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"Blessed be the LORD God of *Israel*; For He hath visited and redeemed *His* people, And hath raised up an horn of salvation for *us* in the house of his servant David; as he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began; That *we* should be saved from *our* enemies and from the hand of all that hate *us*; to perform the mercy promised to *our* fathers and to remember his holy covenant; The oath which he swore to *our* father Abraham, That he would grant unto *us*, that *we* being delivered out of the hand of *our* enemies might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of *our* lives." Luke 1:68-75; the Anglo-Saxon-Celtic-Germanic-Scandinavian people are *ISRAEL!*

#246

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"LESSONS FROM JUDAH'S KINGS-Part 1"

by Pastor Don Elmore

The history of God's covenant people is largely delegated to Sunday school literature in today's modern "rock-and-roll" churches. Stories of Samson and Delilah, Joseph and his multi-coloured coat, David and Goliath are seldom mentioned or studied in "adult" sermons. Even the Gideon Bible Society now passes out Bibles that are New Testament bibles only. I guess they figure that the history found in the Old Testament is not pertinent to the understanding of the New and that there are not any lessons that could be learned and applied to the Christian's life.

But the New testament teaches just the opposite: "*All scripture is given by the inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness*" (2 Tim. 3:16). Since the New Testament had not been completely written and compiled at the time the Apostle Paul wrote these words to Timothy, the "*all scriptures*" certainly included **all** the Old Testament books.

As a result of a lack of knowledge, for whatever reasons, of the history of the Kingdom of God—ISRAEL—many wonderful lessons that *are profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction and instruction in righteousness* are unknown to the average Christian. Thus, the purpose of this series is to help ignite the curiosity of the reader by exploring some of the lessons that are revealed by studying the Kings of Judah; beginning with the first—King Rehoboam.

PRE-SPLIT HISTORY

The story begins with the old covenant—the covenant that God made with His friend Abram (later Abraham) over 3500 years ago. In an irrevocable and everlasting covenant, God promised to Abraham and his seed (descendants) that He would be their God and they would be His people. But not all of Abraham's seed. The Bible very carefully eliminates the seed of Ishmael and the seed of Esau—revealing that God confirmed the covenant only to Abraham's son Isaac and to his grandson Jacob. This explains why God repeatedly referred to Himself only as the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Ex. 3:6, 15, 16, 4:5)

From the time God cut the covenant with Abraham, over four hundred years pass. The seed of Jacob grew to several million people. Some had migrated to Troy and other parts of the Mediterranean lands, but most remained in Egypt, where they had resided for two hundred and fifteen years—ever since their family migrated there in the days of Joseph.

But as God had foretold in His covenant with Abraham, that after four generations in Egypt they would be

delivered to the promised land—Canaan land. With Moses as God's appointed leader, the Hebrews were freed from their slavery in Egypt and eventually inhabited the land that had been previously occupied by the Canaanites.

This Kingdom of God's people—the fleshly descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob—began first as a theocracy, with the covenant God as their King. Not only was God their King, but He dwelt among them; sitting on the Throne that was on top of the Ark of the Covenant which was located in the Holy of Holies in the Tabernacle and later the Temple in Jerusalem.

But in the days of Samuel the prophet, the people pleaded to have a king like the other nations who dwelt about them. Therefore, the theocracy changed to a monarchy. The first three kings all reigned for the same length of time—40 years. First there was Saul, then David, then David's son Solomon.

During the days of Solomon, Israel grew to be a mighty and famous nation. The Israel navy and merchant ships traveled many parts of the earth, importing many products and animals (to Australia and the west coast of America). But the most notable of accomplishments was the building of the magnificent temple at Jerusalem.

THE GREAT DIVISION

Few Christians have ever thought about the fact that most Israelites only worshipped at the Temple in Jerusalem for a short period of time—about 16 years! That is because

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The views and opinions expressed in the articles herein or herewith are those of the authors and not necessarily those of CIM. They are written by fallible men. You must ask Jesus to guide your studies!

	KINGDOM OF ISRAEL	KINGDOM OF JUDAH
KING	Descendants of other tribes than Judah	Descendants of King David of Judah
PRIESTHOOD	Descendants of any tribe but Levi	Descendants of the tribe of Levi
PROPHETS	Self sent	God sent
FEAST DAYS	King devised	God ordained
TEMPLE	Located in Bethel and Dan	Located in Jerusalem
LAWS	Man made	Divine

sixteen years after the Temple was built, there was a major division that occurred in the nation of Israel. Ten of the twelve tribes seceded and formed a new nation called the Kingdom of Israel. This left the original nation with only two tribes—Judah and Benjamin—along with the priestly tribe of Levi. The remaining Kingdom was called the Kingdom of Judah.

Even though the two kingdoms formerly were one, and they had the same heritage, they were very different in their destinies and policies. The Kingdom of Israel (also known as the Northern Kingdom) under the leadership of Jeroboam, their first king, quickly and decisively departed from the commandments and instructions of the God of their fathers.

They ignored the covenant that God had made with David of the tribe of Judah, that only this tribe and David's seed would be granted the divine right of rulership over Israel. Likewise, they also denied God's appointment of the tribe of Levi to be the priestly tribe, with the sons of Aaron to be the High Priests.

In addition, Jeroboam installed new Feast days that were similar to the former Holy Days of the Kingdom, but he established them at different times with a different format. And he not only forbade anyone from his kingdom to travel to the Temple in Jerusalem (which was located in the Southern Kingdom of Judah), he also built two new temples—one in Bethel and the other in Dan. Inside each, he placed an image of a golden calf.

It is important to note that at no time in the Bible (from Genesis to the dividing of Israel into two separate Kingdoms) were the covenant people of God ever referred to as Jews! They were referred to as Hebrews or Israelites—but never as Jews. In fact, the religion now known as Judaism had not as yet come into existence.

Just like what happened in the history of the United States of America in the mid-1800's. A new nation seceded from the original—the Confederate States of America and the United States of America. But unlike what happened in the 1800's, God forbade a war from occurring in the days of ancient Israel between the two separated nations (2 Chronicles 11:1-4).

But they did have constant battles between themselves all the days the kingdoms existed. In fact, each generation they drifted farther apart until they became bitter enemies.

THE NEW KINGDOM OF JUDAH

The king of the remaining Kingdom—now known as

the Kingdom of Judah—was Rehoboam. The first military action that he did was to build new cities for defense purposes and to fortify existing ones. He put captains in these cities along with storage of food, supplies and weapons. In every city he put shields and spears and made them very strong.

In addition, Judah was strengthened by the immigration of a very unusual group of refugees—Levites from the Northern Kingdom of King Jeroboam. Because King Jeroboam and his sons had cast them off from executing the priest's office unto the LORD, they left their suburban lands and their possessions and came to Judah and Jerusalem.

The Kingdom of Israel, under the leadership of King Jeroboam had fired all of the Levitical Priests and replaced them with the (1 Kings 12:31). Since the King had built new temples, the faithful Levitical priests would have quit on their own—for they would

have had to officiate at an apostate altar had they stayed.

What a sight it must have been! Levitical priests from all of the newly seceded tribes, travelling to the true Temple in Jerusalem. And with them came a remnant, out of all the tribes, who wished to remain faithful to the God of the covenant. So, the Northern Kingdom right away lost the most faithful of all its citizens.

But the Southern Kingdom gained them. As a result of these most righteous and faithful of all refugees, the Kingdom of Rehoboam experienced a time of great strengthening. What lessons can be learned from the actions of the Levites and their fellow refugees?

1. Rather than worship at an apostate church, they left their homes and possessions to move to an area so that they could worship at the place of worship that had God's ordained priests and Temple.

2. They refused to join a religious system that rejected the covenant-based theology of their fathers.

3. They recognized that it would be vain to worship in the apostate religion in the North, even though it had larger congregations and the financial support and backing of the government.

They were willing to leave their homes for the uncertainties of a new job and location.

5. They refused to be "loners" in the North, instead joined their brethren to be part of the worship system that God had commanded them.

6. They understood that the false doctrines and practices of the larger, wealthier, popular religion of the North

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would be spiritually detrimental to their children.

7. They were willing to suffer the possible dangerous consequences of fleeing to the Kingdom from which their Kingdom had rebelled.

REHOBAM'S SIN

But after three years of enjoying the fruit of the immigration of faithful refugees, the King of Judah stumbled greatly: *"He forsook the Law of the LORD, and all Israel with him"* (2 Chron. 12:1).

What were some of the things that the King did? *"For they also built them high places, and images, and idols, on every high hill, and under every green tree. And there were sodomites [homosexuals] in the land; and they did according to all the abominations of the nations which the LORD cast out before the children of Israel"* (1 Kings 14:23, 24). Did he think there would be no consequences for these sins? [do our kings?]

There were. As a result, God raised up the King of Egypt, along with the Lubimian, the Sukkiimians, and the Ethiopians—a mighty military force. Twelve thousand chariots, sixty thousand horsemen, and an innumerable infantry marched toward Jerusalem to battle. They were unstoppable. They captured fortified city after fortified city in Judah with the eventual target the capital city of Jerusalem.

Lessons to be learned:

1. A national forsaking of God's laws bring wars not peace. To the ancient Kingdom of Judah came the northern Africans, to the United States has come the War of northern aggression, the Spanish-American War, World War I, World War II, Korean Police Action, Vietnam, Desert Storm, Afghanistan, Iraq, and soon—Iran?

2. A personal forsaking of God's Laws also brings difficulties and battles on a family and personal basis

3. Sometimes judgment comes swiftly, sometimes it is delayed.

4. Sodomy has always been an abomination to God and brings a nation judgment.

5. False worship by God's covenant people provokes God to anger.

GOD SENT HIS PROPHET

Shemaiah was the prophet that God sent to the sinful King of Judah and his war staff who had gathered at Jerusalem because of the advancing armies of the Egyptians and their allies. The message of the prophet? *"Thus saith the LORD, Ye have forsaken me, and therefore have I also left you in the hand of Shishak [king of Egypt]"* (2 Chron. 12:5).

What did the King and the princes do? THEY HUMBLISHED THEMSELVES and they said, *"The LORD is righteous"* (2 Chron. 12:6). Therefore, God again sent his prophet Shemaiah to them. But this time he had a different message: *"[Since] they have humbled themselves; therefore I will not destroy them, but I will grant them some deliverance; and my wrath shall not be poured out upon Jerusalem by the hand of Shishak. Nevertheless, they shall be his servants; that they may know my service, and the service of the kingdoms of the countries"* (2 Chron. 12:7-8).

Lessons to be learned:

1. The main message of God's prophets to those in sin is to repent.

2. The only way for a sinful Israelite nation to prevent total destruction is to heed the words of the prophets and to humble themselves.

3. Even though Shishak was undefeatable, when Judah humbled themselves, God intervened and would not permit him to be completely victorious.

4. God is longsuffering and merciful.

5. Sin has its consequences.

Even though the King and his advisors humbled themselves in the time of their dire need, their repentance and reformation was just partial. Soon they were to suffer a relapse again. For as their reformation was, so was their deliverance.

God granted to Judah some deliverance, but not complete deliverance. Had they complained of the "strictness of God's Laws," then God let them experience being under the rulership of the king of Egypt. They were to be the servants of King Shishak, but they were not to be destroyed. And God allowed the foreign armies to also plunder the treasuries of both the Temple and the exchequer. The valuable treasures that were gathered by Rehoboam's father—Solomon—were taken away to Egypt.

Lessons to be learned (from the *Matthew Henry Commentary*, page 459):

1. "The more God's service is compared with other services the more reasonable and easy it will appear."

2. "Are the laws of temperance thought hard? The effects of intemperance will be much harder."

3. "The service of virtue is perfect liberty; the service of lust is perfect slavery."

But God's Word says that "in Judah things went well" (2 Chron. 12:12). King Rehoboam had the

royal seat in the holy city, but yet he *"did evil, because he prepared not his heart to seek the LORD"* (2 Chron. 12:14). He had in his kingdom good ministers, good prophets, good priests, good families and good people; but he failed to successfully lead them because he frequently forsook the laws of God.

The fourth year of King Rehoboam's reign was his worst. But even though he heeded the prophet Shemaiah's warning, he never completely sought the LORD the way his grandfather King David had.

Lessons to be learned:

1. It is imperative for us to seek the LORD with all of our hearts.

2. Partial reformation brings only partial deliverance.

3. King Rehoboam had a golden opportunity to lead Judah to serve the God of their fathers, but he failed to keep God's Laws.

4. The Israelite nations of today are in trouble. They do not have any leaders who have even hinted at being humble before the God of our covenant.

5. There are not any prophets who have instructed our leaders to repent and quit forsaking God's Laws.

6. Even after the destruction of America's tenth largest city, numerous massive hurricanes, large uncontrollable fires that have destroyed millions of acres of vegetation and forests, dangerous droughts in many states, an unrepayable national debt, a lop-sided balance of trade, a weak dollar, possible hyper-inflation, increased illnesses and sicknesses, illegal immigration, increased violence and murders, loss of thousands of jobs to outsourcing to other countries, sexual perversion gaining governmental protection, inability to win wars, etc., (and doesn't a lot of that sound just like Australia as well?? CIM) few Americans (and few Australians) see the need to repent and to return to God's Laws. At least Rehoboam and the Kingdom of Judah did partially

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humble themselves—that is a lot better than what we are doing in America (and Australia!).

..... to be continued..

GOD'S DIVINE RIGHT OF KINGS

The Kingdom of United Israel

King from the Tribe of Benjamin:

1. Saul

Kings from the tribe of Judah:

2. David

Kings who were descendants of King David:

3. Solomon

The Kingdom of Judah

1. Rehoboam

2. Abijah

3. Asa

4. Jehoshaphat

5. Jehoram

6. Ahaziah

7. Athaliah

8. Joash

9. Amaziah

10. Azariah

11. Jotham

12. Ahas

13. Hezekiah

14. Manasseh

15. Amon

16. Josiah

17. Jehoahaz

18. Jehoiakim

19. Jehoiachin

20. Zedekiah

(Captivity by Babylon)

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SIGNS OF A FALLEN COUNTRY

pastor Everett Ramsey, DD

EVIL, UNGODLY and FOREIGN HEROES

The Bible says, *"They that forsake the law praise the wicked : but such as keep the law contend with them"* (Proverbs 28:4).

With our Congress giving hero status to Rosa Parks by placing a bust of her in the wall/hall of Heroes on Capitol Hill, this is a good example of the wicked praising the wicked and forsaking the laws of God. The Law is clear,

"Thou shalt in any wise set him king over thee, whom the LORD thy God shall choose: one from among thy brethren shalt thou set king over thee: thou mayest not set a stranger over thee, which is not thy brother." (Deut 17:15).

This includes raising them to a place of honour with our own founders and leaders.

"Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you" (Matt. 7:6).

In the Bible, dogs, hogs and goats represented those who were either wicked, outside the covenant or both.

What is sad in this country today is the fact that the people are divided into two groups; those who know God and want godly government and the rest, who want a secular government. Many of those wanting a secular government claim to believe in and worship God, but it is obvious that they do not know God.

The government is elected and controlled by those who want a secular government. Therefore, government does

those things that pleases the secular-minded folks which also vexes the heart and spirit of those who know God. Much like Lot in Sodom.

Solomon saw this problem early. He seemed to have no solution, even though he was king.

"So I returned, and considered all the oppressions that are done under the sun: and behold the tears of such as were oppressed, and they had no comforter; and on the side of their oppressors there was power; but they had no comforter. Wherefore I praised the dead which are already dead more than the living which are yet alive. Yea, better is he than both they, which hath not yet been, who hath not seen the evil work that is done under the sun." (Eccl. 4:1).

Acts of evil and reprobation by leaders of the United States is so often and so vile nowadays that I have ceased to be surprised or shocked. So when the Federal government announced that a Bronze bust of Rosa Parks would be put in the hall of heroes in the capitol, it was just one more abuse of power against the people of God who now dwell in a country no longer under God. Maybe removing the words, "Under God" from the pledge would be more realistic.

I have to admit that more and more, I am identifying with Solomon who was the preacher in Ecclesiastes. The leaders have power and the people of God can do nothing except, resist and suffer.

The selection of Rosa Parks as a hero is another act of defiance as was the selection of Martin Luther King. Both these people were chosen by their NAACP and trained in communist training camps, then assigned their acts of defiance. Those leaders who approve of their acts, automatically disapprove of God.

To say that Rosa Parks, out of the blue, decided one day that she did not want to sit in the back of the bus, is sheer deception. The bus, the day, the place were all chosen for her and she was following the orders of those who

planned this rebellion against the laws of God's book on separation of the races and their designated places of service.

Anyone who is a non-white "Christian" without Adamic origins is an alien and a foreigner, even if they are born in this country and in spite of the 14th and 15th amendment to the United States Constitution.

This country was originally settled and established by 13 sets of the re-gathered tribes of Israel. Their law was the Bible, not the statutory codebooks. They started with 13 countries with 13 constitutions and laws that specifically limited voting and office holders to white Christian males (see *America: Free, White & Christian #060 @ \$15.60*). These same laws required office holders to profess faith in Jesus Christ as God. The language was accepted to be English (although German was almost chosen as official language). The money was to be gold and silver based, not credit created out of thin air (as we have today).

This country was synonymous with nation. It had a common people (genetics) with a common faith, a common language and common money. These are the absolute necessities for building a strong country. Every major world power has been destroyed for the same reasons. They tried to mix the gold and silver with lead and dirt, they

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allowed all religions except those which claimed exclusivity: Christianity. They tried to mix the races. They allowed diversity of languages. This created confusion, hatred and eventually war.

The mixture of races required government subsidy of the lazy, the unskilled, the unrighteous and eventually the tax load broke the will of the good people and they moved on to other lands.

The godly people, who have the spirit of righteousness and creativity from God are gradually being driven out of the productive channels of the society.

There have been literally thousands of ministers, laymen and good women who have gone to jail, had their assets stolen by the government and been harassed and demeaned in the press for their faith in God and God's Laws in their lives. The requirement of God to His people is to obey His laws in every area of life. This is the one thing that wicked rulers refuse to allow God's people to do.

God's people are to protect the innocent, bring justice, not by statute, but by the law of God. It is precisely when the people of God have stepped forth to stop aborticide, sodomy and debasing of the currency and unjust confiscation of assets through credit instruments and usury that the evil power of those in government and the press is brought to bear and used to destroy the righteous.

The press is the great peer pressure applicator. The press not only determines what is right, it destroys those who refuse to bow at their feet. If you are going to be a non-conformist on the side of God, you will be smeared, lied about and attacked unmercifully. If you want to be a non-conformist for evil, the press will make you a hero. That is what happened with Martin Luther King and Rosa Parks. Without the press, neither of them would have become heroes.

For our country's officials to exalt and honor people who disdain our culture, our language, our God and our race is an abomination against God and a double insult to God and His people.

The sad thing is that so many of our people, instead of seeing the position we have allowed ourselves to become trapped in, are still trying to rally the people to resist the authorities and repair the break. We are way too late for that.

Our solutions are not judicial, legislative, religious or by a majority vote. We only have one solution and that is the Lord God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. If He does not choose to deliver His people, many will suffer and die.

from: "Jacob's Heirs", Jan 2006, 16800 Sunset Dr. Houston MO 65483

WHY JOE CAN'T FIND A GOOD PAYING JOB

Joe started the day early having set his alarm clock (made in **Japan**) for 6 am. Got out of bed (made in **Malaysia**). While his coffeepot (made in **China**) was perking, he shaved with his electric razor (made in **Hong Kong**). He put on a dress shirt (made in **Sri Lanka**), designer jeans (made in **Singapore**) and tennis shoes (made in **Vietnam**).

After cooking his breakfast in his new electric skillet (made in **India**) he sat down at his table (made in **Thailand**) with his calculator (made in **Mexico**) to see how much he could spend today. After setting his watch (made in **Taiwan**) to the radio (made in **India**) he got in his car

(made in **Korea**) filled it with petrol (from **Saudi Arabia**) and continued his search for a good paying **Australian** job.

At the end of yet another discouraging and fruitless day checking his computer (made in **China**), Joe decided to relax for a while. he put on his sandals (made in **Brazil**), poured himself a glass of wine (made in **France**) and turned on his TV (made in **Indonesia**), and then wondered why he couldn't find a good paying job in **Australia**.....

A NEW CRIME IN CINCINNATI

On Monday afternoon on March 6, 2006, six police cars swarmed around a man and several women in a vacant school parking lot. Besides the Cincinnati policemen were agents from the Ohio Department of Agriculture, the Kentucky Department of Agriculture and the Federal Department of Agriculture.

They viciously interrogated the man and confiscated his goods and attempted to confiscate his vehicle. The women who were there, tried to explain to them that the man was innocent of any wrongdoing and why—but the police arrogantly refused to listen and continued "stealing" their property.

Then suddenly, the man began to have chest pains and trouble breathing and subsequently collapsed. Several of the women who were witnessing this, pleaded with the officers to "Call 911." But one of the police officers screamed back, "I am 911, lady! NOW SHUT UP!"

The man's crime? Delivering milk to families who are shareholders in his dairy farm. That is, they own the dairy cows that he keeps on his farm so he can milk, bottle and deliver it for and to them. Since when is delivering MILK to its owners a crime? It, of course, isn't. May our GOD avenge this evil!

NCM, Box 321, Union KY 41091

WHY DID JONAH GO TO NINEVEH?

by **Arnold Kennedy**

The question is, "Does the going of Jonah to Nineveh stand out against 'The Exclusiveness of Israel'?" The popular church view is that it does. But it may not, even if the Ninevites were not Israelites. We have to call to mind that Israelites did prophesy against non-Israelites such as we find in the case of Obadiah warning Edom and of Daniel speaking to Nebuchadnezzar. We have seen that Nebuchadnezzar came to acknowledge the God of Israel, even if this did not put him on a par with Israelites covenant-wise. Such as Jonah going to Nineveh may have had the purpose of giving a warning to that people. If the Ninevites were not God's people, then Nahum also prophesied against Nineveh.

There are views that Nineveh, at the time of Jonah, was occupied by Hebrews, and alternatively there are views that God used Jonah to warn the cruel nation of the Assyrians as non-Hebrews. We can look at both views. Without any doubt, this is a difficult subject.

SOME TRADITIONS

There are a number of traditions existing about the founding of the city:

[a] Nineveh was founded by Hebrews. An Internet search indicates that the name "Nineveh" comes from the Hebrew words "nin" and "Naweh."

[b] Nineveh was built by Asshur, the son of Shem.



[c] There were two different people named Asshur.
[d] That Nineveh was founded by "Ninus the Assyrian."

[e] That Nimrod may have built Nineveh as well as Babylon.

[f] That the Assyrians founded the city.

[g] "The old capital, Assur, was replaced by Calah, which seems to have been replaced by Nineveh. Nineveh was thereafter generally the capital, although Sargon built Dur Sharrukin (Khorsabad) as his capital."

Further to this we have:

- Most traditions start from the assumption, "*Nineveh was the ancient capital of Assyria*" to conclude the Assyrians founded the city, but this is without offering any proof that the city was built by the Assyrians.

- There are traditions that say Ninus was the Greek name for the city of Nineveh; the ancient capital of Assyria; located on the Tigris River, the site of the modern city of Mosul in northern Iraq. These traditions come from Greek mythology.

- Eusebius says that Ninus and Semiramis reigned in the time of Abraham, and there is confusion whether or not this reign was in Babylon or Nineveh.

- There are modern claims that Asshur was the son of Nimrod.

- There are claims that "Asshur" means "Assyrians;" it is often translated this way.

- Some even surmise that Asshur and Nimrod may have built together.

- Asshur is linked with Magog in Ezekiel 39:16.

- We have similar names such as Asher, the son of Jacob.

So we can see there is much variety written on this theme. The opinions found on the Internet are enough to confuse anyone, and of course, there is the possibility that an individual and a people with the same name may be different entities!

FROM THE BIBLE

In the Bible we have a different story as to who built Nineveh, as follows:

Genesis 10:8, "*And Cush begat Nimrod: he began to be a mighty one in the earth. He was a mighty hunter before the LORD: wherefore it is said, Even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before the LORD. and the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar. **Out of that land went forth Asshur, and builded Nineveh,** and the city Rehoboth, and Calah, and Resen between Nineveh and Calah: the same is a great city.*"

The latter names seem to be descriptions rather than places, for example "Rehoboth" meaning "wide streets or avenues (Gen. 26:22, "... Rehoboth, and he said: For now the LORD hath made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land.")

From the Bible,

[1] We have Nimrod as a Hamite, the son of Cush, the son of Ham.

[2] We have Asshur as a Shemite as the son of Shem.

We are told that it was Asshur who built Nineveh. So in close proximity we have Babylon and Nineveh which different builders who were of different origins.

DATES

There are arguments about dates too, and from the

dates lifted from the margins of the Thompson Chain Reference Bible, we have:

1. The story of Jonah is 862 BC.

2. Nahum made his prophecy against Nineveh in 713 BC

3. The Assyrians took Nineveh in 704 BC.

This fits together date-wise and thus the first two happenings took place before the Assyrians took possession of Nineveh. Thus Jonah did not go to warn an Assyrian city. The prophet Nahum is obviously warning Israelites and he mentions Judah, Israel and Jacob. Thus it would seem that the Assyrian capture of Nineveh was in fulfillment of Nahum's prophecy of "*Woe to the bloody city! it is all full of lies and robbery; the prey departeth not.*"

There are other confirmations that Nineveh was originally of Hebrew origin. We see the forty five mentions of the wearing of sackcloth by a repentant people in the Bible as being a Hebrew custom. In the Jonah story we see even the King of Nineveh repenting and wearing sackcloth too.

"*So the people of Nineveh believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them. For word came unto the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, and he laid his robe from him, and covered him with sackcloth, and sat in ashes.*"
Jonah 3:5.

Thus it follows that Nineveh became the ancient capital of the Assyrian Empire after Hebrew occupation, but the Assyrians did not build that city!

There are indications that Nineveh was built on an astronomical design - [British Museum]. The following website shows the discovery of Hebrew costumes being found in Nineveh -http://www.4to40.com/earth/history/index.asp?article=earth_history_

[hebrewcostumes](http://www.4to40.com/earth/history/index.asp?article=earth_history_hebrewcostumes)>.

The people residing in Nineveh in the days of Jonah are described as being "persons" = "adam." - Jonah 4:11

"*And should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than sixscore thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand; and also much cattle?*"

The popular idea about Jonah going to non-Hebrew "Gentiles" cannot be sustained if these values are accepted, and thus the doctrine of "The Exclusiveness of Israel" stands if this view is valid.

THE ALTERNATIVE VIEW

This view is that Jonah went to non-Hebrew Assyrians, and the following argument is provided by discussions with Robert Phillips of Sydney, Australia, as follows:

"Despite the presence of Israelite populations outside Israel, such as the kingdom on Crete and the people in Britain, other than the provision for the "ger"-stranger in the Law, the Bible never references them. The apostles were told not to go to the Samaritans who were right next door to Judea, and Jesus only visited them indirectly, on one occasion (to speak with the Israelite woman at Jacob's well, John 4) However, there is no evidence of any large populations of Israelites, such as the population of Nineveh, living nearby Israel in Jonah's day. The actions and words of the crew of the boat in Jonah 1:7-16 -- taking lots, appealing to Jehovah, making sacrifices to Jehovah in verses 9 and 10,



show they were Israelites. We will compare these actions with the actions of the Ninevites in Jonah 3:5-10 in a moment.

Jonah 3:3 indicates it was a large city (whether 3 days across or 3 days around is less important than the fact that the number 3 is used). Jonah 4:11 tells us there were 120,000 children in the city; assume two children per family and that gives ~240,000 people and add, say 25% for old people and we have ~300,000 people. A city of this size, in those days, belonged to a large and prosperous nation. A city of this size always had considerable influence and control over a much wider area around it. So here again, it is not plausible that there could be such a large population of Israelites nearby and it not be mentioned in the Bible.

The only recorded words Jonah uttered (Jonah 3:4) were "Yet 40 days and Nineveh shall be overthrown." There is no word of "repentance" anywhere in the text, except in Jonah 3:8 "let them turn every one from his evil way" (we also know they "repented" by it being mentioned in Luke 11:32 and Matt. 12:41, which we will come back to in a moment). In the entire Bible, no statement of this kind has ever been delivered to Israel for repentance. The appeals to Israel have always been accompanied by references to Israel's past and the things Jehovah has done for Israel. Furthermore, there is no hint that these people were offered or were in any way saved in an eternal life sense. Only that their city and their lives would not be prematurely destroyed.

Jonah 3:6 refers to the King of Nineveh. There has been no reference to a King of Israel in the Bible without reference to his lineage. Even with Cyrus we know his lineage. So if this king was an Israelite king, why no reference to his lineage? We will return to this point in a moment.

Jonah 3:6-10 records the actions of the Ninevites. There is no recognition or even reference by the Ninevites to Jehovah. In verses 5 and 8, where the Ninevites are acting and speaking, they are referring only to *elohim* -- an "elohim", no Definite Article. This is "god" with a little "g". In verse 9 the King tells them to appeal to Ha Elohim - The Creator(s). This instance, versus the next two instances in verse 10, could be using the Definite Article to refer back to which ever *elohim* was being appealed to in verse 8 (which is a conventional use of the Definite Article), or it could be to The Creator (as Jehovah Elohim). The latter is unlikely because if they knew of Jehovah Elohim in the first place, they would not be believing "an *elohim*" and appealing to "an *elohim*" in verses 5 and 8. So in verse 9 it is saying "who can tell if the creator (you appealed to in verse 8) will turn.....".

In verse 10 the Ninevites have finished speaking and Jonah is recounting the consequences of their actions. That is, that *Ha Elohim*, The Creator, (the Jehovah of Jonah 1:1) saw their works and *Ha Elohim*, The Creator, decided not to destroy the city as He said He might do in Jonah 1:2. Jonah 1:1 used the name Jehovah because it was God speaking to an Israelite -- one of those for whom He said He would be "as if He were Elohim." But in Jonah 3:10, it is recounting God's actions with respect to the actions of these non-Israelite people, which is precisely when He uses the title *Ha Elohim*, as we have seen elsewhere in Scripture.

In Jonah 4:2,3, Jonah bemoans the repentance of the Ninevites and asks God to take his life. Why would a prophet of God want to die because an Israelite population had repented? He would not. And neither did God rebuke Jonah for having such a desire with respect to these people.

So at this point, we can draw all the threads together as follows. There is no evidence of a large Israelite population living close to Israel during the time of Jeroboam II, this being the period we are given mention of in Jonah. The actions of the sailors transporting Jonah showed they knew about and recognized Jehovah and were indeed Israelites. In stark contrast, the Ninevites knew nothing of Jehovah and did not address the being they appealed to by any other name than *elohim*, using it in its most generic sense. *jesus* refers to the Ninevites' rapid response to mend their ways after merely seeing and hearing a man, spewed up by a whale, who they took to be a messenger from their god, as being in stark contrast to the lack of response of the Edomites despite seeing and hearing the Son of the God of their fathers (Abraham and Isaac). (We know this is the intent of the verse because it is coupled with the actions of the Queen of Sheba in recognizing the value and importance of the wisdom of Solomon to her and her kingdom versus the dim-wittedness of the Edomites to recognize that one greater than Solomon was amongst them and who could dispense far more to them).

So, if they were not Israelites, who were they and why did Jonah have to go there? If we step back and survey the history of the day for a couple of hundred years either side of Jeroboam II, the most notable event is the rise of Assyria

and the captivity of the Northern Kingdom. The following summary (mainly from G.G. Findlay) of the Assyrian people provides the clue:

"The Assyrians are thus seen as fierce, masterful, often cruel, with immense virile strength and working energy. They were active, courageous and tenacious, great builders and fighters. The kings considered themselves as the inspired ministers of their gods. The Assyrian social life was less corrupt than that of the Babylonians and Phoenicians and they

showed each other no small degree of uprightness and good fellowship. They were skilled in agriculture and commerce. They shared in astronomical and other sciences of the Babylonians as well as their literary culture and their sculptures showed considerable skill, but without traits of genius. They were methodical and orderly in matters of business and their chronology was a pattern of exactitude. The art and discipline of war they carried to perfection never previously attained."

However, they were detestable rulers—they inspired a general and frequently desperate hatred among their subjects. Maspero says: *"They were a people full of blood, full of violence and falsehood, sensual and excessively proud, contemptuous of their enemies, crafty and treacherous. Few nations have abused more insolently the rights of the stranger. They demolished and burnt down the towns on their march; they impaled or flayed alive rebellious chiefs. With all the splendor and refinement of their exterior civilization, they always remained savages."*

Great conquerors, but poor administrators. Force and terror were their chief means of government. None of their states advanced much beyond a rudimentary political constitution or acquired the act of combining local authority with imperial supremacy.

They crushed out the petty kingdoms and nationalities of SW Asia and left desolation in their track, but they could not build a lasting empire.

Given this overall summary of the Assyrian people, God was hardly likely to let them take hold of the Northern Kingdom with that standard of behaviour because they

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would have either destroyed or so badly corrupted the Israelites, they would never have survived the experience. Considering that developing history of the day, we find that Jonah was prior to or contemporary with Jeroboam II (2 Kings 14:25). This means his message was delivered somewhere around 80-120 years prior to the captivity of the Northern Kingdom. We also know that the Assyrians had Nineveh as their capital (but modern historians have no agreement on when it became so). So the logical conclusion is that the Assyrians were ensconced in Nineveh at the time of Jonah's visit and that his visit was focused on forcing them to lift their standards by the time they came to capture Israel.

Such a change in the behaviour of a nation would take 2-3 generations. Hence as Jonah's visit was spread abroad, stylized and taken into the education of the next 2-3 generations, they would have become, temporarily, far better people than they had been. However, after that, people would no longer be scared of or even believe the threat that Jonah announced and they would have slowly reverted to their normal behaviour.

If we accept that the Ninevites were Assyrians, then it explains their reference only to elohim and their lack of recognition of Jehovah at any level. Repentant Israelites would not be left to appeal to an elohim—the prophet would have castigated them severely for doing so. All Israel, up to the end of the Apostolic era, has never been that far from its knowledge of God—hence the Wise Men of the East who traveled westward (following the star in the east) to see the birth of the Messiah; The Samaritans, in their discussions with Jesus, knew their history and so on. These people, living so close to Israel, would have known of Jehovah, if they were Israelite. It also explains why Jonah wanted to die after delivering the message—he had just been responsible for galvanizing the Assyrians to lift their game to a level appropriate to be the captors of Israel. He must have felt as if he were some kind of traitor—which is why he fled to Tarshish in the first place and was quite happy to be thrown into the sea (so that he would die and not have to deliver the message himself). Hence the reason we are not given any lineage for this king—he was a king of no account at this point in Assyria's history and his actions were having no direct impact on Israel at that time. That would come later with Sennacherib et al, who we are well informed about in Scripture.

GOD'S ASSEMBLY OF CALLED-OUT ONES

Robert B. Record

No two words have done more to confuse the thinking of the people of Christendom than have the words, "Church," and "Gentile." It has been imagined, or taken for granted that they are translated from the Hebrew and the Greek, but such is not the case. And to them have been given a meaning that the Lord never intended.

Because of its use, or mis-use, in connection with the church, let us look briefly at the word, Gentile. Popular usage has made it to mean every body except the Jew. But what are the facts? Frederick Haberman in his book, "*Tracing Our Ancestors*," (#306 @ \$17.80), points out, and I quote, "There is no equivalent in the Greek for our term, 'Gentile.'" It is an English word found in no other language (the Dutch translation uses, heathen, nations, or Greeks

where 'gentile(s)' is used in English). Gentile is derived from the Latin, "gens," meaning "tribes." Paul said, "I am an apostle to the ethnōs," meaning "nations" or "tribes," and means in this case, the tribes of Israel. (Strong's Conc: *a race [as of the same habit], i.e. a tribe; spec. a foreign [non-Jewish] one; translated as : Gentile, heathen, nations, people*) (*Ethnos* is translated as 'Gentiles' 93 times; as 'heathen' 5 times; as 'nations' 64 times; and as 'people' 2 times; Young's Conc.) I point this out, here, to show the absurdity of speaking of the church as either heathen, or Gentile. Yet it is being done all the time.

And what shall we say of the word, Church? What is its derivation? By way of answering this question, let us turn to "Smith's Bible Dictionary" where we read, "The derivation of the word is generally said to be from the Greek, 'kuriakon,' meaning, 'belonging to God.'" But the derivation has been too hastily assumed. It is probably connected with "kirk," the Latin "circus, circulus," the Greek, "kukulos," because the congregations were gathered in circles."

Now because the word, church, is not found anywhere in the Old Testament, and because its use, or mis-use in the New Testament, it has almost completely disassociated

from any teaching found in the Old Testament. As an example of this, I would call your attention to a footnote in the Scofield Reference Bible which attempts to enlighten the reader on Jesus' words in Matt. 16:18, where the word, church, appears for the first time. The Greek word translated "church" is ecclesia, meaning "an assembly of called-out ones." And with this as a definition of the word, church, the footnote reads, *Israel was a true church, but not in any sense the N.T. church—the only point of similarity being that both were "called out," and by the same God. All else is contrast.* Such teaching is a great evil, and has done almost irreparable harm to the thinking of God's people. The connotation that has developed

around the word, church, has led to the creation of a theology which blinds people to the continuity of the Old Testament teaching with that of the New. A popular teaching abroad in the land is, that the Old Testament has to do with Israel, or the Jew, while the New Testament has to do with Gentiles, or a non-Israel people. And this mistaken concept developed around a mistaken identity of the Israel people.

Let us go back into the Old Scriptures for a moment and let us see what it was that God planned from the beginning. We understand from Matt. 25:34, that it was to set up a kingdom of righteousness here on the earth. In the building of that kingdom, God chose a people in Abraham to be His servants and witnesses. Almost from the beginning, therefore, this covenant people were an assembly of called-out ones. This truth is recognized in a "Biblical and Theological Dictionary" published for the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, back in 1857. This covenant people were distinct from other peoples and races. They were in every sense of the word, a true church.

Now what we need to see is, that when our Lord declares in Matt. 16:18, that He is going to build His church on the rock of faith in His name as Lord and Saviour (the first church, or assembly of called-out ones having failed through human weakness and disobedience), He was NOT therefore introducing something new that would have to do with the heathen, non-Israel world. Such a teaching is but

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the mistaken theology of men which makes the Word of God of none effect. The church alluded to by Christ in Matt. 16:18 was simply the old assembly of called-out ones established under a new and better covenant with new ordinances of worship.

That the Israel of God was destined to son-ship is seen through the Law and the prophets. From the beginning it was the intent and purpose of God to indwell His people. In Leviticus 26:11,12, for example, we find God predicting and promising that if they would obey Him and walk in His statutes, then He, Jehovah, would take up His abode among them and be their God. While this promise to Israel had a partial fulfillment when God later dwelt among them in the Tabernacle, and in the Temple, we need to turn to II Cor. 6:16, for its deeper and fuller meaning. Here we find Paul quoting from this passage in Leviticus in these words, *“What agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For WE (not ye) are the temple of the living God, as God hath said, “I will dwell in them, and walk with them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.”* Need I remind you that the promise of God in Leviticus 26, was to Israel? And Paul is here declaring that this promise was having its fulfillment in this Christian dispensation in the people to whom it was promised. yet how many people see this? God was literally to indwell His people. And this body of believers is not a Gentile church. It is an assembly of called-out ones who for many years looked forward to Christ, but which now experience the salvation of God through faith in the finished work of Jesus on the cross. The yearly sacrifices for sin by the high priest was a constant reminder to Israel of their need of a savior. It was their schoolmaster until Christ. And then, in the fullness of time *“God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that they might receive the adoption of sons,”* or as the Moffatt Bible translation puts it, *“that they might have their son-ship,”* this all had to do with Israel. This was God confirming the New Covenant promised to Israel in Jer. 31:31-33, whereby God would put His Law in their inward parts and write it on their hearts.

This leads us to consider the words of Jesus on that memorable night as Jesus commemorated the coming Pass-over with His disciples. As He took the cup, He said, *“This is My blood of the New Covenant which is shed for many for the remission of sins.”* How many people who partake of this Supper have the slightest idea of what He was saying? Jesus is saying that He was about to die as Testator of the New Covenant—which covenant of course, was predicated on the Abrahamic Covenant. Hebrews 9:16-17, tells us that *“Where a testament is, there must also be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead.”* This all had to do with the redemption of God’s ecclesia, His assembly of called-out ones. In Gal. 3:13, Paul says, *“Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, ‘Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree.’”* Who had incurred the curse of the Law? Israel, and this redemption provided by Christ was national. Many I fear, do not see this. While Israel as a nation has yet to come into an experiential knowledge of that redemption, it is assured and guaranteed them by the blood which Jesus shed on Calvary.

Having said all this, let us now take another look at the words of Jesus to Peter in Matt. 16:18. *“I say unto thee,*

‘That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.’” We must keep in mind that when Jesus uttered these words, there was no such thing as a book called, *“The New Testament.”* Jesus had not yet died, and Paul had not yet been converted. The only scriptures the disciples had, and from which our Lord Himself preached, was what we call, *“The Old Testament.”* [i.e. The Septuagint] When our Lord therefore spoke of building His church—not on Peter—but on a personal faith in Himself as the promised Messiah, was He referring to something taught in the Scriptures, and with which the disciples were familiar or was He introducing something new? Let us see.

Let us now go over some things and re-cap just a little so as to get a clearer picture of this assembly of called-out ones that God is building. The Greek word, *“ecclesia,”* while it may be used of an assembly of people called together, it is used in the Scripture to designate Israel. The word, *“church,”* on the other hand, has a connotation given to it that makes it include most everyone but Israel. In the Old Testament Scriptures the Hebrew word is *“qahal,”* meaning a congregation, or *“what is called together.”* This is the designation given to Israel after the exodus from Egypt. It is so-used in Gen 35:11 and Gen. 48:4. It was this assembly, or congregation of called-out ones to which God gave His Law—which Law they persistently broke, leading ultimately to their divorcement. Having failed through human weakness, they stood in need of redemption and restoration. James refers to this fallen assembly in Acts 15:16 as, *“The tabernacle of David which had fallen down,”* but which Jesus had come to restore and raise up again. Jesus had come to put the kingdom nation back on track again. This new ecclesia was actually a re-structuring of Israel on a better foundation. Jesus was to become the new Fountainhead of the nation of Israel. That this is so, is further borne out by Jesus Himself in Matt. 15:24, where we find Him saying, *“I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.”*

That God has been calling out a people for His name in this Christian era, no thoughtful or informed person will deny. But to assert and to teach that this assembly of people whom God is calling out is made up largely of ‘Gentiles’, or non-Israel people, is wholly unscriptural. Yet you hear it all the time. How, then, shall we account for such an unscriptural doctrine becoming so popular throughout Christendom today? I think the basic reason lies in the fact that most of the people of Christendom have mistaken the biblical identity of the people of Israel. Having limited the Israel of the Bible to the ‘Jew,’ a religious sect classed with Protestants and Catholics, the rank and file of religious leaders have swallowed hook, line and sinker, the lie that God in this Christian dispensation has been building a ‘Gentile’ church, made up largely of non-Israelites. These same religious leaders have divided the world up into two camps—Jew and Gentile [by which they supposedly mean Israel and non-Israel]. To their way of thinking, therefore, anyone who is not a Jew must be a Gentile. And, since the Jews rejected Jesus, and would have none of Him (and still are like that), there is thus no one left of which the church could be comprised. To say that our people are confused is to put it mildly. They are so confused, that politician and clergy alike stagger like drunken men as they endeavour to cope with our mounting problems.

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Think with me for a moment. For God to set Israel aside, the people with whom He made His covenants and promises, and whom He chose to be His servants and witnesses, and in this Christian era turn to a heathen, non-Israelite people with whom He made no covenants, and who were strangers to God and His promises, and use them to do Israel's work, is nothing short of a flat denial of the sovereignty of God.

"But," you ask, didn't Paul say that he was an apostle to the 'Gentiles.' He certainly did. But here again that phony word, Gentile, is substituted for the Greek word *Ethnos*, meaning "nations." Paul is saying that he is an apostle to the nations. But what nations you ask? Let us not forget that in Matt. 21:43, our Lord declares that the kingdom was being taken from Jewry and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. And this nations could be none other than a nation of Israel. Most theologians either ignore, or they seem all unmindful of the fact that Abram's name was changed to Abraham, because he was to become the father of many nations. And it is most singular that when Paul went on his missionary journeys, he went westward into the region of Asia Minor, whence Israel had migrated in their westward trek to their new home in the West. The Galatians, the Ephesians, the Corinthians, the Thessalonians, etc., were all 'Gentilized' Israelites, and Paul's letters to the churches in these areas so indicate. These people were NOT Chinese, Japanese, Indians, or Negroes. They were God's Israel who later became the Caucasians who moved into Western Europe to become the English, the Scots, the Irish, the Dutch, the Germans, the Norwegians, the Swedes, the Danes, etc.

Strange isn't it? Or is it? How the Reformation and religious revivals took place in the hands of the white man? Strange, isn't it, how we white 'Gentiles' have embraced Christ and Christianity and have carried the Gospel to the rest of the world, while the Jews and other heathen have remained non-Christian? For those who have eyes to see and ears to hear, this is all proof-positive that God has poured out His spirit on Israel as He had promised. Here in the lands of the white man are the assemblies of the called-out ones, churches, which worship God and Jesus Christ. God is not getting this church ready to leave the earth, but to live upon it in the Kingdom of our God.

**EYES THAT SEE NOT,
 AND EARS THAT HEAR NOT**
Robert B. Record

We know that in the natural, people have eyes that see not—whether because they were born blind, or an accident or a disease has impaired their vision. The same thing can be said of hearing. But, there is also a blindness and deafness in the spiritual realm that is equally serious.

Turning to Jer. 5:21, we find the Lord addressing His people with these words, "*Hear now this, O foolish people, and without understanding: which have eyes, and see not; which have ears, and hear not.*" I would remind us that these words are not addressed to the heathen, pagan world. They are rather addressed to the house of Jacob, in the days of their divorcement. I quote them here, because history would seem to be repeating itself, and in the same people. In Paul's second letter to Timothy he warns of a coming

day when the people of Christendom would not endure sound doctrine, but would turn away their ears from the truth, and be turned unto fables. I believe that we are living in the day of which Paul spoke. Though our people are still very religious, an apostasy has gradually set in, and they seem not to be aware of their spiritual condition. While they make a loud profession of believing the Bible from cover to cover, they have at the same time embraced a lot of theological interpretations, which make the word of God of none effect. Their minds are so cluttered with a lot of preconceived notions about Israel, the church, some Antichrist, and a (7) year tribulation period, that the message of the prophets does not come through to them. Having learned so many things that are not so, they are confused and without understanding. Like their fathers before them, they have eyes that see not, and ears that hear not. My father, the late Mr. W.B. Record, used to say, "They have spiritual cataracts over their eyes, and their ears are filled with religious ear wax."

To have ears that hear not, is but another way of saying that people either do not believe you, or they pay no attention to what you say. *thou you give them God's Word, they have been so mis-taught in that Word, especially "the more sure word of prophecy" spoken of by Peter (II Peter 1:19), that the Truth sounds like heresy and fiction.*

Living as we are in the end of this Christian dispensation, it is of the utmost importance that we give ear to the prophetic Scriptures—for in them alone do we have light on our national pathway and the meaning of the developing crisis. We are repeatedly exhorted throughout the Scriptures to "Hear the Word of the Lord." God's people were to hear the Word of the Lord with avowed purpose of obeying its precepts. To hear without obeying, is not to hear.

With the end of the age upon us, the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.

This means, among other things, that the good news of the Kingdom needs to be preached to God's Israel to prepare them for the Kingdom Age. As a people, we have lost our way and have supplanted the Kingdom of God with a heaven above. The Gospel of the Kingdom as preached by John the Baptist, was a call to repentance. We as a nation, need to get back to God, and it is long past time that we were giving ear to the Kingdom and National message of the Bible. This is the message that will set our people free. But it must be believed and acted upon. We must do something about it. Let those who have ears to hear, let them hear what the prophetic Word says to our people. The great majority of our people still have eyes that see not, and ears that hear not.

Spiritual blindness is both an affliction, and a state of being. Christians who have matured spiritually, or who have become carnal or fleshly in their Christian walk, are unable to discern spiritual truth. Spiritual truths are spiritually discerned. By the same token Christians who are untaught in the word, or who have learned a lot of things that are not so, are also lacking in spiritual discernment. They have eyes that see not. They may think they see, but they do not. The religious leaders of Jesus' day thought they saw, but Jesus called them "blind guides." Their theological interpretations of the Law and the Prophets, produced in them spiritual blindness. And so it is with many today.

Spiritual blindness may also come on a people as a judgment from God. The continual rejection of revealed

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truth, the refusal to believe the facts before their eyes, whether from prejudice, or just plain stubbornness, will result in the inability to see. and this is the condition of altogether too many in Christendom today. In view of the developing crisis, it behooves us, therefore, to be much in prayer that God will open blind eyes and unstop deaf ears. We cannot do this. It is the work of God as we proclaim His Word and call our people to repentance. Let us therefore be about our father's business redeeming the time because the days are evil. Remember the time is short and the hour is late in which to labour!

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HOW TO OVERCOME DISCOURAGEMENT by R.T. Woodworth

Discouragement has been a problem with God's people down through the ages. It is the chief mental disorder of our modern times, only now we call it depression.

The first man Adam demonstrated symptoms of depression in the Garden of Eden when he hid from God. Adam was fearful and he blamed his plight on others. From that first incident on, millions of good people have suffered these pangs of discouragement with blame.

In fact, when we analyze Bible heroes, we discover some universal types of depression still prevalent among good people today. Take Moses, for example. When the Lord called Moses, this meek man replied, "Who, me?" Moses had all the valid reasons for not wanting nor feeling qualified to go to Pharaoh and ask him to "Let God's people go." He had once lived in Pharaoh's palace and enjoyed the luxuries of royalty, but in a time of frustration and anger, Moses killed a man who abused a fellow Israelite slave. He had to flee from the country. From a prince in Pharaoh's court, he became a fugitive from justice, an unknown herdsman in the wilderness. When God was ready to deliver Israel out of Egypt, He called Moses, the discouraged, fearful, withdrawn, obscure man to be the deliverer, and Moses asked, "Who, me?"

Moses' successor, after the Exodus and forty years of wandering, was Joshua, the strong military leader of great courage. In fact, the admonition to "be strong and of good courage" is used more for Joshua than any other Bible character. Moses named him as his successor and encouraged the people not to be discouraged. (Deut 1:21). Then Moses introduced Joshua to them and said, "Encourage him!" (v. 38).

Later, the Lord tells Moses to "Command Joshua and encourage him and strengthen him; for he shall go over before this people and he shall cause them to inherit the land which you will see." (Deut 3:28).

After Moses died, the Lord said to Joshua, "Moses, My servant, is dead; now therefore arise and go over this Jordan, you and all this people, to the land which I am giving to them—the children of Israel." (Joshua 1:2). Four more times Joshua is told to "Be strong and of good courage." (v. 6, 7, 8, 18).

Why all this encouragement of Joshua—because he was a very courageous man? No, but because he was not. He was discouraged, disappointed, and downhearted. Who wouldn't be after forty years of getting nowhere in the wil-

derness. All the refugees from Egypt had died off and still they weren't in the Promised Land. Joshua was depressed, and he had every earthly reason to be discouraged, and say, "Woe is me!"

Then there was Gideon, the young farm boy who had to thresh grain secretly to hide it from the Midianites. When the Lord called Gideon, his reply was, "Show me!" (Judges 6:17).

Gideon was a discouraged youth who made a reasonable observation: If God is with us, then why all this trouble? Where are the miracles we are supposed to have? The Lord may have brought us out of Egypt once, but now He has forsaken us." (v. 130. So Gideon asked for a sign of God's sanction. "Show me a sign." And when God did demonstrate His presence and promise, Gideon was afraid he would now die (v. 22). Twice the fleece was put out and twice the Lord proved Himself to Gideon, but still he suffered a feeling of inferiority, a low self-image, just plain lack of courage and trust.

Or look at Elijah, the great prophet of the Lord, and all the wonderful deeds he did. But Elijah's life was full of discouragement. Even after a tremendous triumph over the false prophets of Baal, Elijah feared Queen Jezebel and fled for his life to hide in a cave.

Then God said, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" (1 Kings 19:9). The depressed prophet complained that the whole country was going to the dogs, he was the only one left, and they were after his life (v. 10, 14). Elijah was often discouraged and asked "Why me?"

Jonah was asked to go on a "Mission Impossible" to preach to Nineveh, and Jonah's reply was "No way, not me!" In fact, he immediately boarded a ship headed in the opposite direction. After the storm and the whale, his escape and finally doing his duty, Jonah was successful in saving the city of Nineveh, but he was still discouraged and wanted to die.

So did Job (6:9, 10:19). David was discouraged many times (1 Sam 30:6). Jeremiah lamented over many things. Even the Disciples were disappointed over the crucifixion, and at the Ascension of Jesus. Peter and Paul both were discouraged at times. The saints had their times of trouble and days of depression, whether their reasons were valid or not. All of us feel it sometimes. Yet the still small voice that spoke to Elijah still whispers in our ears: "Be strong and very courageous. The Lord is with us. He will not fail. He cares. He is faithful." We all need that encouragement to carry on. Sometimes our discouragement stems from our failures, failure to trust and obey, to believe and act on our faith. Sometimes it comes from self-pity, rejection by others, feeling inferior, fear of failure, or just plain cowardice.

The cure is Jesus. Take Him for your example. Look at His life, and the way the world treated Him. Jesus said, "The servant is not greater than his Lord." (John 15:20). We can overcome discouragement by looking to Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith.

Moses overcame by obeying God in spite of the discouraging signs of impossible plagues. Moses obeyed and believed God until "Who me?" became "Use me!"

Joshua lacked courage at first, but was encouraged by his Israelite brethren. We can overcome discouragement by encouraging others. In our positive approach to strengthen

Clearance - only a few left SHOOTING BACK The Right and Duty of Self-Defence by Charl Van Wyk

The author was an ordinary Christian man until the day he was called upon to be extraordinary. The date was 25 July 1993 and the event was what was to become known as the St. James Massacre. Charl was catapulted to the media's attention by shooting back at the terrorists who attacked the innocent congregation. This is his story. Deals with: Should God-fearing people carry arms? When is it appropriate to defend ourselves and our families? What can we do when our freedom to carry arms is legislated away from us?

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others, we strengthen ourselves. Cheerleaders and home fans shouting encouragement from the stands have often turned mediocrity into victory. Churches are built when Christians help their neighbours and every one says to his brother, "Be of good courage." (Isa 41:6-7).

Practice the power of positive thinking. Remember the story of "The Little Engine That Could." Never parade your faults, but profess your faith. Whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you have it, and it will come (Mark 11:24). Whatever is true, honest, just, pure, lovely; if anything is good, virtuous, or praiseworthy, think and talk about these things (Phil 4:8). Forgetting the past, look forward to those things to come with great expectation (Phil 3:13). If you are on the freeway, don't spend your time looking in the rear-view mirror. Keep your eye on the road ahead (Luke 9:62).

List your assets. Count your blessings. God loves you and cares for you enough to die for you. He not only cares, but He knows you and He keeps you. Cast your cares on Him (1 Pet 5:7). Start being grateful for what you already have. Be content with little or much (Phil 4:11).

Finally, listen only to God. Read His Word more than the newspaper. Hear Him speak to you in church, by radio, through His messengers and angels. Keep your eye on the Lord more than on the television. Talk to Jesus more than you do to others about your troubles. Claim God's promises instead of mourning over broken promises.

Forget all the excuses like, "Who, me?" "Why me?" "Woe is me!" and remember the encouraging invitation of our Lord, "Follow Me!" "Even me!" You are something special to God. He has something special for you. Take courage in the fact that many Bible heroes were also sometimes discouraged, but they did not give up. They obeyed God even when it didn't seem to make sense; He rewarded them.

*"God has not promised skies always blue,
Flower-strewn pathways all your life through...
But God has promised strength for the day,
Rest from your labour, light for the way,
Grace for the trials, help from above,
Unfailing sympathy, undying love."*

Annie Johnson Flint.

* * * *

CONFIDENCE AMID WORLD TROUBLE MARK 13:7

Jesus teaches us to build our confidence in the abiding reality of Himself in the midst of everything. If a man puts his confidence in the things which must go, imagine his incomprehensible perplexity when they do go. No wonder Jesus said "men's hearts fail in them for fear." These words describe the time we are now in.

But to His disciples Jesus said, "When **you** hear of wars and rumours of wars, see that ye be not troubled." Our true life is not in the things which are passing, and if we build ourselves on God and His Word, when they go, the marvel is that we are not scared. The thing to examine spirituality is, am I connected with Jesus the Christ personally?

Courtesy The Pathfinder, PO Box 291, Spokane WA 99210

ETIOLOGY OF ADDICTION *Stephen Contrado, Th.M.*

We need to understand why individuals become addicted to alcohol and drugs. Understanding why people become addicted gives us the leverage to overthrow the addiction. There are a number of general reasons. Addiction is a chronic illness - a mental, social, medical, and spiritual problem. The addiction of one individual differs from another. Individuals become addicted for various reasons. An addict should understand what personal factors predis-

pose him to addiction. If the addict gains insight into what troubles him, he can fight the illness. Let's explore why some individuals become addicted. Here are ten personal factors:

1. Curiosity. Let's not underestimate the drive of man to explore the unknown. Youths especially are motivated by this drive. They want to learn how drinking or smoking affects their thinking and behaviour so they experiment. They wade further and further into the quagmire of dependence and irrationality. Many never return.

2. Boredom. No individual needs to become so bored that he resorts to alcohol and drugs, but many do. Individuals feel anxious about missing out on the pleasure and action they see in the media. They feel their lives lack thrill and glamour. Bad work habits and wrong ideas keep people from becoming active in sound social and personal ways. Laziness results, boredom soon overwhelms them, and then they seek chemical highs.

3. Identity Crisis. Sociologists would regard an identity crisis as a social factor. The breakdown of family, church, and state weaken the resources of the individual. But not knowing who you are, what you stand for, and how you can find happiness is really personal. Some people fail to develop a conscience, unable to discern right from wrong.

4. Irresistible Emotion. Each individual develops a unique emotional response to anxiety and frustrations. Sometimes these emotions are repressed, but during periods of mental clarity addicts usually realize their emotional problem. Anger or fear cripples tens of thousands. They seek escape or relief in addiction.

5. Hopelessness. People sometimes think they are powerless. In a society that values power, this is an unbearable predicament. Those threatened by a feeling of inadequacy, inferiority, and powerlessness often want to deny reality. Alcohol and drugs give these addicts the illusion of the power they need.

6. Illusions of Grandeur. For some people equality and the regular methods of achievement are not enough. They want a trump card. These addicts need to feel enlightened or gifted with supernatural talents. Their rebellion leads to the dangerous cult of addiction and permits them to cling to illusions.

7. Alleviation of Pain. Some people are so hurt, traumatized, or feel such physical pain that they will do anything to relieve the pain. For one reason or another these addicts don't seek help from physicians and psychiatrists, but seek out alcohol and drugs. Chronic abuse often includes pain.

8. Seduction. Some people cannot say, No. They readily believe the most unrealistic promises made to them. They may seek affection or attention. They are susceptible to advertisement. For some people a distorted concept of sexuality becomes confused with every social need, and they easily fall victim to addictions. The Casanova takes a drink for courage. Miss "Hottie" thinks drinking increases her sex appeal. Even adults are trapped in this adolescent psychology. Middle-aged "sex-pots" use an addiction to deny growing old.

9. Social Discontent. Some people blame others for their troubles. Some imagine their troubles to be worse than they are. Some resort to domestic and social violence that leads to, and fuels the addiction. Some try any and every means of protest until they finally end up addicts. Many radicals of the "hippie" movement were in this class of addicts.

10. Spiritual Alienation. People need a sense of purpose, fraternity, and faith in a generous and just Providence. When they lack spiritual security they fail in life through personal weaknesses. Complacent and materialis-



tic people are not free from the real need for spiritual union.

Addicts need to find an appropriate plan of action to cope with their personal problems and quit their habit. If they cannot deal with an addiction themselves, they need to get help. The long-term effects of addiction reduce the possibilities of a successful recovery. The caring observer needs to know ways to persuade those addicted to Alcohol and drugs to get help. Some addicts are persuaded by showing them the suffering they bring to those who love them or the danger they pose to innocent people. He can show them that they can achieve an earlier ambition. Insights makes healing possible.

We need to be resourceful and effective pastoral counselors and guardians of the Lord's covenant (i.e. plan for our people) to achieve national security. The Lord permits addiction to destroy our nation because our people turn away from Him. Our sons and daughters are given unto heartless drug traffickers from almost every foreign nation. Our schools are a market for illicit substances and a training ground for disobedience towards the laws of our republic.

Courtesy Virginia Christian Israelite, PO Box 109 Round Hill VA 20142

WHEN NATIONS COLLAPSE

by Bill Muehlenberg

A lot of thought has gone into human mortality, and how we can prolong life. Less thought has gone into the question of why nations die. But nations, like people, do have a beginning, and do have an end. Thus it is worth looking at the question of how and why nations collapse.

This paper will not be a scholarly examination of the subject. Instead it will be more of a rough outline, sustained by a string of thoughts and quotations taken from those who have pondered these important questions. Historians, philosophers, theologians and others will be quoted to contribute to the discussions.

One common theme that emerges from those who have thought carefully about the decline of nations is that often it is the case that they collapse from within, instead of perishing from without. Thus Arnold Toynbee could rightly say, "Civilizations die from suicide, not murder."

Toynbee, a British historian (1889-1975), is most famous for his magisterial study *A Study of History*, 1934-1961. In this 12-volume work he examined the rise and fall of nations.

One of his more significant remarks is worth recalling: "Of the twenty-two civilizations that have appeared in history, nineteen of them collapsed when they reached the moral state the United States is in now." Given that this is now a dated comment, how much more true is it today?

Other historians have of course remarked on the suicidal tendencies of nations. Will Durant (1885-1981: "A great civilization is not conquered from without until it has destroyed itself from within. The essential causes of Rome's decline lay in her people, her morals, her class struggle, her failing trade, her bureaucratic despotism, her stifling taxes, her consuming wars."

Along with his wife Ariel, he penned the monumental 11-volume *Story of Civilization* (1935-1975). They also penned, among other works, the 1968 study, *The Lessons of History*. In both these works they noted the tendency of nations to wither from within.

Lord Macaulay (1800-1859), the English writer and historian, made a similar observation about the fate of democracies. He said that the average age of the world's greatest democratic nations has been 200 years. Each has been through the following sequence:

From bondage to spiritual faith.
From faith to great courage.
From courage to Liberty.

From liberty to abundance
From abundance to complacency
From complacency to selfishness.
From selfishness to apathy.
From apathy to dependency.

And from dependency back again into bondage.

(A letter from Lord Macaulay to an American friend, May 23, 1857). The questions of course that arise are these: Where are we in this progression? How far along are we on the road to decay? Can we escape this fate?

EXAMPLES OF THE DECLINE

It is not hard to pinpoint where we are on Macaulay's timeline. The examples of corruption, selfishness, apathy and decadence are all around. The easiest way to make this case is simply to open the daily newspaper. Recent newspaper headlines readily confirm the situation. Consider just a few from the past several months:

* Pedophiles launch own political party (May 30, 2006) Pedophiles in the Netherlands are registering a political party to press for lowering the legal age of sexual relations from 16 to 12 and allow child porn and bestiality. The party says it eventually wants to get rid of the age limit on sexual relations.

* Bibles banned (May 12, 2006) Bibles are being banned in hospitals and schools in order not to offend non-Christians.

* Gay school guide: Teachers' manual rejects 'mum' and 'dad' (June 4, 2006). Victorian schools are being advised to dump the words "mother" and "father" by a new teachers' manual that promotes the cause of same-sex parents.

* PC penguins (April 16, 2006). Seaworld in Queensland has decided to change the names of 'fairy penguins' to 'little penguins' for fear of offending homosexuals.

Many more examples could be provided. But I think you get the point. These are all examples of a culture in deep decline. Or as one American sociologist and Democratic Senator put it, these are illustrations of "Defining Deviancy Down."

Daniel Patrick Moynihan (1927-2003) wrote an important essay by this title in 1993. In it he decried the moral collapse in the West, and the way we try to cope with it. He wrote: "The amount of deviant behaviour in American society has increased beyond the levels the community can 'afford to recognize' and that, accordingly, we have been redefining deviancy so as to except much conduct previously stigmatized, and quietly raising the 'normal' level in categories where behaviour is now abnormal by any earlier standard."

He rightly noted that the saturation of evil is becoming so complete that the only way we can cope with it is to redefine it. Of course such attempts are not new. Twenty-five hundred years ago the prophet Isaiah could warn of similar calumny: "Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter." (Isaiah 5:20).

HOW DID THIS HAPPEN?

There is a long answer which we cannot go into here. We could look at the Enlightenment and its impact. Or more recently, the counterculture of the sixties. But we can provide a short answer: The past century has been one grand social experiment to see what life is like when we reject God. (And the results are in!)

We have tried to live as if there is no God, and we are now reaping the whirlwind. One modern prophet who shares this view is the former Russian gulag prisoner, Alexander Solzhenitsyn. He has written much on this theme. His assessment is simple yet profound: "It is because we have forgotten God. That is why all this is happening to us."

Our moral decline is directly connected to our rejection



of God. Will Durant offered this insight: "There is no significant example in history, before our time, of a society successfully maintaining moral life without the aid of religion."

Another important voice in this regard is TS Eliot (1888-1965). The American-British poet and critic wrote an important volume in 1948 entitled, *Notes Towards the Definition of Culture*. His thoughts are well worth recalling:

"If Christianity goes, the whole of our culture goes. Then you must start painfully again, and you cannot put on a new culture ready made. You must wait for the grass to grow to feed the sheep to give the wool out of which your new coat will be made. You must pass through many centuries of barbarism. We should not live to see the new culture, nor would our great-great-grandchildren: and if we did, not one of us would be happy with it."

Exactly. Throw out God, and the work of civilization becomes very difficult indeed. Again, Will Durant concurs: "From barbarism to civilization requires a century; from civilization to barbarism needs but a day."

WHAT CAN BE DONE?

What is needed more than ever is a rebuilding of the foundations. As the Psalmist said so long ago, "If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?" (Psalm 11:3) The job will not be easy, but it must be done. We need to preserve what is good, and resist those anarchic voices who would take it away from us.

And a big part of this is to learn from history, and to avoid the problems we encounter there. As the Spanish philosopher Santayana reminds us, "Those who ignore history are doomed to repeat its mistakes."

But it is not enough to just recall the lessons of history. We must be willing to act, to take a stand, to make a difference. We cannot sit on the sidelines in a time of danger and threat. It was Dante in his *Inferno* who remarked that "The hottest level in hell is reserved for those who remain neutral in a moral crisis." (not that we believe Dante was correct - but it will do as a figure of speech. For the truth on 'hell' I suggest getting Sheldon Emry's tape series "***The Burning Hell - is it Bible Truth or Blasphemy?***" #A-7604 to A-7606 six messages on three tapes @ \$15)

We must get involved. It is not enough just to talk about the problem, or to theorize about current malaise. Karl Marx knew the importance of action: "Philosophers have only interpreted the world; the thing is to change it."

But I am just one person, you might protest, What difference can I make? The problems are just too big. But the anthropologist Margaret Mead would have us believe otherwise: "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world ... indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."

Or as Edmund Burke has written: "Nobody makes a greater mistake than he who did nothing because he could only do a little."

A radical Black Panther activist of the sixties, Eldridge Cleaver, wisely said: "If you are not part of the solution, you are part of the problem." And a prophet of 2000 years ago put it this way: "You are the salt of the earth, you are the light of the world." (Jesus Christ, Matt. 5:13).

So what do we do, as believers? Often people debate as to whether we should seek personal revival or social reformation. The argument is often presented as if it is either/or. But I can suggest that it is both/and. The need of the hour is to both get our own act together, and to seek to be a light in a dark world, to be a preserving salt in a corrupt nation.

Indeed, the bottom line is this: Society is in a mess because the church is in a mess. (Because the churches

have not preached God's Law for society! CIM) And the church is in a mess because you and I are in a mess. We need to get back to our first love (Rom. 13:8 - obey the law). We need to stop our trivial pursuits. We need to realize that we are here for a purpose, and the purpose of our existence does not revolve around ourselves, but around someone whom gave His very life for all of us (to redeem His people - Gal 4:5, Tit 2:14). We can do no less for Him.

Thus we need to get back to basics. And we need to seek forgiveness for losing the plot (forgiveness for breaking God's Law). As we were reminded so long ago: "If my people (Israel), who are called by my name (or more correctly: "Upon whom My name is called" being a reference to Numbers 6:23-26), will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways (transgression of My Law), then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land." (2 Chron. 7:14)

In the end, we must agree with Toynbee: "Sooner or later, man has always had to decide whether he worships his own power or the power of God."

The question is, how will we respond?

Courtesy Saltshakers, PO Box 6049, Wantirna Vic 3152

By the time you read this, out stay in Brisbane will be almost over, and we'll be heading home. If anyone wants to get in touch with me while we are away from home, you can try my mobile # 0408-660-164. There will be family members who are not coming with us, but they may not always be at home. There will be some delay with the mail because of our absence.

It seems like the DVD's are coming out better now, as we have had very few complaints the last few weeks. A couple of machines which were giving trouble have been replaced. As DVD's are easily damaged, we ask that you be particularly careful with any loan DVDs you may be viewing. If you have to put them down somewhere, other than in their case or on the DVD tray, please place them printed side down, and recorded side up in order to avoid scratching. If any are damaged beyond repair (they will no longer play), they will have to be paid for. We try to help you by making them available, please help us by looking after them with great care.

With the new standards converter, some of the old American (NTSC) video tapes are coming to new life, and the new DVDs produced from them are much clearer and better colour-wise. The deal on 6 videos for \$10 will continue until all are gone. It may take a couple of days to get them together. There is no choice on what you get. Some of these old messages are still very relevant, and with the transfer to DVD, being segmented, makes it much easier to view certain portions, as you can avoid the fast forwarding to find what you wanted to look at. Also, if you order DVD's and you order two of the same at once, where the first is sug don \$15, you can have the second for \$10! i.e. \$5 less for the second, to what is the suggested donation for the first DVD (This may help you if you want to give one to a friend).

The situation in Victoria looks ominous for home-schoolers, as there is legislation being introduced to ban it. Let's pray that the other states will not follow this line. Victoria's Racial and religious Vilification laws are causing problems - but fortunately some of the other states have chosen not to follow Vic's example.

In these trying times, May our Heavenly Father show mercy and grace to His people - May He bless you and keep you and make His face shine on you and grant you His peace and protection from all who hate Him, and want to destroy His Word and His people,

