

## **PTB 8 of 48: Bottom Line on Righteousness and Law in 3 parts.**

### **INTRODUCTION:**

**To see the continuing of this Message in three parts, what will be considered is:**

**I. Bottom line of The Bible outline on Righteousness of God and Man summarized.**

**II. Idolatry.**

**III. Rivers of Living Water from Jesus.**

We are all aware of the compromises being made now for Judaisers in Messianic Judaism and similar popular movements to respect the Law more along with Jesus of Nazareth as the Christ more. It is good in that this respects the Word of God of the completeness of the fulness of the Gentiles and the increased hope for the Jewish salvation has now come in. Of course, this compromise is fraught with several dangers. For example, Scofield mites and Messianic Judaizers rightly see the return of Israel to the Promised Land as fulfillment of the Scripture, and true, you see it clearly for example in the first half of Zechariah 14; however, masters of half truth or bent truth they fail to present the second half of Zechariah 14 which is that only half of Jerusalem at the END will be saved.

Here is the bottom line of Jews and Gentiles: the cause of Christ clearly states in Ephesians and backed up with the details of Galatians and Romans that the Jews in the sight of God, God and Christ have become equals in the body of Christ which is the church of the firstborn written in heaven. However, of course from the perspective of God working in history it is stated in Ephesians from the Gentile perspective that they would become one in the body of Christ, for there is no doubt that Israel was the original chosen of God to be His people.

This matter of Jew and Gentiles is mixed in with the matter of Law, for you must say that the Jews as in the current state of Israel, at least those few that pay attention to religion at all, consider their greatest contribution to the world to be Moses and the Law, hence you see all their emphasis today on the Talmud, which is the first 5 books of the Bible, the Law of Moses; and a corresponding emphasis on striving to reach them with mixing certain laws of the Law with the Messianic hopes. Scofield mites neglect so much real Bible, in favor of the non-existent in the Bible words of rapture, millennium, and dispensationalism (how then can they be literal and the disaster in the SBC be a conservative resurgence), that the Scofield mites and Judaizers ignore the edict of Pastor James of Jerusalem and Peter and Paul, the first a Jewish fisherman and the second a lawyer of the Jewish nation, declaring in the first century not to lay any requirements of the law on any believer, Jew or Gentile. (You see, this is how equality of ONeness in the body of Christ first showed itself, or at least secondarily.)

What was the conclusion of the Apostles and elders gathered at Jerusalem for the great circumcision conference (Acts 15)? That (1) since God has given to Jews and Gentiles the gift of the Holy Spirit, there is no difference; (2) it is a sign that both the Jewish believing heart and the Gentiles believing heart are purified by faith; (3) it is tempting God to put a yoke on Jews or Gentiles that it was obvious in OT days the Hebrew forefathers were not able to bear (more about this momentarily as we continue with what the Law could not do in that it was weak according to the flesh, Acts 15:10); (4) then in what might be considered a first statement of faith of all Christianity, those assembled Christians decided **“But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they.” (Acts 15:11)**

No, even as today the Jewish Christians, who at that time outnumbered the Gentile Christians, did not take easily this perspective from God and the Holy Spirit. THEY WERE SILENT.

**“Then all the multitude kept silence, and gave audience to Barnabas and Paul, declaring what miracles and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them. And after they had held their peace, James answered, saying, Men and brethren, hearken unto me: Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things.**

**Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.” (Acts 15:12-18)**

**NOTE: In a later message, we must discuss how that Tabernacle of David, through Jesus was and is set up. Let it be said right now, that it in no way justifies the false claims of the Scofield mites and Messianic Judaizers that this requires a non-existent in the Bible second kingdom of God on earth and in Jerusalem that the Hebrews rule.**

Isn't it amazing the difference in the historical perspective then and now? THEN, the Jewish Christians were debating about letting the Gentile Christians into the church; NOW, the Gentile Christians are debating on how to get the Jewish Christians into the church. And the sad part is that with the influences of the Scofield mites and the Messianic Judaizers, the stand and statement of faith made at First Century Jerusalem is being compromised. Here, however, the bottom line is that known and controlled by God are all His works from the beginning, and not only in Zechariah 14 did He declare ahead of time some of those works that the Jews today, at least some of them, would be restored to their own Promised Land, but He just as clearly declared in the same chapter that Jesus Himself with one foot on Mount Olives and one foot on ,would save one half of all in Jerusalem at the END, thus making complete the One body in Christ of the Church of the firstborn written in heaven.

Back to the Law which really today and then separated the Jews and Gentiles, and the Law particularly in the ten commandments has clearly become the standard for morality and ethics throughout the world. Yet as Paul makes clear in Romans, the chief contribution of the Jewish nation to the world and to Christianity is that to them were given the oracles of God. Jesus was a Jew; Paul was a Jew; all our common forefathers in the faith were Hebrews like Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Moses; and in fact all the Apostles of Christianity and the Prophets of the OT were Hebrew Jews.

By the way, it is important to note that the first usage of the word Hebrew in the Bible is in Genesis 14:13 where Abraham was called a Hebrew; and of course most know that Jew is short for Jerusalem or for a citizen of Jerusalem.

Without covering the whole Bible in one message, we must get on with the sermon for the day which is on "Righteousness of man and God" or what is really right in the world of God the Father? As Dr. Lee would say, the request is that you for a few moments cast your mental tents of three parts: (1) the Law in the Old Testament interpreted by the NT; (2) Idolatry, the chief sin of the Hebrew nations; and (3) Rivers of Living Water through faith in Christ, the cure for the two evils of Israel in Jeremiah and from God Himself that (a) they had forsake God and (b) they had hewn out broken cisterns that could hold not water.

1. Sometimes Aish gets the Torah right as in this quote: (Of course anything based on the Bible, even part of it, has to have some right.

6. *What does God ask of you except to fear Him? (Deuteronomy 10:12)*

*Moses tells this to the Children of Israel in his words of rebuke at the end of his life. You think religion is so hard and demanding? You're afraid to get started? When you really come down to it, God asks only one thing of us – that we care about Him. Live with the reality that God is there. He loves and cares for us, but He insists that we live up to our potential. We cannot hide from Him. If we only live with that awareness, all else will follow naturally.*

{ <https://www.aish.com/sp/ph/Six-Famous-Questions-from-the-Torah.html?s=mm> }

2. *Of course like they have done for generations the conservative Judaizers take Scripture out of context, Look briefly at Deuteronomy 10 in total context.*

**At that time the Lord said to me, "Chisel out two stone tablets like the first ones and come up to me on the mountain. Also make a wooden ark.<sup>[a]</sup> I will write on the tablets the words that were on the first tablets, which you broke. Then you are to put them in the ark."**

<sup>3</sup> So I made the ark out of acacia wood and chiseled out two stone tablets like the first ones, and I went up on the mountain with the two tablets in my hands. <sup>4</sup> The Lord wrote on these tablets what he had written before, the Ten Commandments he had proclaimed to you on the mountain, out of the fire, on the day of the assembly. And the Lord gave them to me. <sup>5</sup> Then I came back down the mountain and put the tablets in the ark I had made, as the Lord commanded me, and they are there now.

<sup>6</sup> (The Israelites traveled from the wells of Bene Jaakan to Moserah. There Aaron died and was buried, and Eleazar his son succeeded him as priest. <sup>7</sup> From there they traveled to Gudgodah and on to Jotbathah, a land with streams of water. <sup>8</sup> At that time the Lord set apart the tribe of Levi to carry the ark of the covenant of the Lord, to stand before the Lord to minister and to pronounce blessings in his name, as they still do today. <sup>9</sup> That is why the Levites have no share or inheritance among their fellow Israelites; the Lord is their inheritance, as the Lord your God told them.)

<sup>10</sup> Now I had stayed on the mountain forty days and forty nights, as I did the first time, and the Lord listened to me at this time also. It was not his will to destroy you.

<sup>11</sup> “Go,” the Lord said to me, “and lead the people on their way, so that they may enter and possess the land I swore to their ancestors to give them.”

Fear the Lord

<sup>12</sup> And now, Israel, what does the Lord your God ask of you but to fear the Lord your God, to walk in obedience to him, to love him, to serve the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, <sup>13</sup> and to observe the Lord’s commands and decrees that I am giving you today for your own good?

<sup>14</sup> To the Lord your God belong the heavens, even the highest heavens, the earth and everything in it. <sup>15</sup> Yet the Lord set his affection on your ancestors and loved them, and he chose you, their descendants, above all the nations – as it is today.

<sup>16</sup> Circumcise your hearts, therefore, and do not be stiff-necked any longer. <sup>17</sup> For the Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who shows no partiality and accepts no bribes. <sup>18</sup> He defends the cause of the fatherless and the widow, and loves the foreigner residing among you, giving them food and clothing. <sup>19</sup> And you are to love those who are foreigners, for you yourselves were foreigners in Egypt. <sup>20</sup> Fear the Lord your God and serve him. Hold fast to him and take your oaths in his name. <sup>21</sup> He is the one you praise; he is your God, who performed for you those great and awesome wonders you saw with your own eyes. <sup>22</sup> Your ancestors who went down into Egypt were seventy in all, and now the Lord your God has made you as numerous as the stars in the sky.

**I. The Ten Commandments according to Jesus and the Apostles, recorded in the New Testament and quoted from the OT, then explained for the proper meaning. A reminder, the Bible through the authorship of God the Holy Spirit is self-interpretative.**

NOTE: the bottom line of the Law, especially the 10 commands, is that given by the Holy Spirit to the Apostle Paul in Romans 10, and it is the bottom line for Israel today and Gentiles today, summarized as the broken cisterns are works of "going about to establish their own righteousness". Of course, both Jew and Gentile today have many creative ways, assisted by sin and Satan and pride of life, to strive to establish and justify their own existence and rightness, or righteousness.

## Romans 10 New King James Version (NKJV)

### Israel Needs the Gospel

"Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for [a]Israel is that they may be saved. For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

For Moses writes about the righteousness which is of the law, "The man who does those things shall live by them." 6 But the righteousness of faith speaks in this way, "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?' " (that is, to bring Christ down from above) 7 or, " 'Who will descend into the abyss?' " (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). 8 But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith which we preach): 9 that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. 11 For the Scripture says, "Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame." 12 For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him. 13 For "whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved."

1. Exodus 20, Luke 18:20, Mark 7:10, Matthew 5:38, Romans 13:8,9, and James 2:11. **{These are the Ten Commandments according to Jesus and the Apostles.}**

2. Exodus 21:17 and Mark 7:10: speaking evil of mother and father was considered so serious to God that those who did such were to be put to death.

3. Exodus 21:24 and Matthew 5:38: under the law it was to be life for life, eye for eye, and tooth for tooth so greatly did God respect human life and welfare and desire Israel to do the same.

4. Exodus 32:6 and I Corinthians 10:7: Paul reminds Christians at Corinth not to be idolaters even as the children of Israel were while Moses was on Mount Sinai getting the Ten Commandments.

There is a lot of sentimental slop about Mount Sinai today from both the Jewish Aish society and the fictions of the Scofield mites such as John Hagee, sort of like efforts to rewrite history. What we need is to get a better perspective from a lawyer expert of the

first century, a Hebrew himself, the Apostle Paul who wrote in I Corinthians 10 about the true events of Mount Sinai.

**“Moreover, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware that all our fathers were under the cloud, all passed through the sea, <sup>2</sup> all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, <sup>3</sup> all ate the same spiritual food, <sup>4</sup> and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ. <sup>5</sup> But with most of them God was not well pleased, for *their bodies* were scattered in the wilderness.**

**<sup>6</sup> Now these things became our examples, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted. <sup>7</sup> And do not become idolaters as *were* some of them. As it is written, “The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.” <sup>8</sup> Nor let us commit sexual immorality, as some of them did, and in one day twenty-three thousand fell; <sup>9</sup> nor let us <sup>[a]</sup>tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed by serpents; <sup>10</sup> nor complain, as some of them also complained, and were destroyed by the destroyer. <sup>11</sup> Now <sup>[b]</sup>all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our <sup>[c]</sup>admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.**

**<sup>12</sup> Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall. <sup>13</sup> No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God *is* faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to <sup>[d]</sup>bear *it*.**

1. The real scope on Mount Sinai and the wilderness wanderings, with the unnecessary 40 more years attached, is clearly presented by this Hebrew scholar of the first century as God was not pleased with most of them, only a remnant as always.

**“But with most of them God was not well pleased, for their bodies were scattered in the wilderness.” (I Corinthians 10:6)**

2. A Hebrew leader that was there at Mount Sinai in his last will and testament, Moses, what did he have to say in his farewell address to the nation. Many consider the whole book of Deuteronomy, which we will start considering next week as the Farwell Address of Moses, one such quote is from chapter 4—

**“<sup>32</sup> “Indeed, ask now concerning the former days which were before you, since the day that God created man on the earth, and inquire from one end of the heavens to the other. Has anything been done like this great thing, or has anything been heard like it? <sup>33</sup> Has any people heard the voice of God speaking from the midst of the fire, as you have heard it, and survived? <sup>34</sup> Or has a god tried to go to take for himself a nation from within another nation by trials, by signs and wonders and by war and by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm and by great terrors, as the Lord your God did for you in Egypt before your eyes? <sup>35</sup> To you it was shown that you might know that the Lord, He is God; there is no other besides Him. <sup>36</sup> Out of the heavens He let you hear His voice to discipline**

you; and on earth He let you see His great fire, and you heard His words from the midst of the fire. 37 Because He loved your fathers, therefore He chose their descendants after them. And He personally brought you from Egypt by His great power, 38 driving out from before you nations greater and mightier than you, to bring you in and to give you their land for an inheritance, as it is today. 39 Know therefore today, and take it to your heart, that the Lord, He is God in heaven above and on the earth below; there is no other. 40 So you shall keep His statutes and His commandments which I am giving you today, that it may go well with you and with your children after you, and that you may live long on the land which the Lord your God is giving you for all time.”

3. Idolatry was the main problem at Sinai, the main problem in the United Kingdom of Israel under David and Solomon, and during the dispersion the Jews learned above all not to make idols; yet idolatry did not stop, only new ways were found like the rest of the Gentile world to commit idolatry. Just before the destruction of Jerusalem during the time of the Prophet Jeremiah, God Himself spoke to Israel to identify that new form of Idolatry.

**“You have committed two evils, forsaken Me the fountain of living waters; and hewn out for yourselves cisterns, broken cisterns that will hold no water.”**

II. The Laws of a Holy God **{the laws went beyond the commandments to regulations, civil law which would be the law of the new nations, and how to organize}.**

Leviticus

1. Leviticus 4:18-20 and Hebrews 9:22: not a paraphrase or a quote, but rather in Hebrews 9:22 Paul summarizes what blood could do in the laws and ordinances of the Old Testament, the practices of which Leviticus 4:18-20 is typical.

2. Leviticus 11:44 and I Peter 1:16: God requires that His people be Holy since He Himself is Holy.

3. Leviticus 18:5,16 and Galatians 3:12: any person who desires to live under the Laws must live by keeping the Laws.

4. Leviticus 19:12 and Matthew 5:33.

(1). In these just and holy requirements of the Law of Leviticus since “I am the LORD”, His name is not to be sworn by falsely nor profaned.

(2). With this quote as a starting point, Jesus says don’t make any oath.

III. How Did the Law Read during the time of Jesus.

1. Luke 10:26: “And He **{Jesus}** said to him, ‘What is written in the Law’ How does it read to you?” (NASV)

2. Leviticus 19:18 and Luke 10:27: (1) To Love God with all the heart, mind, and soul; and (2) To Love your neighbor as yourself.

3. Leviticus 18:5 and Luke 10:28: "And He (Jesus) said to him, 'You have answered correctly; DO THIS, AND YOU WILL LIVE.'" (NASV) **{NOTE: If you could really do this, keep these laws, you would live eternally. If now and during NT times, as the Scriptures tell us is true, that is if "the law is our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ, was it also the schoolmaster to bring the remnant of the remnant in OT times to Christ. I think so, although they looked forward to the atonement while we look behind; and we are told that the Gospel was preached to Abraham, how can we fail to see that it was also preached to all God's people of the OT times. Indeed, we will see how much in the last chapters, with all the "Prophet Messiah" references in the Prophets, how much really the Writing Prophets did speak of Christ, and of the Gospel aspects of Christ. Can we say then that God's people of the OT, like the Gentiles and the Jews of whom Paul wrote in Romans, that "they are without excuse for their sins".}**

IV The Laws Jesus Came to Fulfill, not Destroy.

1. Leviticus 19:18 and Matthew 5:43: You have been told to love your neighbors and hate your enemies'

2. Be like God (Matthew 5:44,45): **"But I say to you, love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you in order that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous."** (NASV)

## *II. Idolatry!*

Jeremiah realized in Jeremiah 8:18 to 9:6 that "Judah's idolatry is incurable" **{from Sampey in the heart of the Old Testament}**, the readers of Jeremiah do not fully comprehend that until the events and dialogue in Egypt as recorded in Jeremiah 44. And that is understandable as this was the first time that the women and their husbands openly admitted that they would continue to worship and

burn incense to the Queen of Heaven. Moreover all the Jews in Egypt gave a reply of rebellion to Jeremiah against the Word of God.

"As for the word that you have spoken to us in the name of the LORD, we will not listen to you! But we will certainly do whatever has gone out of our own mouth, to burn incense to the queen of heaven and pour out drink offerings to her, as we have done, we and our fathers, our kings and our princes, in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem. For then we had plenty of food, were well-off, and saw no trouble. But since we stopped burning incense to the queen of heaven and pouring out drink offerings to her, we have lacked everything and have been consumed by the sword and famine."  
(Jeremiah 44:17,18)

NOTE: It is true that with the commitment to follow God comes a cross. It can not always be peace and prosperity, that is not guaranteed as promoters of the false gospel of prosperity claim {see "False Gospel of Prosperity online at [www.biblecombibleman.com](http://www.biblecombibleman.com)}. At the peak revelation of the cross that comes with commitment, of course in the New Testament, comes, "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."

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*16-1: Faith in the Living God Leaves, Confusion Appears.*

God's People, leaders in government and religion, and the people themselves became thoroughly confused once they had secretly while still in Jerusalem and Judah given up faith in the Living God. It was easy for them after forsaking the God of the fountain of living waters, to make many broken cisterns of idols that could hold no water. They didn't know whether to worship and service all these idols of other countries or Yahweh, so that tried to do both.

1. In the official temple services as described in Jeremiah 7 and 23, they officially worshiped the Living God, the LORD God, with words like these:

"The temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD are these", repeating it in a praise chant of worship as worshippers do often today with such repetitive and meaningless words when they are not sure what they believe.

2. Yet secretly throughout the parts of the Temple as Ezekiel witnessed in horror as God took him from Assyria to Jerusalem for a tour of the Temple, there were 4

groups of idolaters worshipping many different idols. Barclay's commentaries call what Ezekiel was allowed to see, and recorded in Ezekiel 8:1-18, about the real condition of the Temple, "The Art of Idolatry".

*"The four scenes with which this great vision begins, taken together, form a comprehensive condemnation of Israel's worship. All were involved, with no exception. {this hasty generalization we must later question in more detail as we know that both Daniel and his three friends of the fiery furnace were once part of Temple and city activity in Jerusalem before captivity in Babylon, and even before that Ezekiel, a prophet in Jerusalem, had been taken captive to Assyria earlier, likewise like in the time of King Ahab, Jezebel, and the Prophet Elijah, we suspect that both the prophets Jeremiah and Elijah were not aware "of the 7,000 which God had reserved for Himself who had not bowed their knees to Baal} The idol of Asherah at the north gate indicated the popular worship of the people. The secret room of sacrilegious murals demonstrated the distinctive failure of the nation's leaders, the elders. The weeping women illustrated the loss of faith in the Living God. And, in the midst of it all, even the priests ere turning backwards in their misdirected attempts at worship. And not only were all the people engaged in this folly; they were without discrimination in their choice of idols. The idol of Asherah represented the religion of Canaan; the secret murals were drawn from the religion of Egypt. The weeping women turned to a god of Babylon, while the priests worshipped the sun, whose cult was practiced in almost every nation of the ancient Near East."*

What shocked Ezekiel most, and the Jewish elders in Assyria to whom he told the visions was how far gone into idol worship 70 of the most prominent leaders in Jerusalem, those he spied through a hole in the wall as they worshipped all kinds of creeping things from murals on the wall. These were some of the best of the best in Judah, and which included Jaazaniah whose father Shaphan had been a large part of the previous reform under King Josiah.

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*16-2: Idols and Idolatry in America Like in Jerusalem of Jeremiah.*

A Little Frank Discussion on Idols and Idolatry: Can this wickedness of idolatry be applied to God's people of the United States today, in spite of never hearing the names of idols like Baal, Asherah, the Queen of Heaven, and the Sun god, etc.?

For example, we were shocked to learn in the message **{Advanced Bible Studies in Jeremiah}** "Dreamers of Deceit and Delay" that the peculiar group of Southern Baptists known before take-over of the SBC as Bible Baptists, and other religious groups today, are guilty of the same kind of deceit on God's people as the official prophets and priests of Jeremiah's time; that is, first they contradicted God by saying that Judah would not go into Babylonian Captivity, and then once in Captivity, they said it would be a short time. **{This is the same kind of deceit about the immediate future that leads these fundamentalists and others to postulate a fictitious rapture before the Second Coming, and one thousand years that delays the second coming of Christ.}** In short, since we have a cult or religious body here in charge of a large body of God's people, the fundamentalists running the SBC, practicing deceit and delay, is it also possible that this same large body is guilty of the most gross of all national sins on the part of Judah, that of idolatry. We don't want to think so; however, sins like friends are known by their company; and from exegesis we must determine the similarities between most of God's people at the destruction of Jerusalem, and in Egypt, and similarities to God's people today. And all of this must be done with both great intellectual honesty, contemporary history, and the sociology of religion today.

**NOTE: Surely, we are not yet ready to say from our Advanced Studies in Jeremiah, that the fundamentalists are also guilty of idolatry simply because they have been deceivers of deceit on eschatology. The two national sins went hand in hand for God's people of Judah, but must they also go hand in hand for the fundamentalists. Many of us have known some mighty good preachers who are wholeheartedly committed to the false rapture and fictitious one thousand years of Scofield, both false doctrines of which tend to delay by deceit in the minds of God's people the imminence of the Second Coming!**

1. First of all, even though many of us got jumpy after Bailey Smith made the statement that God does not hear the prayer of Jews--this being perceived by the extreme tolerance of most Americans as intolerance and discrimination, still it is true, and Jeremiah has the nerve to say so in Jeremiah 2:11, that anytime a god is worshipped in this country or elsewhere obviously not the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ, IT IS IDOLATRY, because these others, like in Judah before destruction, are not gods at all. "Has a nation changed its gods, which are not gods?" (Jeremiah 2:11)

You know we as Americans and Christians are always faced with two sociological choices: (1) we can practice intolerance toward sound doctrine "the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine..." (II Timothy 4:4,5), traveling further and more quickly down the road of the Falling Away until shortly within 40-80 years we move into the fourth and fifth stages of the Falling Away, turning away from truth and being turned into fables {yes, much like the confused worship of Jerusalem and the Temple for many idols}; or (2) Allow the American Democratic Faith of extreme tolerance for all gods and religion to dominate over our love of the sound doctrines of the Bible. This latter puts us in the peculiar position of trying to admit the existence of a "god" that does not really exist!

2. We must get back to the seriousness of the first two commandments about "having no other gods before" the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ, and about "not making for yourselves images of this God or other gods, and not "bowing down to or serving other gods". You know, most of you preachers and otherwise, probably have not read them in a long time, perhaps because you think they are antiquated in spite of Jesus saying that He came to fulfill them rather than destroy them!

**"You shall have no other gods before Me. You shall not make for yourself a carved image--any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God {and you begin to comprehend how jealous God is as you study Ezekiel and Jeremiah}... (Exodus 20:3-5)**

**NOTE: Please never forget as such good preachers as Charles Allen in "God's Psychiatry" and "God's Pattern of Thinking" and good Christian writers as J.B. Phillips in "Your God is Too Small" have made the point that you are in violation of these first two commandments anytime you allow to be created in your mind a "concept" or mental image of God that is so unlike the God of the Bible and the God of the Lord Jesus Christ, the LORD God of Creation.<sup>1</sup> If you do not read, heed, and take seriously these first two commandments from the LORD God of the Universe, then naturally you run the risk of the confusion of idolatry like happened to God's people of Judah and Jerusalem.**

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<sup>1</sup>This author tried to deal with it in the book, "God Is Greater than Your Conscience", dealing with the contemporary trend in America where Americans use a social and collective conscience to justify a small image of the Great God.

3. In spite of the difficulty of finding any sermon preached, famous or otherwise, on idolatry, likewise a chapter in a commentary on Bible teaching book, still many good Christian preachers maintain that anytime you allow a thing, person, or even status or goal to take the place of first loyalty in your life over the God, you are in violation of the first commandments; and furthermore whatever image of God you must rationalize in your brain to justify such second place in loyalty toward God is a violation of the second commandment in that you make also an image of God. You see it doesn't have to be a god on a pole, or some entity like, since these gods do not really exist anyway. In fact, if you are honest about it, you will realize that since these other gods do not exist, and the only other supernatural being is Satan and his fellow demons, that as you worship other gods you are engaged in the milder forms of devil worship, if there is any such thing as mild demon worship. And you see that is exactly what the leading 70 men of Judah were doing in the basement of the Temple; in secret, they were worshipping Satan and his demons.

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*16-3: Judah's Idolatry is Incurable, Jeremiah 8:18 - 9:6.*

1. Reminders that had to be on the minds of Judah and Jerusalem, especially after the discovery of the Book of the Covenant {the law of Moses or the first five books of the Old Testament} under king Josiah. Quite often "Covenant" and the Ten Commandments or the law were used interchangeable.

a. In the "you shall have no other gods before me" of the NIV, the notes state about the word "before":

*"In Genesis 16:12 and 25:18, the Hebrew for this words is translated 'in hostility toward' which can be the same literal meaning in the second commandment of Exodus 20:3. In any event no other deity, real or imagined, is to rival the one true God in Israel's heart and life."*

b. Similar meaning is found in Exodus 20:23:

**"Do not make any gods to be alongside Me, do not make for yourselves gods of silver or gods of gold." (Exodus 20:23)**

In double jeopardy of two commandment violation are those rich, or would be rich and prosperous, that make silver and gold to be their priority, effectively make them idols in the place of the God.

c. The danger of being led astray by "the world", the community and environment around you is in the detail explanations of the 10 in the book of Deuteronomy and in the New Testament.

(1). "Do not follow other gods, the gods of the peoples around you..." (Deuteronomy 6:14)

(2). Ephesians 4:17-20.

"This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind, having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart; who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. But you have not so learned Christ."

2. Yet in spite of over 163 years of warning and chastisement on the judgment that would be actuated on them in the destruction of Jerusalem, and in spite of so many chastisements that there was no room on their back for more stripes, Jeremiah wrote; and with God getting up early and staying up late to send prophets to warn them of the consequences without repentance {the words or the Temple Message of Jeremiah was really "change your ways and doings}, they refuse to change their ways and doings, especially on the matter of Idolatry. And of course if you break the second commandment, you must also break the first commandment, once again double jeopardy.

3. God and Jeremiah began to mourn poetically as they realize that the Idolatry of God's people was incurable, beyond hope; and further that God, having already told the Prophet not to any longer pray for the people, now is ANGRY!

a. First God.

"Why have they provoked Me to anger with their carved images--with foreign idols? The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved!" (Jeremiah 8:19,20)

b. Then Jeremiah.

"Oh, that my head were waters, and my eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people! Oh,

that I had in the wilderness a lodging place for travelers, that I might leave my people, and go from them! For they are all adulterers, and assembly of treacherous men." (Jeremiah 9:1,2)

The daughter of the people is like the children of Judah in captivity in Babylon, where the cry of the daughter of my people come from a far country, actually two far country with the captive of Judah in Babylon and the captive of the northern kingdom of Israel in Assyria, some scattered to many other countries as in Joel 3:6, it is mentioned that some of the people of Judah and Jerusalem were sold to the Greeks, far from their borders.

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*16-4: Cause of the Coming Judgment--Idolatry--Ezekiel 6:1-14.*

1. The "Exile" was a process, rather than a couple of single dates, in both the northern kingdom of Israel and in the southern kingdom of Judah and Jerusalem; and Ezekiel agrees with Jeremiah that the single dominant cause of this captivity and exile was IDOLATRY. From 734-722 B.C. the Assyrians made repeated raids against Israel and warfare, some killed, and some taken east to Assyria. Tiglath-pilezer first carried the people east of the Jordan and in Galilee captive, and then in 722 B.C. the people of Samaria were taken into the land of the Medes. The Babylonian exile of the southern kingdom of Judah and Jerusalem was similar in that it started as early as 605 B.C., the same year that Daniel and many other of the nation's finest were carried captive to Babylon; in 587 B.C. Jehoiachin and many people were taken captive; and then the total destruction of Jerusalem and the temple came in 587 by the Chaldeans, Zedekiah and most of the remaining people were carried also to Babylon. Actually Ezekiel, formerly a priest before becoming a prophet 5 years after captivity in Babylon, was taken captive in the bunch with King Jehoiachin in 587 B.C.

According to Sampey in THE HEART OF THE OLD TESTAMENT:

*"Jeremiah and Ezekiel taught their people that the captivity itself was brought about by Israel's God as a chastisement for their idolatry and immorality. The Exile {70 years for Judah} was Jehovah's school of discipline for His rebellious people."*

2. While Jeremiah's messages were primarily for Judah, where Jeremiah remained even after under the land was under the rule of Babylon and with the vassal

governor Gedaliah, Ezekiel was first in Judah as a priest then in 587 was taken captive by Babylon to the southern part of the country where after 5 years he began his prophesy.

"On the fifth day of the month, which was in the fifth year of King Jehoiachin's captivity, the word of the LORD came expressly to Ezekiel the priest, the son of Buzi, in the land of the Chaldeans {or Babylonians} by the River Chebar..." (Ezekiel 1:2,3)

### 3. A Preliminary Outline of Ezekiel as given by Block in the NEW INTERNATIONAL COMMENTARIES.

#### a. PART I: Message of Doom and Gloom for Judah/Israel (1:1-24:27)

(1). Call of Ezekiel to the Prophetic Ministry (1:1-3:27).

(2). Signs and Visions of Woe for Israel/Judah (4:1-11:25).

(3). Collection of Prophecies of Woe Against Israel (12:1-24:27).

4. It is in Ezekiel 6:1-14, obviously in the "Signs and Visions of Woe for Israel and Judah, that Ezekiel makes a strong case of IDOLATRY against the total nation of Israel, Judah and the northern kingdom.

"Then those of you who escape {are not killed initially} will remember Me among the nations where they are carried captive, because I was crushed by their adulterous heart {like in the Prophet Hosea and in Jeremiah, lack of loyalty to the LORD God is called adultery also here in Ezekiel} which has departed from Me, and by their eyes which play the harlot after their idols {you know this almost borders on adultery as taught by Jesus when a man looks on a woman with lust in his heart, something quite often not obvious to the Moral Majority}; they will loathe themselves for the evils which they committed in all their abominations {recall how the Temple message of Jeremiah in chapters 7 and 23 spoke of the abominations in violations of the 10 commandments, of mistreatment of the people in the land, and of idols--you will recall in particular how the people in Jerusalem during temple worship had the nerve to say that "we are delivered to do all these abominations"}. And they shall know that I am the LORD; I have not said in vain that I would bring this calamity upon them." (Ezekiel 6:9)

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*16-5: Idolatry in the Chief of Prophets, Isaiah.*

Never forget that it was the Prophet Isaiah and Joel and others who made prophetic predictions of the inevitable destruction of Jerusalem in 587 B.C. In fact, you will recall what helped to spark the reformation under King Josiah was the accidental discovery of the Pentateuch in a closet of the Temple as they were in the process of clearing out all the idols. And this reading of the law shook up the King and the kingdom of Judah as it also predicted a destruction of Jerusalem! A quick survey of the word "idol" in Isaiah will show us how this master of Prophets dealt with Idolatry.

1. In Isaiah 2:8, after in 2:1, "The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem" comes words about "The Day of the LORD" because of what the house of Jacob is doing, "filled with eastern ways", soothsayers like the Philistines, and "their land is full of idols"--

**"They worship the work of their own hands, that which their own fingers have made. People bow down, and each man humbles himself; therefore do not forgive them." (Isaiah 2:8,9)**

**NOTE: Much of the idolatry in America today is found where individuals, especially the rich and wealth {for the distinction and proper definition see the last chapter}, are so committed to the inventions and constructions of their own hands {you know the self-made man sort of thing}, that this commitment has become more of a worship of "mammon" {man made objects} than of God.**

2. In this day of the LORD, a calamity of the second kind that leads to destruction of the whole earth, "when He arise to shake the earth mightily" (Isaiah 2:21), and the people of the world cast away their idols to the moles and bats (2:20) in order to hide in the cleft of the rocks during the world disintegration.

3. Isaiah proclamation against Egypt of 19:1 included both the "idols of Egypt" being tottered, and the heart of Egypt being melted.

4. More about judgment on Egypt in 19:2-4:

**"I will set Egyptians against Egyptians; everyone will fight against his brother, and everyone against his neighbor, city against city, kingdom against kingdom. The spirit of Egypt will fail in its midst; I will destroy their counsel, and they**

will consult the idols and the charmers, the mediums and the sorcerers. And the Egyptians I will give into the hand of a cruel master, and a fierce king will rule over them,' says the Lord, the LORD of hosts." (Isaiah 19:2-4)

Years later, Jeremiah also warned the Judah remnant at Mispah, who desired to escape to Egypt, that (1) God would "watch over them for adversity and not for good" since they went to Egypt against his will and refused to abstain for IDOLATRY, in particular on the Queen of Heaven; (2) even though a small number of Jews in Egypt would escape, most would be devoured by the 2 kinds of calamities of "famine" and "sword"; and (3) God will give Pharaoh Hophra, king of Egypt into the hand of his enemies as He previously gave Zedekiah, the king of Judah, into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon (Jeremiah 44:7-30).

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*16-6: Cause of Calamities: Worship and Service of other gods.*

It is always best to hear it in God's own words so that you know not only exactly what God said, but you also know what He was thinking. In Jeremiah 44:2,3, God says that all the calamity and destruction that came on Jerusalem and Judah, and all that about to come on the Jews in Egypt **{do you realize that this continued chastisement has further implications for the future up until now}**, is primarily because of THEIR WICKEDNESS TO WORSHIP AND SERVE OTHER GODS.

**NOTE: For more on this subject read the chapter on "Cause, Cure, and Curse of Idolatry" and "Calamities Chase Chastisement".**

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*16-7: "The Religion of Idols Is Foolish" (Jeremiah 10:8)*

Jeremiah 10:1-16 is called by Thompson "A Satire on Idolatry: Yahweh and the Idols."

**NOTE: You will want to read this for yourself straight from the Word of God to get the full impact. Please read it spiritually.**

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*16-8: Contrast 70 at Sinai with 70 in the Basement of the Temple.*

A Contrast between the Faith and Spiritually Filled Nature of the Seventy Prominent leaders at Mount Sinai as compared to the shameful 70 prominent leaders in the basement of the Temple confused with allegiance to other gods. The point is, then and now, that is ultimately comes down to a proper personal relationship and knowledge and faith in God with a corresponding filling of the Spirit of God, and then preaching {**prophesying**}.

These 70 leaders in the nation were secretly in the darkness of the basement of the temple, underground you might say, worshipping 70 distinct images or symbols on the wall, one for each of the towns and villages of Judah. Each had his own little cubicle as if hidden from the rest of the 70 so that he could burn incense in privacy and so worship the image on the wall. Surely there is no need to look for some kind of sexual acts in the privacy of these cubicles, although we do not that many of the idols of Judah and the surrounding neighbors did involve sexual acts. However, primarily these 70 false gods of Judah and Jerusalem were symbols of something like fertility, prosperity, peace, and so on and on in the same manner that Americans today create symbols to represent the prime motivations in their lives.

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*16-9: Sins, wickedness, or abominations, of America and Jeremiah, start with many words, phrases, and concepts; but eventually come back to just plain idolatry.*

1. Jeremiah's Concept of "den of thieves" starts with Idolatry.

Many times as you look at sin in the Bible, you are inclined to think that it is all IDOLATRY! Take the "Den of Thieves" concept of the Temple Message of Jeremiah 7:11, "Has this house, which is called by My name, become a den of thieves in your eyes?" The train of thought for this concept from God through Jeremiah starts to flow, with "the ways and doings" of Jeremiah 7:6 {another way to describe a life style of sins}, first consisted of (1) improper judgment between a man and his neighbor, (2) oppression of strangers in the land, fatherless, and widows, and (3) shed innocent blood, and with the bottom line, "walk after other gods to your hurt" (7:6c).

"walk after other gods" , this time with the modification "whom you do not know" (7:9) is repeated again in Jeremiah 7:9, only 3 verses later than above; and preceded by the sins of 10 commandment violation: steal, murder, commit adultery, swear falsely...

And the worse part in the sight of God comes in the next verse, Jeremiah 7:10, it would not, it seems, have been so bad if these sins had been committed by God's people while they were absent from the house of God; but God's people of Judah and Jerusalem had the nerve to come to church each week with all these abominations behind them, stating, "we do all these abominations, we are still here so that what we are doing must be right". In worship and service to God, each week at the Temple, they had to nerve to come into the very house of God, dedicated to the Great God of the Universe Himself, and named "as a house and temple of God" after the very name of God, stating as almost a profession of faith, "we are delivered to do all these abominations" (7:10)

2. The concept of "den of thieves" of Jeremiah comes back to Idolatry.

The issue and gist were THE DESECRATION OF THE HOUSE OF GOD AND THE NAME OF GOD. And the second part of the issue according to their God was that they thought they were hiding all these abominations and desecrations from God. {Remember how the 70 elders at this time in the temple basement of Jerusalem were worshipping and serving in the dark 70 idols of the cities of Judah, saying, (1) God does not see us, and (2) God has forgotten this land. {Perhaps this is where the term "God-forsaken land" came from.}}

**"Behold, I, even I, have seen it', says the LORD." (Jeremiah 7:11)**

God's people, just like any den of thieves, desires to do after a robbery, or murder, or some other crime, desired to run for the hills and hide at a known and secure place of hideout; unfortunately what God's people of the nation during the time of Jeremiah were doing, was making that hideout, or den of thieves, the very house of God! {Enough to make God angry, of course!}

3. Any desecration of a house of God comes back to idolatry, because to have to have in your mind and as part of your worship and service another god who will allow perverted uses of the house of God. You see, our God and the God of the Bible, the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ, does not allow such desecration.

a. When in Matthew 21:13,13 when Jesus Himself used the "den of thieves" phrase and concept of Jeremiah 7:11 and Isaiah 56:7, it was because religious businessmen had perverted the temple from "a house of prayer" to a "den of thieves". Specifically what were doing: (1) buying and selling in the temple area **{obviously a use of the temple of God for personal gain and profit}**; (2) exchanging money for a profit as worshippers needed to purchase with holy coin, also for a profit; and (3) selling doves in the temple area.

b. The other occasion of John 2:13-17 when Jesus drove out of the temple the sellers of oxen, sheep, and doves, and the money changers **{all doing business for profit in the temple area, an obvious desecration of the house of God}**, He made it clear that the house of God, in fact "His Father's house", was not to be made "a house of merchandise!" (John 2:16)

4. The Apostle Paul, writing Scripture under the inspiration of God, in Romans 2:22, and all in one sentence, makes the jump from "robbing temples" to idolatry; and you see how this was Old Testament based, especially from the Temple Message of Jeremiah 7 and 23, and also based on prior teachings of Jesus as He twice drove the moneychangers out of the temple.

**"You who abhor idols, do you rob temples?" (Romans 2:22)**

**NOTE: Many Americans and church members have one of their few convictions today, along with the false concept that they like the Jews before Paul and Jesus, were good people, also had the false conviction that above all they did not commit IDOLATRY. In fact, they hated idolatry. Yet the Word of God through Paul is once again saying that if you desecrate houses of God by a misuse of any purpose than for the service and worship of God, then you are an IDOLATER!**

5. Okay, we will take it one step further before the conclusion of this section and this chapter on IDOLATRY: **WHEN YOU COVET OR LUST AFTER SOMETHING, THAT SOMETHING BECOMES AN IDOL AND YOU ARE GUILTY IN THE SIGHT OF GOD OF IDOLATRY!**

Did you notice that in an earlier chapter, when we quoted from Ephesians 5:1-6, the startling phrase, "nor covetous man, who is an idolater", (Ephesians 5:5) equating the sin of covetousness with IDOLATRY! You know this is a serious sin in the sight of God for this covetous idolater, along with fornicators **{notice all these are**

**descriptions of a lifetime of continuous habits}**, and unclean person can not have any inheritance in the kingdom of God and Christ. Now, that is serious!

W. O. Carver in *THE GLORY OF GOD IN THE CHRISTIAN CALLING*, paraphrases this Scripture in the following words:

“For keep this constantly in your practical knowledge; every fornicator, or impure person, or man-of insatiable-passion, who is, in fact, nothing less than a sex-idolater, is barred from having any share in that Kingdom which is founded and constituted by the Christ and which under the dominion of the Christ, is also the realm of God.”

And translates Ephesians 5:5 in the body of the commentary as:

“For be well assured of this: that no fornicator or unclean person, or sex pervert, who really is an idolater (putting sex before all else) has any place in the kingdom of our (the) Christ and God.”

**NOTE: The parenthesis of “putting sex before all else” is from Carver, which really explains how covetousness can become Idolatry; and like any substitute for the worship and service of God, when that habit becomes a priority over service for God, it also becomes IDOLATRY!**

Jewish Hebrew or Gentile allow the Rivers of Living Waters from Jesus to replace all your Broken Cisterns.

### *III. Rivers of Living Water.*

We can read over it dozens of times and still miss the meaning unless it grabs our attention in a special way that the possibility exists that “Rivers of Living Water” can flow out of our own lives. The possibility and promise come from Jesus Himself.

**“He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.”  
(John 7:38)**

In order to understand this, and thereby also exercise this democratic privilege of prophecy, we must understand “heart” in the Bible as the very core of our inward man or being consisting of mind, emotions, and will. It is very closely related to “soul” or “spirit” in the Bible except the spirit of man has both the old man and the new man, both bad and good; and includes the conscience of man which can run all the way from good to bad with degrees in between.

The great importance of the whole inward core or heart of man is seen in the famous verse of Romans 10:10 where it is “with the heart” that man believes all the way to righteousness that is acceptable to God, and then with an expression of the outward man from the mouth, “confession is made” all the way to salvation. {You may desire to read it in the Bible now from Romans 10:10 and think on it; for the two-step process of salvation, (1) believe and (2) believing, is what this book is all about.} That is there is so little similarity to Christ and the average church today and with an ever increasing gap during these days of the once in a nation historical event of the Falling Away, bare obvious evidence in our current

environment that: (1) an increasing number of church members with the increase in unsound doctrines and practices of the Falling Away never get past the simple believe in the Lord Jesus Christ to the continuation of believing of the second step; and (2) that we hardly recognize the gift of prophecy and prophets in our local churches, which should be right up there with pastors, teachers, and evangelists. {If you do not immediately see the Biblical basis for this conclusion, then please go to Ephesians 4:11; and note please that it was the Ascended Christ who gave these gifts to the church and to men of the churches. I am sure you remember that Christ Ascended after He had lived on earth, and that was after all the Prophets of the Old Testament, so that prophets and prophecy--prophecy is what prophets do--is as much an office of the New Testament church as of the Old Testament. In fact, what we will find in this Preface to BIBLE REPORTS FOR BELIEVING is that prophets and prophecy became more widespread in New Testament times than Prophets and Prophecy in Old Testament times.}

**1-1: "Rivers of Living Water" Excites our Imagination and Bible Knowledge.**

Been there and done that, when we first read John 7:38 all kinds of exciting images, possibilities, and Scriptures flow through our mind.

Immediately since we are reading the Gospel of John already, we think of the incident in the life of Jesus when He spoke to the woman of Samaria at Jacob's well, telling her as recorded in John 4:10 of the "living water" that Jesus could give to all Jews or Gentiles that would ask. Yes, Jesus did contrast the quality of the water that Samaritans like this woman could get out of Jacob's well with the living water from Jesus in that the first had no permanent thirst quenching potential while the second from Jesus with a deep two step process drinking, believe and believing, would lead to a "never thirst again". And we do love the sound of the words, "But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water sprinkling up into everlasting life." (John 4:14) However, this is not the same as in John 7:38, because this living water of John 4:14 goes into the inward man while the living water of John 7:38 comes out of the heart of the inward man.

Yes, they are related: the living water must first go into the heart of a man or woman before it can flow like a river of prophesy out of the heart; and that is the very gist of this book, that the continuing of "believing" must take place before both full salvation, and no matter how democratic in the church prophesy became after the Coming of the Holy Spirit on the first day of Pentecost after the Ascension of Christ, there can in no local church be the "if all prophesy" of I Corinthians 14:24, without the all taking the second step in salvation of "believing".

**1-2: You Must See in John and the Rest of the Bible This 2-step process.**

Ho hum, we think, "another book on John and how to believe", OR "believe in Jesus, that is old stuff"; and we might miss the twin themes of this book that at least half or our present church members, that is a total of at least half of so-called Christians have never gone beyond the first step of believe to the second step of believing, and the reason so many churches in America today are now making such significant contributions to the historical and once in the history of a nation Falling Away is because they have never made, for many reasons remaining to be discussed in this book, that giant step forward into the believing for full salvation and consequently for the ability to have flowing out of their hearts "rivers of living water".

1. You will notice the two-step process of believe and believing in the stated purpose of the Gospel of John in John 20:31: (1) the "believe" in John 20:31a with the words of "these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God"; and then the "believing" in John 20:31b with the words to follow immediately, and by the way so close that you sometimes do not realize that salvation is a two step process, "and that believing you may have life in His name."

2. After years of spreading the Gospel of Jesus, many of those years as a Pastor at Ephesus, and no doubt the last of the living Apostles of Jesus, the Apostle John near the end of the first century wrote another book, and once again with a very clearly stated purpose recorded in the book like the John

20:30,31 gist of the Gospel of John, where he and the Holy Spirit made sure that you would not miss the second step of believing.

**“These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God.” (I John 5:13)**

**That says it all in the “continue to believe”!**

**1-3: Most of our church members are in the “Den of Thieves” category.**

One of the prime reasons that it can be stated so confidently that more than half of our church members are in the “Den of Thieves” from Jesus and Jeremiah or HIDEOUT FOR BAD HABITS category of II Timothy 3:1-8 is because at least half of our church members have not progressed from the believe to the believing process of salvation; and inevitably as we pass from the third stage of the Falling Away of II Timothy 4:3,4, that is from the vast now present “heaping up of Bible teachers with itching ears” {by the way the same as the proliferation of false prophesy and false prophets that Jesus predicted in Matthew 24 as a true sign of the Falling Away}, into the fourth and final fifth stage of the Falling Away, the turning away from truth in the churches and the being turned by God into fables, then the number of “Den” members in the church will increase significantly. How else can it be? How in the world can we go from the present condition where millions of church members across this country and the world profess to be followers of Christ, to the Falling Away clearly taught in II Thessalonians and II Timothy 4:3,4 without God’s own people in the churches turning away from truth and turning into fables.

**1-4: The Minority Message to a Few of Each Church.**

Even as it is so hard to faithfully preach the demand of Christ and the Bible on marriage as a lifetime commitment without any justifiable cause for divorce except one and simultaneously faithfully lead divorced church members to confess divorce as a past sin and put it behind them as forgiven by God, so it is hard to simultaneously preach the present condition of churches at the same time presenting words of encouragement and specialized security of the believer to a few. However take note that in the specialized messages of Revelation 2 and 2 to the seven churches of Asia Minor, in each case, there was a large message for the majority that had absolutely gone bad and then a minority message at the same time to encourage the few.

1. The message of Christ to the majority in each church.

(1). The local church at Ephesus (Revelation 2:1-6), You have left your first love; and unless you repent rapidly as a church body, Christ is going to come quickly and remove your lampstand from its place in the sight of God and in the kingdom of God.

(2). The local church at Smyrna (Revelation 2:8-11) ...well, there can always be one out of seven churches about whom Christ has nothing bad to say. Of course, our problem today is that every church member and every church thinks they are that one; that the other six do not exist today; or certainly that it could never be their own church since their pastors have told them for years that they are the elect of God, the “called” if not the “chosen”.

(3). The local church at Pergamos (Revelation 2:12-17), you are already in a mini-Falling Away, because you have far too much unsound doctrine in your church; and unless you straighten it out yourselves in your own church, then Christ is going to start a fight with you based on the Sword of the Word of God.

(4). The local church at Thyatira (Revelation 2:18-29), you have in your church a very influential female prophetess that is causing unsound doctrine of Christian living, and without repentance in your church calamities of judgment from God will come immediately on all those supporters of such a prophetess and her also, not to mention the inevitable and eternal consequences of such lack of continuing faith.

(5). The local church in Sardis (Revelation 3:1-6), while you have the reputation in the community and denomination, of all Christianity, as a First Baptist Church, a past reputation and name that you are

“alive”, in the sight of Christ and God you are now dead; and Christ will come against you like a thief to take care of the Den of Thieves in you.

(6). The local church in Philly (Revelation 3:7-13), well really two churches out of seven are good and faithful and notice how this one is faithful in that it has persevered with a continuing faith for salvation and prophesying.

(7). The local church at Laodicea (Revelation 3:14-22), would we be too critical of your church if we called it “lukewarm” like Laodicea, a fact that you really know already, or simply would be rather be using the Word of God in Revelation 2 and 3 as well as much other of the Word of God that you will find in the following chapters of this book, to point out why: (1) well over half of your members are lukewarm because they over a period of years did not pass from initial “believe” into “believing”; and (2) they are well past the historical point where from all of them democratically flows the rivers of living water of prophesy as taught in I Corinthians 14.

2. The Message of Christ to the Few of the Minority in Each Church.

(1). Revelation 2:7, for the few only in the church at Ephesus, the few who have the ear to hear the sound doctrines of the Holy Spirit, these few only in this church will be considered as overcomers, overcomers who will have eternal life and the privilege of eating from the tree of life; alias those who continue to believe all the way to salvation, that continue to prophesy with rivers of living water.

(2). No minority message here because things are okay in this and one other church of the seven; however in Revelation 2:11 that is a more majority message, one to all the churches, as the challenge is presented to overcome in order not to be part of the second death where hell, death, and Satan are cast into the lake of fire and brimstone.

(3). By now you have noticed that the message to the minority, like here in Revelation 2:17 and to the church at Pergamos, is to all the churches, once again pointing out how many churches then and today Christ must call in order to select a few “chosen” for all the churches; and here the few overcomers among the many otherwise, are promised: (a) hidden manna to eat; (b) a white stone with a personalized name from Christ that no one else has or knows.

(4). “to the rest in Thyatira” (Revelation 2:24), the minority who do “not have this unsound doctrine” or this minority who has not known this depth of Satan, this burden of “Den of Thieves” and HIDEOUT FOR BAD HABITS should not be on you, should not be place on you, indeed is not placed on your in spite of the waywardness of the majority in your church: (a) hold fast to the security of the believer that you have; and (b) you overcomers will receive in the New Earth power over nations.

(5). “You have a FEW names even in Sardis”--no church is perfectly bankrupt with Den of Thieves and with BAD HABITS (Revelation 4-6), who have undefiled wedding garments of the called and chosen; and these few shall walk and live with Christ in eternity in pure robes of white.

(6). Yes, they are all overcomers in the church at Philadelphia. They all have continued to believe, they have continued to prophesy with rivers of living water coming out their mouths, and with understanding as in I Corinthians 14. Would that we had today in America one church out of the many completed dominated and consisting of overcomers; but where is it?

(7). Once again as always in the seven churches, there is a message for the minority of overcomers to the local church at Laodicea , Revelation 3:21,22, with a promise to rule and reign with Christ on the New Earth.

#### **1-5: Bottom Line of Prophecy of all Members in I Corinthians 14.**

The bottom line of I Corinthians 14, then when Paul wrote it to deal with the same problem of tongues in this local church at Corinth, and now when the violations of proper worship and prophesy are more widespread with the initial message and message of I Corinthians 14 on “Prophecy and Understanding” is that we have not taken our brains to our worship service.

1. Tongues in the Bible, especially in Acts 2, are primarily other languages, except for gibberish where many try to simulate a coming of the Holy Spirit, and on rare occasions like where Paul was caught up to

the third heaven, are emotional expressions meant to be only between an individual and God, not in public worshipping.

2. Prophecy is speaking publicly in an assembly of Christians, and prophecy is meant to be addressed to believers.
3. When all in a church body speak together prophecy, one by one by the way, and in agreement, unbelievers are convinced and convicted, which is the same as what Christ meant in John 16 when He prayed that all might be One in order that the world would know that real disciples of Christ were in that assembly.
4. The subject of I Corinthians 14 is more about "Prophecy and Understanding" than about any other subject including tongues.
5. When problems continue in a church or denomination like those forbidden with commandments from Paul of Scripture like in I Corinthians 14, it is most generally because that same church or denomination has the same bad attitude of the Corinthians that Paul writes on in the middle of the chapter, I Corinthians 14:36, that the Bible came to their church or group only or that they originated the Word of God.

### **1-6: And so much more, This Book is About the Rest of the Story!**

We still can not get it in our heads that like in the other Great Falling Away of God's people in the wilderness, that the majority of God's called people today--alias Christianity and the body of Christ--are wrong simple because of the historical event in which we now find ourselves of the Second Great Falling Away clearly taught in II Thessalonians as required before the Second Coming of Christ. **{Later we will discuss all the efforts of Scofield notes and fundamentalists to falsely rescue all living Christians from this last and great Falling Away.}** God's called people of Jeremiah could not, or would not, also wrap their head around this very fundamental concept of the Bible that there is a vast difference between the called of God's people and the "chosen" for eternal salvation on the new earth of God's people!

1. No generation, including now and in America, wants to admit that it is "the generation of the His wrath" (Jeremiah 7:29), even as God's people of Jeremiah refused to admit it until overwhelmed by an almost infinite series of calamities.
2. It is just where we are in history, and let us face up to it as Christian believers in the Bible: we are now in the third stage of the five stages of the Falling Away (II Timothy 4:4,5)--intolerance toward sound doctrine and teachings, Christians and churches driven more by their own desires and wants than by Christ and the Holy Spirit, the vast heaping up in all channels of communications of Bible teachers, preachers, and prophets with itching ears, a wholesale "turning away from truth" by Christianity, and finally a being turned into fables by God; and we are dangling on the precipice of Bible based backsliding where there is no turned back, as American churches fall over the edge of a common falling away from truth and falling into fables.
3. To both define how this present and historical Falling Away of Christians from the real truth of the Bible, also from the true God and the true Christ, relates to "believing", the second step of salvation, is the rest of the story; of course, after from the Gospel of John and supporting Scriptures, the twin process of "believe" and "believing" are defined from the Bible.

