fornicator that forces him to commit sin; it is exactly the other way around; it is the fornicator who sins against his body! SIN LIES IN THE WILL, NOT IN THE FLESH. Hebrews 10:26 speaks of the possibility of sinning "wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth." After Hophni and Phineas "received the knowledge of the truth" they then "willfully" sinned against that Truth. And, after Eli "received the knowledge of the truth" that he must do more than meekly protest the vile behavior of his sons, he failed to take sterner actions, expelling them from the priesthood, and thereby "willfully" committed sin.

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09 -- IT WAS "OMISSION" SIN -- James 4:17, in full, says: "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." The sins of Hophni and Phineas were sins of "COMMISSION" but the sin of Eli was one of "OMISSION". Eli "knew to do the good" of expelling his sons from the priesthood, but "did it not". When God mentioned the "iniquity which he knoweth," I suspect that He was including Eli's own sin of omission in the statement. Eli knew his sons were doing evil and he also knew that he should do more than meekly protest their behavior. Therefore, when he omitted forbidding them to act as priests, he sinned.

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10 -- IT WAS "IMPUTED" SIN -- In Romans 4:7-8 we read: "Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin." Forgiven sins are no longer imputed to, or held against, an individual as acts which shall be duly punished. Obviously then, the sins of Hophni, Phineas, and Eli had not been repented of, had not been forgiven, and were about to be punished with death. Eli's wicked sons enjoyed for a season "the pleasures of sin" (Heb. 11:25); "When lust had conceived, it brought forth sin: and

sin, when it was finished, brought forth death" -- Hophni and Phineas dying as targets on the battlefield, and Eli the victim of a broken neck when he fell backwards from his stool at the announcement of their deaths.

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11 -- IT WAS "AGAINST THE BRETHREN AND AGAINST GOD" SIN -- Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 8:12 But when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ." Jesus said, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me" (Matthew 25:40). In Romans 14:7 Paul also wrote: "None of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself." It is impossible for a person to sin only against himself, or herself -- every sin committed affects others, is against others, and is thus against God. In Psalms 51:4, David cried out: "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight," but here David's confession seems to relate much more to his inherited, sinful nature rather than to some outward act. Certainly when David committed adultery with Bathsheba and later had Uriah slain in battle, he could not have honestly said to God, "Against Thee, and Thee only have I sinned," for in so doing he had not only sinned against Bathsheba, Uriah, and God, but also against the entire nation, which suffered as the result of these evil acts. Someone has stated the truth thus: "No man is an island unto himself," and when it comes sin, one cannot take the Libertarian view: "Live, and let live; so long as what I am doing does not hurt someone else, there should be no law against it." To a great extent, the philosophy of the world is: "This is MY life, and it's none of your business how I LIVE MY LIFE! -- You live your life, and I'll live mine." This is NOT the philosophy of the Bible, nor the philosophy of God. Everyone shall be required to account for the influence of their deeds, not only upon themselves, but upon all others who are affected by them.

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12 -- IT WAS "UNPARDONABLE, ACROSS THE DEADLINE" SIN -- When Eli was protesting most strongly the evil behavior of his sons, he told them in 1 Sam. 2:25 "If one man sin against another, the judge shall judge him: but if a man sin against the LORD, who shall entreat for him? Notwithstanding they hearkened not unto the voice of their father, because the LORD would slay them. This Old Testament passage bears a strong resemblance to Jesus' words in the New Testament: "Verily I say unto you, All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme: But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation" (Mark 3:28).

However, not every sin that becomes "unpardonable" is such when it is first committed. The sins of Hophni and Phineas might have been pardonable at first, had they listened to God's warnings, but they persisted in their vile behavior so flagrantly and continually that they became a direct affront to the LORD Himself, and when they reached that place they crossed the deadline -- God withdrew all possibility of pardon for them, and purposed that He "would slay them." They were already damned, though yet alive. To what extent the punishment of death fell on Eli, one can only suppose -- his punishment may have been only that of bodily death, but the Divine statements concerning the punishment of his sons have an aura about them that suggest that when Eli's sons crossed the deadline, God purposed to "slay them" also with that eternal "hurt of the second death" (Rev. 2:11).

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03 -- HOW THE ISRAEL OF GOD SHALL HAVE THE FIRST DOMINION

"And thou, O tower of the flock, the strong hold of the daughter of Zion, unto thee shall it come, even the first dominion; the kingdom shall come to the daughter of Jerusalem" (Micah 4:8).

"When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" (Acts 1:6).

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01 -- EARTHLY ISRAEL'S LONG-EXPECTED EARTHLY PREEMINENCE

Since the days of the prophet Micah, earthly Israel has been expecting the time to come when they shall have the preeminence over all nations -- "EVEN THE FIRST DOMINION."

But, when the lowly Jesus of Nazareth appeared, he did not usher in that long-expected, highly-visible revolution that would turn the world upside down and bring about the world-wide dominance of the Jewish nation. Instead of riding into Jerusalem on a White Horse in splendor, having brought all nations to their knees before earthly Israel, Jesus rode into the city on a borrowed donkey! In the eyes of carnal and proud Judaism, this was NOT how it was supposed to be! -- and thus, they imagined that He was an impostor, flung epithets into his ears, spat in his face, flogged him, crowned him with thorns, nailed him to the cross, and then mocked him as he hung there, dying in agony, challenging him -- if he really was their long expected Messiah -- to demonstrate his mighty power by descending from the cross!

But the unbelieving Jews responsible for killing their King were not the only ones who expected something more from Jesus RIGHT SOON. After Christ rose from the dead and privately manifested himself to His disciples, they too revealed their hope that Micah's prophecy might soon be fulfilled in the exaltation and Dominance of earthly Israel. Just before Jesus' ascension, "they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" (Acts 1:6). But the kingdom will never be "restored" to earthly Israel.

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02 -- WHY THE KINGDOM WILL NEVER BE "RESTORED" TO EARTHLY ISRAEL

Jesus answered the disciples inquiry indirectly, by saying: "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power" (1:7). Many read into this that Jesus only inferred that there would be a delay in that fulfillment, when in fact, as I read the Scriptures, earthly Israel, -- viz., the Jewish Nation on earth -- will NEVER become the preeminent nation on earth -- THE KINGDOM WILL NOT BE "RESTORED" TO EARTHLY ISRAEL, FOR IT NEVER BELONGED TO EARTHLY ISRAEL in the first place! To interpret Micah's prophecy as did the Jews who crucified Christ, and as did the Pre-Pentecostal disciples,

is to misinterpret it. The kingdom will not be "restored" to earthly Israel because "the Kingdom is THE LORD'S"! (Psa. 22:28). Let me show you more about how "THE KINGDOM IS THE LORD'S," AND HAS NEVER BELONGED TO EARTHLY ISRAEL.

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03 -- JESUS "IS" ISRAEL, GOD'S SON!

Follow me now, for this is crucial to the point I make:

(a) ISRAEL IS ONE OF THE NAMES OF GOD: -- God changed Jacob's name to "Israel" and the nation springing from Jacob, God labeled as "my people which are called by MY NAME" (2 Chr. 7:14). "Israel," therefore, is one of the names of God Himself.

(b) ISRAEL IS THE NAME OF GOD'S SON: -- More specifically now, "Israel" is the name of God's Son. Hosea shows us this: Hosea 11:1 -- "When ISRAEL was a child, then I LOVED HIM, and CALLED MY SON out of Egypt." Notice: "Israel... My Son." But lets go further with the explanation:

(c) JESUS, GOD'S SON, IS ISRAEL -- The greater fulfillment of Hosea 11:1 above is seen at the time that God brought JESUS BACK UP OUT OF EGYPT: Matthew 2:15 "And was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, OUT OF EGYPT HAVE I CALLED MY SON." In the great Person of Christ JESUS, AS ISRAEL, GOD'S SON, WAS CALLED OUT OF EGYPT.

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04 -- JESUS AND SPIRITUAL ISRAEL VS. JACOB AND FLESHLY ISRAEL

DO YOU GET THE PROPHETIC PICTURE? -- Jacob, renamed "Israel," and his fleshly offspring are "ISRAEL THE LESSER," while Jesus as Israel, God's Son, along with His spiritual offspring are "ISRAEL THE GREATER," and the Kingdom, the FIRST DOMINION is to come to Jesus and Spiritual Israel, not to earthly Israel at all.

St. Paul tells us WHO THEY ARE THAT CONSTITUTE "THE ISRAEL OF GOD": Gal. 6:15-16 "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but A NEW CREATURE. And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon THE ISRAEL OF GOD."

Jacob-Israel had 12 sons from whom sprang earthly Israel. Jesus-Israel had 12 disciples from whom sprang spiritual Israel, the true Israel of God.

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05 -- EARTHLY JERUSALEM AND EARTHLY ISRAEL ARE CAST OUT

In Galatians 4, Paul likened earthly Jerusalem and earthly Israel to "the bondwoman (Hagar) and her son (Ishmael)." Sarah, he likened unto the Heavenly Jerusalem, and Isaac he likened unto Spiritual Israel, The Church.

NOW GET THIS: -- Then, Paul says: "Cast out the bondwoman (Hagar -- Earthly Jerusalem) and her son (Ishmael, Earthly Israel, the Jewish Nation).

Thus, THE FIRST DOMINION shall come to Christ, the Greater Israel, in the New Jerusalem with Spiritual Israel -- not on this earth, not in the earthly Jerusalem, nor to earthly Israel, the flesh and blood Jewish Nation! Hope as they may, strive as they will, the kingdom shall never be restored to earthly Israel, for it belongs to Israel, God's Son and His spiritual offspring, the true Israel of God. Earthly Jerusalem and Earthly Israel are forever cast out, and Heavenly Jerusalem and Spiritual Israel are now God's City and God's people.

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06 -- A FINAL REMNANT OF EARTHLY ISRAEL TO JOIN SPIRITUAL ISRAEL

However, even though earthly Jerusalem and earthly Israel shall not see the kingdom "restored" to them -- "a remnant" of flesh and blood Israel shall be saved on the Day of the Lord, "according to the election of grace." But note: THAT REMNANT WILL BECOME PART OF THE TRUE ISRAEL OF GOD, HAVING RECEIVED GOD'S SAVING-SANCTIFYING "GRACE" on that Great Day! AFTER this remnant is brought into the Spiritual Israel of God, it is then that "ALL ISRAEL SHALL BE SAVED" (Rom. 11:26, Plus see the entire Chapter).

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07 -- CHRIST SHALL REIGN FROM HIS THRONE, NOT FROM HIS FOOTSTOOL!

Because Kings sit ON THEIR THRONE to reign, and NOT ON THEIR FOOTSTOOL, can you imagine even a carnal potentate sitting on his footstool instead of on his throne to rule?

What is my point? Just this: HEAVEN is Christ's THRONE and EARTH is His FOOTSTOOL: Acts 7:49 -- "Heaven is my throne, and earth is my footstool: what house will ye build me? saith the Lord: or what is the place of my rest?"

As the Great Israel of God, the King of kings and Lord of lords -- JESUS IS NOT GOING TO SIT ON HIS FOOTSTOOL IN AN EARTHLY JERUSALEM TO REIGN. No! Ten Thousand Times, No! He is going to SIT ON HIS THRONE IN THE HEAVENLY CITY!

He says, "What house will ye build me?" No temple on His Footstool, Earth, is magnificent enough to hold His Splendor and Glory! Only the Heavenly City, where "the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it" (Rev. 21:22) shall suffice for His worship and His Throne!

Christians are never told to look for any city on this earth, but of the Israel of God it is written: "here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come" (Heb. 13:14). Spiritual Israel

shall indeed have THE FIRST DOMINION and INHERIT THE KINGDOM: Matthew 25:34
"Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world," BUT THE CITY IN WHICH THEY SHALL THUS RULE WITH CHRIST WILL NOT BE ON THIS EARTH -- IT SHALL BE IN THE CITY FOR WHICH ABRAHAM LOOKED, and "he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God" (Heb. 11:10).

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08 -- THE BARABBAS BACKFIRE -- WHY THE JEWS ARE ROBBED OF PEACE

Christians are prone to "root for" the Jewish Nation in its armed conflicts of this tragic time, when Palistininan-Arab suicide bombers are massacring their civilians and the Israeli Army is retaliating with tanks, bombs, missiles, and troops, and slaying scores of Arabs.

Yes, probably most Christians are siding in their hearts with earthly Israel, the Jewish Nation -- regathered and reconstituted in 1948. But, shall they EVER as an earthly nation have peace, having rejected the Prince of Peace? I say, NO -- they shall not, until they blindly accept the anti-Christ as their long-expected Messiah, and that peace will last only three and one-half years.

As I interpret Second Coming prophecy, right now, and until the Lord Returns, Israel shall suffer THE BARABBAS BACKFIRE. When they cried out nearly 2000 years ago: "Not this man [Jesus], but Barabbas," they robbed themselves of true peace forever as a nation. "Barabbas was a robber," and their choice of the Robber instead of the Redeemer has been costly to earthly Israel -- Oh, so costly!

No, ten million times No! -- the Holocaust was not justified, and those who perpetrated this upon the Jews shall suffer the eternal vengeance of Almighty God, unless they repented and found forgiveness before their death. But again, I say -- this has been part of the awful price earthly Israel has paid for choosing the Robber instead of the Redeemer. The curse of Matthew 27:25 has been, and is still, being fulfilled: "Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be on us, and on our children."

Perhaps 10 days ago or so, I heard well-known Radio Host, Rush Limbaugh say that it was his opinion that there will be no peace between Israel and the Palestinians -- UNTIL -- UNTIL, ONE SIDE HAS ANNIHILATED THE OTHER.

Let me tell you what I think is more likely to be the final outcome:

Bloody violence will continue between earthly Israel and her Arab neighbors UNTIL -- UNTIL THE JEWISH NATION ACCEPTS THE ANTI-CHRIST AS THEIR MESSIAH. Remember, earthly Israel has returned to Palestine IN UNBELIEF. While there are Orthodox Jews praying and mourning at the Wailing Wall, the nudity on Jewish beaches is nearly as bad, if not just as bad, as you will find anywhere on earth. As a nation, even the most Orthodox among them are still rejecting Jesus, the true Israel of God. To a great extent, Jews in Israel are just as worldly and wicked as most others on earth. DON'T FOOL YOURSELF -- AS SUCH -- THEY ARE NOT -- I

REPEAT, ARE NOT -- GOD'S PEOPLE. Never has Paul's statement in Romans 9:6 been more true: "they are not all Israel, which are of Israel." Indeed, only a small fraction of Jews today are a part of the Spiritual Israel of God. Those who are only of Israel the earthly nation, are not God's people. There shall yet be a remnant therefrom saved, but only a remnant.

Jesus prophesied in John 5:43 "I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive."

When earthly Israel receives the False Messiah, anti-Christ -- THEN, FOR THREE AND ONE-HALF YEARS shall come the most marvelous peace ever seen in the Middle East! Jews and Arabs will be united in their acceptance of this 666-Man as THE Prince of Peace! Indeed, the whole world will accept him as such. So convinced shall Israel, the Arabs, and the entire World be that AT LAST... PEACE HAS COME, that Paul said: "They shall say PEACE and SAFETY."

It will seem like a rosy, dream-world of undisturbed tranquillity and that richer-than-ever trade has come on earth to stay! Amidst world-wide peace and tranquillity, the commerce of Babylon the Great shall flourish immensely. Millions will be convinced that the False Christ is the True Christ, and Peace and Prosperity will shine in such abundance that it will appear that the Golden Age of Christ's Kingdom has come at last! Satanic miracles will also convince a deceived world that the Man of Sin is "The Prince of Peace"!

BUT LOOK OUT! "For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape" (1 Thess. 5:3)! When the Proud-As-A-Peacock Man of Sin sits himself in the temple of God, proclaiming to the world that he IS God, THEN THE WRATH OF THE TRUE ISRAEL, GOD'S SON, SHALL BEGIN TO FALL UPON THIS WORLD!

Happily, Out of the final "BARABBAS BACKFIRE," near the close of those awful, final three and one-half years, a final remnant of earthly Israel shall see the Light, mourn over their sins, and be born again "at once" (Isa. 66:8). If you don't believe in sudden conversions, you don't believe in Second Coming prophecy, for suddenly -- "at once" -- that final remnant shall be born again, and along with the resurrected and raptured saints, they shall rise up "to meet the Lord in the air" and even "so all Israel shall be saved" (Rom. 11:26).

Shall that spiritual, heavenly, raptured "Israel of God" ever be robbed of their peace? NAY. NEVER! For concerning Israel, God's Son and His Kingdom it is written: "Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever." YOU HAD BETTER BELIEVE IT TOO, FOR "The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this" (Isaiah 9:7).

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04 -- IT'S NOT SADD! -- IT'S BADD!

Yes, it is often true that what I have labeled as SADD -- (S-piritual A-ttention D-eficit D-isorder) is one of the prevalent plagues in the Church today, but on the other hand, what I have termed as BADD -- (B-oring A-ddress D-rowsiness D-isorder), is also putting listeners to sleep in Church too frequently -- the former disorder affecting many inattentive laymen, while the latter disorder affects a number of long-winded preachers, many of whom may be all too unaware of how boring they really are much of the time.

As pictured in the graphic above, it would be BADD indeed if one's speech was so dull that it put his own reflection to sleep in the mirror! It reminds me of a story I once heard about a preacher who fell asleep while listening to his own tape-recorded message! I do not recall the preacher's name, and do not care to remember it, but if nothing else, perhaps this falling to sleep while listening to his own preaching made him a bit more tolerant of those in his congregation who occasionally drifted into "The Land of "Winkin' Blinkin' and Nod" during one of his messages.

The above picture, and stories like that just mentioned may tickle our funny-bone and may arouse our risibles to more than a chuckle -- but -- it is no joke when a preacher, more often than not, puts his audience into a dull, drowsy state of mind -- or even to sleep -- before he concludes a lengthy sermon!

Admittedly, there are some occasions that drowsiness may come over a crowd when even the most interesting speaker is behind the pulpit. Foy Bullock used to call it "Lock-Eye" when folks began to nod and have trouble keeping their eyes open during a service. Such spells of the "Lock-Eye" may frequently occur during an afternoon service of a camp meeting -- right after folks have eaten dinner and feel more like taking a nap than anything else. But, whatever the time of the service, if the preacher is "boring" the crowd may be "snoring" -- or have their mental interest in the preacher's sermon so dulled that their predominant thought is: I HOPE HE FINISHES SOON!

It was related that the following reminder was under the glass top of Dr. Walter Wilson's pulpit: "If after ten minutes you don't strike oil, QUIT BORING!"

I would not go so far as to say that if a preacher does not sense the anointing of the Spirit on his message within ten minutes he should always stop preaching and dismiss the service, for often when satan is doing his utmost to distract and hinder both the preacher and his listeners, it may take longer than that before the Divine Attestation of God's Presence is sensed by all -- and, there are times when neither the messenger nor his audience sense one ounce of the Supernatural when He is still there, bearing the truth home which will take root and bring forth fruit at a later time.

However, I will say that it is probably time for a preacher to do some soul-searching if it has been a long while since he could truthfully declare like Jeremiah: "His word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay" (Jer. 20:9). Further, I would note that the burning compulsion to preach of which Jeremiah here testified was quite different from a preacher being so enamored with listening to himself that he is reluctant to end his sermon, though he has long since put all of his hearers to sleep!

It is probably all too true, all too often, that the reason why the preacher drones on and on while heads are nodding is partly because he is overly fond of hearing himself preach -- because he is much too fascinated with the supposed majesty of his message and the imagined profundity of his spiritual insights! When a preacher has a bad case of "The Preacher's Itch" it can seem like "The Seven-Year Itch" to his wearied and woozy audience when after 70 minutes of one of his "endless" orations he has apparently only "scratched the surface" of all he wants to say.

When preaching a sermon, there is quite a difference between: (1) a preacher's inward persuasion that he dare "not stay" until he has fully delivered "all the counsel of God" (Acts 20:27), and (b) a preacher's mistaken or conceited notion that his sermon is so profound that even the angel Gabriel, if sitting in his congregation, would be rapt and riveted to his every utterance -- even after listening to him drone on and on for over an hour!

While seldom could it be truly said that too much gravity is the problem with a preacher these days, it should be admitted that too much levity has turned many clerics into clowns who seek to arrest and keep the attention of their audience by making them laugh. Sometimes too much brevity is the problem of a young preacher, but too much longevity is the proclivity of many older preachers -- not too much longevity in faithful service and not too much time in really unburdening their souls when preaching -- but too much needless and superfluous length in too many of their orations.

Probably many young preachers, when they first began preaching have been embarrassed when their stage-fright, rapid-fire sermon lasted only 10-15 minutes and they had to dismiss the crowd a half-hour or forty-five minutes before the usual time. But likewise, perhaps many of those same preachers when older, more experienced, and much more comfortable behind the pulpit, should be embarrassed, but are not, when they preach a half-hour or forty-five minutes too long!

Some time ago, a 77-year-old preacher in Illinois, collapsed and died after declaring to his listeners: "I have just one more point to make and then I'll close!" I would not make light of this occurrence -- I would only observe: It was God's will that the message close sooner than the preacher thought. And, I wonder:-- How many times has God willed that a preacher end his message long before the preacher did so? -- when it was not the Divine will to close the messenger's mouth by abruptly taking him home to heaven, but when, if the messenger had listened to the inner prompting of the Spirit, the sermon would have been brought to an end long before it was?

The injunction in Ecclesiastes 5:2 is one that both all preachers and all writers would do well to heed:-- "God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few." Alas, however, it is advice that too many of us who are older fail to heed too often, and I will own up to my own guilt regarding this. I will pass out a little compliment to Lowell L. Foster here:-- He is one who can say, or write, a lot -- in a few words -- a talent, or discipline, that not too many have!

I do not write this as an excuse, but I will observe that while sometimes a lengthy book or article can be left alone, or laid aside and finished on another occasion, without insulting the writer, during a long oration more often the listener feels compelled to "hear it out" lest his or her

early departure appear to be discourteous to the preacher, or speaker -- and in that way, the long-winded preacher often has "a captive audience".

I do not write the following brief observation with any desire to be coarse, or too plain, but the fact is: "The mind can absorb only what the seat can endure!" Preacher, when people sitting even on padded pews have heard you for more than an hour and are so miserably and physically uncomfortable that they can think of nothing else but the moment they can stand and move about -- **YOU'VE LOST YOUR CROWD, AND YOU HAVE PREACHED TOO LONG!**

In his book, "The Preaching Ministry," J. B. Chapman wrote: "The old advice to 'begin low, go slow, rise higher, strike fire, and sit down in a storm' is still good for the preacher who is after results." I would only add that probably the preacher who wants to "strike fire, sit down in the storm," and get good results, had best do that as soon as wisdom ordains it -- and long before many unwise, long-winded preachers sit down.

Spurgeon wrote: "Don't preach too long. I should say, if you are earnest and interesting that whatever you are preaching about, you should preach about forty minutes. Some sermons remind me of the sailor who was told to pull a rope on board; he pulled and pulled until he was tired and then declared that he believed the "end of this 'ere rope is cut off." Of course the sailor's statement was both illogical and bad English, but we can still use it to uniquely express the frustrated state of mind of many who have long sat in audience listening to what seems like an "endless" discourse:-- **"THE END OF THIS HERE SERMON IS CUT OFF! -- it is nowhere to be found!"**

In bringing this article to a close, permit me the following personal illustration:

Years ago I was invited to preach at the Ontario Bible Missionary Church, and my aunt and uncle, Bill & Gertrude Bliss, and their young son Danny came over from their home in Payette, Idaho (about five miles away) to hear me speak. Danny, who was about 6 years old, had gotten a watch for Christmas and wore it to the service. After I had preached for some time, and not having a watch with me, I made some sort of inquiry about what time it was -- whereupon, Danny promptly looked at his watch and announced: **"YOU'RE DONE!"**

A number in the audience apparently heard Danny's "timely" announcement, and maybe most of them were either amused by this unpretentious expression of his judgment in the matter and/or agreed with him! Since that time, Bill & Gertrude and I have been amused by this story, but on that night, unaware of Danny's announcement, I preached on. How well he and the rest of my audience managed to endure the rest of my discourse, I know not, nor do I know how much longer I continued to preach.

I do know this, however, when in God's All-Wise judgment He could -- and sometimes does -- inform the preacher: **"YOU'RE DONE!" -- IT IS TIME TO QUIT! -- even if the preacher is less than half-way through his, or her, outline. Selah.**

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I fear that we have a lot of "Jack-Rabbit Judgment" these days being passed from the "Kangaroo Courts" of quick-spoken religious judges who either have no evidence at all upon which to base their judgment, or whose evidence has been rapidly and prejudicially gathered second-hand, AFTER, and not BEFORE they have formed their opinion -- or should I say, their notion -- on a matter.

A "Jack-Rabbit Judge" is one who quickly "jumps to conclusions" without slowly, quietly, reasonably -- and without prejudice -- gathering and considering all of the facts. From the "Kangaroo Court" of his bias he leaps without logic and without looking into the matter, lands quickly on the ground of his prejudiced, but uninformed, notion and loudly condemns that about which he really knows nothing.

Wise, Old Solomon wrote: "A fool uttereth all his mind: but a wise man keepeth it in till afterwards... Seest thou a man that is hasty in his words? there is more hope of a fool than of him" (Prov. 29:11, 20).

There is more "hope of a fool" becoming a rocket scientist than there is of convincing some folks to withhold their judgment until they have taken time to gather all of the facts before they send off, spout-off, and widely publicize their notions and condemnation about things of which they have not the slightest shred of first-hand knowledge.

Further, because the time necessary to gather the facts is of no real concern to them, "Jack-Rabbit Judges" are often the first ones to speak out, loud and long, on a matter. But once again Solomon wrote: "He that is first in his own cause seemeth just; but his neighbour cometh and searcheth him" (Prov. 18:17). Just because he who first passes judgment on a thing sounds convincing does not mean that he is right. Frequently after a jury has been almost completely swayed into believing the testimony of the first witness in a trial, a cross-examiner, with a quiet, lucid, and logical presentation of the facts, will lay open the complete error and falsehood of that first testimony and convince the jury to reject the fallacies that were first set forth!

A wise juror, and a wise Christian, will prudently and patiently wait to get all of the facts and to hear both sides of a matter before reaching a conclusion. He, or she, will not, so to speak, "sweep their walk before all of the snow has fallen." But even the most detailed and logical presentation of the facts will not convince some people, for while "Jack-Rabbit Judges" are quick to pass judgment, they are exceeding slow to admit their mistakes and errors. Once again, Solomon wrote: "Though you grind a fool in a mortar, grinding him like grain with a pestle, you will not remove his folly from him" (Prov. 27:22 NIV).

Quite a picture! Methodically and patiently, with facts and logic, you can grind the errors of a "Jack-Rabbit-Judge" into powdery flour -- yet you will still be unable to sift the folly of his error from his mind! So tiny is the circumference of his false-judgment that it will fall through the sifter even after the most minute and detailed presentation of the facts. Or, to put it differently, if your grinding and sifting has clearly separated precious Facts from prejudiced Notions, he will still insist that the former are False and the latter are Truth.

Directly related to such as this, the apostle James wrote: "Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath: For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God" (James 1:19-20). Hasty judgments are often heated judgments as well, and such "work not the righteousness of God."

"A fool uttereth all his mind" -- quickly and vehemently -- about many things of which he knows little or nothing, "but a wise man keepeth it in till afterwards" -- "keeps his cool" and keeps back the expression of his opinion on a thing until after he has taken time to learn both sides of the matter, until he has gathered enough evidence to make a reasonable decision, and most of all -- until he is really able to reach a conclusion without being brought there through his own heated emotion, bias, and prejudice.

We live in the age when British "Harrier Jets" can jump up vertically into the air, fly off to some location many miles away, and land there, before some folks can walk around the block. We also live in an age when "Jack-Rabbit-Judgments" can leap from one computer or one telephone to those of thousands of others thousands of miles around the globe before some folks have turned over one cog in their noggin. Instead of using our computers and phones to spread unfounded and unsubstantiated notions more rapidly, wouldn't it be wiser to use them to gather facts more widely and more completely, so as to be able to pass judgments more logically and more wisely? If this was done, I am sure that there would not be nearly so many Jack-Rabbit-Judgments jumping to false conclusions and bounding to the borders of Timbuktu* (before one can count to two) as there presently are in this "Computer Age". Selah.

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*By the way, if you have an internet browser, you can click on the following URL hypertext and visit an informative site about Timbuktu quicker than some folks can spell Jack Robinson:
<http://www.thesalmons.org/lynn/wh-timbuktu.html>

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06 -- THEY THAT USE THIS WORLD, AS NOT ABUSING IT

The words of the above title are part of 1 Corinthians 7:31. Please read carefully the following, which contains a good bit of the context surrounding St. Paul's statement used in my Title:

1 Cor. 7:28-32, 35 -- (28) But and if thou marry, thou hast not sinned; and if a virgin marry, she hath not sinned. Nevertheless such shall have trouble in the flesh: but I spare you. (29) But this I say, brethren, the time is short: it remaineth, that both they that have wives be as though they had none; (30) And they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not; (31) And they that use this world, as not abusing it: for the fashion of this world passeth away. (32) But I would have you without carefulness. He that is unmarried careth for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord... (35) And this I speak for your own profit; not that I may cast a snare upon you, but for that which is comely, and that ye may attend upon the Lord without distraction."

There is virtually nothing in this world, however legitimate, including marriage, that cannot be abused, and even abused so much that it can cause a person to lose his or her soul. With some exceptions, of course, probably most things in this world -- whether they be things created by God Himself (animal, vegetable, or mineral), or things invented by Man -- can be either used for the Glory of God and good of souls, or abused for the indulgence of self and the damnation of souls.

If the Holy Institution of Marriage -- begun by God Himself in His union of Adam and Eve as man and wife -- can be abused for the indulgence of self and the damnation of souls, then none should doubt that any other thing in this world can be abused. If marriage would damn a man or woman, or hinder his or her spiritual life, then Paul says in effect: leave it alone; do not marry.

But Paul set forth here a principle, and not an outright prohibition:-- the principle being this: BE "THEY THAT USE THIS WORLD, AS NOT ABUSING IT" -- and this principle is in perfect accord with another one of Paul's admonitions: "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God" (1 Cor. 10:31).

Paul's belief was: If you can use it for the glory of God, use it; if you cannot, then leave it alone. In many matters pertaining to things in this world, Paul's advice was: "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind" (Rom. 14:5). And, even when one was perfectly "free" from any human or Divine regulation, restraint, or restriction regarding a thing, Paul admonished that this freedom be used for the glory of God: "Art thou called being a servant? care not for it: but if thou mayest be made free, use it rather" (1 Cor. 7:21).

Who would deny that when Paul admonished the freed Christian, "use it rather," that he meant: "USE YOUR FREEDOM FOR THE GLORY OF GOD AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM"! He told the Galatian Church: "Brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another" (Gal. 5:13). The principle set forth again here is: Don't be in bondage to men; you are the Lord's Freemen, but just make sure that you do not use your boasted liberty to indulge any evil temptation -- instead, use it for the glory of God and the service of your brethren in the Church.

Folks, as I see it, one can abuse, and go astray on the Interstate Freeway, or use it for the glory of God to go preach a red-hot holiness revival! Likewise, one can abuse the Airlines to fly off to fleshly indulgences, or to go to the mission field to spread scriptural holiness around this globe. Similarly, one can use the radio, telephone, automobile, or Greyhound bus to spread or indulge in vile filth, or to reach the lost and "bring them in from the fields of sin."

The fact that a thing CAN BE, AND IS, USED FOR EVIL BY SOME OR MANY does not of itself mean IT MUST BE, OR IS ALWAYS, USED FOR EVIL BY ALL. No doubt, God wants His people to use good, sanctified sense in these matters -- to be those "who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil" (Heb 5:14). In other words, a sanctified person should LEARN TO DISCERN WISELY FOR HIMSELF, OR HERSELF! Don't just jump to conclusions based on the opinions of others -- even if you revere them highly. Holiness person: If you cannot marry without abusing it; stay single; if you cannot use the Freeway, the Airplane, the

Telephone, the Automobile, or the Greyhound bus without sinning -- then don't use them! IF YOU KNOW THAT YOU CAN USE THEM FOR GOD'S GLORY -- THEN USE THEM THUS!

Personally, I believe that THE INTERNET "CAN" BE USED FOR THE GLORY OF GOD -- both via emails and by web sites. But, "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind."

When Paul wrote the following, he wrote "a mouth-full" -- perhaps a bigger mouth-full than some Holiness folks wish he had:-- "I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself: but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean" (Rom. 14:14).

He preceded it by this counsel: Rom. 14:13 "Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way." If one honestly believes before God that using the Internet will endanger his or her own soul and that of others who know that he or she is using it -- THEN LEAVE IT ALONE!

But in passing judgment on these things, IT IS A VERY PERSONAL MATTER -- AND THOSE WHO DIFFER WITH THE OPINION OF OTHERS HAD BETTER BE CAREFUL THAT THEY DO NOT BEGIN TO DESPISE, JUDGE, AND OSTRACIZE, THOSE WHO THINK DIFFERENTLY THAN THEMSELVES:

"Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him. Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand" (Rom. 14:3-4). Selah.

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07 -- IT IS NOT GOOD

In 17 places we find the words "is not good" in the KJV of the Bible. I will examine each of them in the order of their appearance and add a few comments with each.

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01 -- IT IS NOT GOOD TO LIVE IN A SELFISH CELIBACY -- Genesis 2:18 "And the LORD God said, it is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him." -- As one who did not marry until I was age 45, I may not seem to be qualified to comment on this verse. However, some may feel that the opinion of one who has been on both sides of the fence for some years is worth considering. If I recall correctly, the following is a rough quotation of a remark once made by Queen Elizabeth when she was asked to give her opinion about marriage: "You ask me to give you my opinion of marriage. This reminds me of what an old bishop said when he was asked to give his opinion about sin, and replied: 'I am against it'! -- Well, regarding marriage, I am FOR it." And, dear reader, God is "FOR IT" also.

Hebrews 13:4 declares: "Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge." God IS NOT FOR sexual immorality and looseness; He IS NOT FOR cohabitation of a man and woman outside of marriage; He IS NOT FOR the vile, homosexual and lesbian unions of those of the same sex; He IS NOT FOR a man or woman to live alone for selfish reasons, when such celibacy turns one into an eccentric oddball or a being who contributes nothing to society but evil and hurt, like that of Uni-bomber, Ted Kaczynski! Yes, like the apostle Paul, there are those who can, and do, live single lives in the will of God -- but such are the exception, not the general rule.

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02 -- IT IS NOT GOOD TO DO IT ALL YOURSELF -- Some of my older readers may remember the Primary School story about "The Little Red Hen." The little red hen wanted other animals to help her "plant the wheat, cut the wheat, carry it to the miller, bring the flour home, and make the bread." and each of them in succession replied, "Not I," after which the little red hen said, "Then I will, and she did!" But, when it came to "eating the bread," all wanted to help her eat it -- but, the little red hen decided to eat it all herself, "and SHE DID." Back in my grade-school days our schoolbook stories often did have a good moral to them, and the moral here is two-fold: (a) If you want a share in the fruits of labor, you must share in that labor; and (2) If nobody helps you, pitch in and do it alone! -- the best place to find a helping hand is at the end of your own arm.

IT IS good to deplore the attitude of those today who insist in sharing the wealth of our nation, while refusing to do any of the work that produces it! -- and -- it IS good to first start looking for a helping hand at the end of your own arm. When we read that story in our grade-school primers, probably most (if not all) of us admired the industry of "The Little Red Hen," and in our hearts cheered her when she refused to share her bread with those lazy, good for nothing critters who refused to help her. The position of The Little Red Hen seems to be quite like that stated by the apostle Paul, when he wrote in 2 Thessalonians 3:10: "For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat."

However, it is NOT GOOD for one to always try to do everything by themselves -- especially in conducting the affairs of God's Work and God's People. It was this sort of "doing it all yourself" that Moses' father-in-law advised against when he said to Moses in Exodus 18:17: "The thing that thou doest is not good." Moses had been trying to "do it all himself," when he could have delegated various responsibilities to qualified lieutenants under him. And, probably most of the time, it is best for a Pastor, Church Leader, Business CEO, or even the Head of Household, to delegate chores and responsibilities to others under him (or her) rather than trying to do it all alone.

Further, it is a bad mistake for any such leaders to insist upon so micro-managing things that none dare do or say a thing without their personal, stated approval. You recall the two women who brought the living child to Solomon -- one of them was said to have overlaid, or smothered, one of their children -- and you know something Pastor?: -- there is a vast difference between "mothering" and "smothering" those in your flock! Pastors who so micro-manage the lives of their people that they actually "smother" them to death spiritually, do greatly err! Preacher, if you have your people feeling like they dare not tie their shoes, so to speak, without your approval, then you

are a "Smotherer" and not a "Motherer" of God's flock! You have become a "Lord over God's heritage" instead of an "ensample" (1 Pet. 5:3). Like the pseudo-mother in the case before Solomon, "Smotherers" of a Church would rather see it split and die before giving up their rule of it! Conversely, true pastors after God's heart, true "Motherers" of God's flock, are those like the true mother before Solomon:-- they would rather give up their rightful position of authority in the Church than to see it split and killed!

Because micro-management by a leader will both wear him out, no matter how fair he may be, and because micro-management will often kill rather than nurture healthy growth in a Church or a Business -- "THE THING THAT THOU DOES IS NOT GOOD" if you are a leader who unwisely and needlessly insists upon doing everything yourself while never delegating chores and responsibilities to competent people under you!

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03 -- IT IS NOT GOOD TO FALL ASLEEP AT YOUR POST -- After he had stolen into the camp and stealthily taken Saul's spear and cruse of water, David left that camp and from a distance he upbraided Abner, Saul's guard with these words: "This thing is not good that thou hast done. As the LORD liveth, ye are worthy to die, because ye have not kept your master, the LORD'S anointed. And now see where the king's spear is, and the cruse of water that was at his bolster."

The spiritual application of this verse is so apparent that I need not elaborate.

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04 -- IT IS NOT GOOD TO GIVE GOOD COUNSEL FOR A BAD CAUSE -- You will recall how when Absalom had David on the run, Ahithophel advised him to immediately pursue and slay King David. It was "good counsel for a bad cause." Had Absalom followed that advice, he would probably have succeeded. After Ahithophel had given his wise counsel, we read in 2 Samuel 17:7 that "Hushai said unto Absalom, The counsel that Ahithophel hath given IS NOT GOOD at this time," and God allowed Hushai to persuade Absalom to wait until he could mount a more universal and prestigious march. Hushai's false, but flattering, counsel was followed, and you know the outcome -- Ahithophel, seeing the handwriting on the wall, committed suicide, Absalom's forces were routed and he was slain.

The moral I assert with this story may not be the primary truth in it, but it IS, at least, one of the important lessons in that drama:-- IT IS NOT GOOD TO GIVE GOOD COUNSEL FOR A BAD CAUSE. Many, who like Ahithophel, have used their sagacity to advise others of the best way to do a bad thing, shall no doubt share in his fate -- not necessarily because they shall die at their own hand, but because they shall reap the eternal consequences of using their wisdom to teach others how best to promote evil in this world! Among such, are those who counsel Tobacco, Booze, and Smut peddlers about how best to captivate and initiate buyers for their soul-damning products. Because of their emulation of Ahithophel's sin, probably millions of advertisers who concocted the clever ads bought by wicked industries shall share eternal damnation, along with the peddlers of those products. Selah.

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05 -- IT IS NOT GOOD TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF BRETHREN -- After discovering how various Jews were taking advantage of their brethren, in Nehemiah 5:9 we read how he rebuked them: "Also I said, it is not good that ye do: ought ye not to walk in the fear of our God because of the reproach of the heathen our enemies?"

There is nothing more treacherous nor more reprehensible than for one to take advantage of one who considers him a brother! The Psalmist declared in Psalm 55:12-14 "For it was not an enemy that reproached me; then I could have borne it: neither was it he that hated me that did magnify himself against me; then I would have hid myself from him: but it was thou, a man mine equal, my guide, and mine acquaintance. We took sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company. Let death seize upon them, and let them go down quick into hell: for wickedness is in their dwellings, and among them."

Those who call themselves Christians, but who deal fraudulently with true Christians, knowing full-well that those genuine Children of God will not take them to court, are going to find it awfully hot in hell -- unless they repent of their deeds. Jesus warned such "grievous wolves in sheep's clothing" when He said in Matthew 25:40: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

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06 -- IT IS NOT GOOD TO BE SET IN A BAD WAY -- In Psalms 36:4 we read: "He deviseth mischief upon his bed; he setteth himself in a way that is not good; he abhorreth not evil." I remember when I was pastoring in Elkins, West Virginia years ago: one of the old ladies who came to church had no front walk. I made forms and a truck dumped the concrete. Then, after boarding it down I left it and went a few blocks back over to the parsonage, thinking that after that concrete had set a bit I would go back and use the edger to put a nice rounded edge on it. I WAITED TOO LONG! When I went back, the concrete had already set to the point that it was impossible to edge it well, if at all. One set in a bad way may later seek to change, only to discover that it is then impossible to do so.

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07 -- IT IS NOT GOOD TO FOLLOW VIOLENT LEADERS -- Proverbs 16:29 declares: "A violent man enticeth his neighbour, and leadeth him into the way that is not good." While it is true that Jesus said in Matthew 11:12, "...the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force," it is not true that He ever advocated physical violence. Indeed, when Peter smote off Malchus' ear, "Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword." The only violence Jesus advocates by His servants is spiritual violence -- that which is passionately in earnest to inherit the kingdom of God. He and never espouses violence like that of Osama Bin Laden and others like him who have been, or are, trying to control the world by force of arms. I do not here assert that Christians must be conscientious objectors, per se. I do say that one had better be very certain that he stands uncondemned by Christ for doing so, if he uses violence and sheds human blood -- for whatever

reason -- be it in war, in exacting death penalties, or even in the protection of his life and that of others who are threatened. I think it likely that Christians can serve in the military, can shed blood in war, can pull the switch on the electric chair, and can kill to protect the lives of others who are innocent but threatened. However, to espouse violence as the approved means of selfishly gaining what is desired is clearly "a way that is not good," and a way to land the one who does such in the Lake of Fire.

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08 -- IT IS NOT GOOD TO PUNISH THE JUST -- Proverbs 17:26 says, "Also to punish the just is not good, nor to strike princes for equity." I like the NIV rendition of this verse also: "It is not good to punish an innocent man, or to flog officials for their integrity." One need not look far today to realize the Christians -- those who are just -- are "taking it on the chin" for their stand against the evil and sins in the world. Put a Christian into some official office and he will be verbally, if not physically, "flogged for his integrity"! It is not good to punish those who peacefully protest the butchering of babies by the millions while praising and protecting those committing this slaughter -- but that is what we are seeing today!

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09 -- IT IS NOT GOOD TO ACCEPT AN EVIL PERSON IN ORDER TO OVERTHROW RIGHTEOUSNESS -- Proverbs 18:5 says as much: "It is not good to accept the person of the wicked, to overthrow the righteous in judgment." I suspect that Bill Clinton was "accepted" by many liberals -- not because they felt him to be innocent, but because by accepting him they would thereby be able to defeat the righteous policies of others who opposed his vile leadership.

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10 -- IT IS NOT GOOD TO HAVE ZEAL WITHOUT KNOWLEDGE -- The KJV of Proverbs 19:2 reads: "Also, that the soul be without knowledge, it is not good; and he that hasteth with his feet sinneth." Perhaps the NIV version of this verse brings out the meaning more exactly: "It is not good to have zeal without knowledge, nor to be hasty and miss the way." Of the zeal which caused the Jews to crucify Christ and later to persecute Paul, the apostle wrote in Romans 10:2 -- "For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge." It is never good to be zealous when you don't know what you are doing -- and that was exactly the case with those who nailed Christ to the cross. He prayed: "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34). One can be zealous and hasty in the execution of that zeal -- "and miss the way."

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11 -- IT IS NOT GOOD TO USE A FALSE BALANCE -- Proverbs 20:23 states: "Divers weights are an abomination unto the LORD; and a false balance is not good." God never uses one weight to weigh this man, and another weight to weigh that man -- when He puts them on His scales, he does not weigh them with "divers weights" or different weights so as to make one man measure up, while using a different weight to show the shortcomings of another who actually

should weigh the same as the first. At the Judgment, God will not put His "finger on the scales" to make a sinning professor of Christianity measure up and inherit Heaven, while removing His finger from the scales and showing that a non-professor who did the same thing has come short and thus must be sent to Hell. Stop and think about it! The fact that God hates "a false balance" when weighing anything -- especially souls -- should convince anyone that Eternal Security is a lie -- a false balance concocted by the devil that is as phony as any crooked butcher ever used when overweighing a piece of meat to cheat a customer! And, spiritual customers who allow themselves to be weighed in that false balance stand to be cheated out of more than a few cents or dollars -- they may thus be cheated of Heaven and lose their souls.

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12 -- IT IS NOT GOOD TO HAVE RESPECT OF PERSONS -- Proverbs 24:23 reads: "These things also belong to the wise. It is not good to have respect of persons in judgment." The Bible weighs in heavily and frequently against this sin. When assessing a man's character WHO he is matters not to God -- WHAT he is shall determine his acceptability or unacceptability to God, and his eternal abode. It is not good for anyone to judge a person by anything but their character -- regardless of their rank and/or reputation. I heard that Jacqueline Kennedy once reminded her children: "Remember WHO you ARE." That was bad advice, if indeed she gave it. The message of God to those who are judging others and themselves with respect of persons would read more like this: "Forget WHO you ARE and WHO they ARE" and start considering WHAT you and they ARE."

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13 -- IT IS NOT GOOD TO SEEK ONE'S OWN GLORY -- Proverbs 25:27 reads: "It is not good to eat much honey: so for men to search their own glory is not glory." It will sicken a man to eat too much honey. That is not good. It is even worse to sicken one's soul by feasting on self-aggrandizement and self-glorification. The following is good advice for those who in many ways are repeatedly telling the world, "I'M THE GREATEST!" Proverbs 27:2 "Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth; a stranger, and not thine own lips."

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14 -- IT IS NOT GOOD TO KOW-TOW TO OBTAIN A LIVING -- The KJV of Proverbs 28:21 reads: "To have respect of persons is not good: for for a piece of bread that man will transgress." The NIV puts it: "To show partiality is not good-- yet a man will do wrong for a piece of bread." In condemning the House of Eli, God said: "And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left in thine house shall come and crouch to him [God's faithful priest] for a piece of silver and a morsel of bread, and shall say, Put me, I pray thee, into one of the priests' offices, that I may eat a piece of bread." God told Eli's house that He was going to raise up "a faithful priest," and even though while Eli's house held the priesthood they would never have shown the faithful priest respect -- yet in order to get "a piece of silver and a piece of bread" they would "crouch to him". The fact is, once put out of office, the house of Eli would "crouch to anyone" who would favor them with a living!

ARE YOU GETTING THE POINT? God has no respect for those who will "crouch" and "kow-tow" to anyone and anything -- just to have a sufficient income and sustenance! Obsequious, sycophantic, boot-licking, apple-polishers who will compromise and sacrifice any and every principle -- and who will bow-to and curry the favor of anyone who will give them a living are not only foreign to the true ministry -- they are foreign to God, and shall be foreign to Heaven. A preacher who will "preach it however they want it here" in order to have an income is emulating the behavior of the house of Eli and violating the commands of God! For a season, he may occupy a mansion, but it will not be located in the New Jerusalem.

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15 -- IT IS NOT GOOD TO HOPE IN THE SALVATION OF ANOTHER -- Ezekiel 18:18 "As for his father, because he cruelly oppressed, spoiled his brother by violence, and did that which is not good among his people, lo, even he shall die in his iniquity." This verse is found in the context where God, through the prophet Ezekiel, is making it exceedingly clear that nobody in a household is going to "live" spiritually and eternally because another in that family is saved. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, nor the father of the son. Each must finally and eternally "live" or "die" in accordance with their individual deeds -- unless the evil in those deeds has been forsaken and forgiven before Judgment Day arrives. In a nut-shell, the above verse teaches that "it is not good" to do evil, and expect to "live" in heaven -- just because somebody else in one's family was righteous.

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16 -- IT IS NOT GOOD TO MARRY AND THEN GET A DIVORCE -- Mat 19:9-10 "And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery. His disciples say unto him, If the case of the man be so with his wife, it is not good to marry."

Indeed, "it is not good to marry," if you think that you can just "jump back out of it any time you desire to do so"! God hates putting away! -- (Mal. 2:16) -- and His will regarding marriage can be summed up in 6 SHORT WORDS: "ONE MAN, ONE WIFE, FOR LIFE"!

In the next verse Jesus commented on -- (NOT HIS OWN STATEMENT, BUT) -- HIS DISCIPLES' ASSERTION THAT "IT IS NOT GOOD TO MARRY" by stating: "All men cannot receive this saying [that "it is not good to marry"], save they to whom it is given" (Mat. 19:11).

For some, it is God's will that they not marry, and "they to whom" this knowledge "is given" should not marry. FOR ALL WHO DO MARRY -- IT IS GOD'S WILL THAT THEY STAY MARRIED! I have heard or read of a preacher who rather flippantly said: "I marry a few and bury a few; I don't know about all of those I marry, but those I bury, stay buried!"

The solemn fact is, however, that none who are "buried" shall "stay buried"! All shall arise and go to the Great White Throne Judgment, and many who have sinned by not "staying married" shall face that transgression on that Great Day of the Lord.

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17 -- IT IS NOT GOOD FOR A CHURCH TO OVERLOOK SIN IN THEIR MIDST -- 1 Corinthians 5:6 "Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?" The Corinthian Church boasted of many gifts, and they fancied that another one of their gifts was that of a "forgiving magnanimity" -- so loving, they thought, that they could overlook ongoing acts of sexual uncleanness by one of their members. He and the one with whom he was committing these fornications had not repented of their deeds -- yet, some in the Church at Corinth were quite willing to let him remain in good standing -- with a tolerance of which they even boasted! -- thinking it to be an evidence of their great love and grace!

Such an attitude did not set well with the apostle Paul. As being present in their midst in his spirit, Paul acted with his apostolic authority and delivered the man "unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus" (1 Cor. 5:5).

I wonder how many churches today are boasting of the same false gift of "forgiving magnanimity" toward those in their midst who are known to be presently involved in sexual uncleanness? When a Church tolerates known sin, they do not thereby grow in grace, but rather they grow in disgrace, both in the eyes of God and in the eyes of a watching and judging world! "A little" of such "leaven, leaveneth the whole lump" and, unless both the tolerated sin and the sin of toleration are repented of, God will in due season cast the whole loaf into His Gehenna Garbage Dump!

It was not the indulgent toleration of the Corinthian Church that later brought that man to repentance -- saving both him and the Church -- it was the severe and uncompromising acts of the sin-hating Paul that brought this about.

Blessed is the Church Leader and Church that will not tolerate evil in their midst, but who will courageously "purge out" that "old leaven" so as to preserve the entire "lump" from further moral decay and eternal destruction.

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08 -- THE KEEPING FOR WHICH CHRIST PRAYED

John 17:14 I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. 15 I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. 16 They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. 17 Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

The keeping of his disciples for which Christ prayed in John 17:15, was NOT a monastic keeping! His little band of initial followers were already quite separate from the world, and it was not for their even more complete, physical, bodily, removal from society that Christ prayed.

He prayed, rather, for the INWARD KEEPER -- THE HOLY GHOST -- to so thoroughly purge their hearts and so completely fill them by His sanctifying power and presence within them, that they COULD, AND WOULD BE KEPT, without a human monitor guiding and guarding their every move!

Let me enlarge upon this: -- In John 17:12, Jesus earlier told the Father, "While I was with them in the world, I kept them..." Before their Pentecost, the disciples needed the bodily presence of Christ "with them," and so long as He accompanied them and they were guided and guarded by Him, He "kept them" -- and they needed this constant monitoring -- a monitoring, that while it was Divine, was also the monitoring of the Man, Christ Jesus.

But God's wisdom ordained that such monitoring was only to last until Christ's ascension, until shortly before the keeping for which Christ prayed was poured out on Pentecost. Then it was, that Christ, in the Person of the Holy Spirit, began to be the INWARD KEEPER of His people, giving each of them the very personal and individual guidance they needed to make the right moral and spiritual choices constantly -- every day, every hour, every moment, everywhere!

While with them bodily, Jesus kept them, but He saw that as the Church expanded and grew, it would be impossible for Him to be bodily with each of the millions of Christians everywhere, and at all times. God did not will that Christ multiply himself bodily countless millions of times so as to accompany and monitor every new follower, and thus keep him, or her, from evil.

The very thought of such a thing strikes us as absurd!

But, there is something else that is also absurd, but which does not seem so absurd to many -- and that is: **IT IS ABSURD FOR THE CHURCH TO USE THE HUMAN MONITORING METHOD NOW AS IF IT WAS THE PRIMARY, AND MOST IMPORTANT WAY TO KEEP FOLKS FROM EVIL!**

When there is a threat or fear that some new invention may lead folks astray -- too much of the time Holiness Folks are enclined to call for a Board Meeting to write a rule against its use, instead of calling for a Prayer Meeting to call down Holy Ghost revival that will put the INWARD KEEPER SO PURELY AND POWERFULLY WITHIN THEIR MEMBERS HEARTS THAT NO MATTER WHAT THE TEMPTATION, NOR WHENCE IT COMES, THEY WILL NOT INDULGE IN ANYTHING WORLDLY, OR WICKED!

In effect, Christ prayed in John 17: "These, my followers are already separated from the world. Father, I do not pray for their further isolation from the world. I pray, rather, that you will "sanctify them" -- set them apart inwardly -- and place My Spirit within them in so purely, powerfully, and constantly, that I shall thus "keep them from the evil."

Before Pentecost, Christ DID tell his disciples: "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel," BUT.... He knew that there was danger in their doing this BEFORE THE INWARD MONITOR PURGED AND FILLED THEIR HEARTS. Thus, He commanded them in Acts 1:4 "that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father" before they

launched forth into all the world. But -- AFTER PENTECOST, Christ willed that the Great Commission be fulfilled -- and that by a crowd so filled with the Holy Ghost that they could safely, without human policing, invade the world from pole to pole and around the globe, spreading scriptural holiness -- without becoming a part of the world.

The real answer to the increased threat of worldliness and wickedness today is not more rules, but more religion -- more heartfelt, INWARDLY "PURE RELIGION" that is "undefiled before God and the Father" and which enables the sanctified Christian to go into all the world "to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction" in every place, in every legitimate way, and still "keep himself unspotted from the world" (James 1:27).

The bodily presence of even Christ Himself is not "thy keeper" (to say nothing of the human monitoring of some other follower of Christ); not even the Bible alone is "thy keeper" (to say nothing of the multiplied rules in thousands of church manuals); INWARDLY, IN HIS SANCTIFYING PRESENCE -- "THE LORD IS THY KEEPER"!

Read now below, just how totally, the Lord, Thy Inward Keeper does this work:

"He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: he that keepeth thee will not slumber. Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep. The LORD is thy keeper: the LORD is thy shade upon thy right hand. The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night. The LORD shall preserve thee from all evil: he shall preserve thy soul. The LORD shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore" (Psalm 121:3-8).

Dear HDM User, and Reader -- as we embark upon the second year of this third millennium, we may see and experience even more dramatic and traumatic developments than those we have seen since that never-to-be-forgotten "Black Tuesday," September 11, 2001.

As your faithful, and totally able, INWARD KEEPER during 2002, may "The LORD bless thee, and keep thee: The LORD make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: The LORD lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace" (Numbers 6:24-26).

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IF, FOR THE CHILD OF GOD

A Revision of Rudyard Kipling's poem "If" -- By DVM

If you can keep God's Grace when all about you
Are losing Grace and blaming it on you,
If you can stay the Course when all men doubt you,
And never vary from the Way that's True,

If you can wait and not be tired of waiting,
Or being lied about, don't deal in lies,
Or being hated, don't give way to hating,
And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise:

If you can dream -- and not make dreams your master,
If you can think -- and not make thoughts your aim;
If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster
And treat those two impostors just the same;

If you can bear to hear the truth you've spoken
Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools,
Or watch the things you gave your life to, broken,
And stoop and build 'em up with worn-out tools:

If you can make one heap of all your winnings
And count them all but naught to bear the cross,
And lose the world with all its tinsel trimmings
And never once consider it a loss;

If you can press ahead when nerve and sinew
Are all exhausted and your strength is gone,
And stand your ground when seems there's nothing in you
Except God's Voice that says to you, "Hold On!"

If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,
Or walk with kings--nor lose the common touch,
If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you;
If all men count with you, but none too much,

If you can fill each quickly passing minute
With sixty seconds' worth of distance run,
Yours shall be Heaven and all that's dwelling in it,
And evermore, you'll be with Christ, God's Son!

--Rudyard Kipling Revised by DVM

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THE END