

## Leviticus 26

### The Mounts and Responsibility

There is much discussion, even disagreements which lead to very harsh words, over whether or not the New Testament Church is the heir to the covenant-promise as given to Abraham and later written down by Moses.

Apparently, there are three views: 1) the covenant-promises were made to a physical race, and the Church sort of came along as an afterthought because the physical race rejected the Messiah, yet in the end, the Lord's attention will return to that physical race (*i.e.*, Dispensationalism); 2) the first covenant-promise was made to a physical race, and it ended with Christ. The Church now has a new promise, or new covenant, and 3) the covenant-promise was made to a spiritual race based upon the faith, as exemplified by Abraham, and the covenant-promise heirs are the same throughout history that is, by faith. Though the original covenant-promise operated primarily within a physical race, or nation, it expanded in Christ to include the whole world. The mark of heirship to the covenant-promise has always been and is presently the circumcised heart that loves God and His Law-Word, (Deut. 30:6) exemplified by a circumcised life of loving obedience to the law of the covenant, the Ten Commandments. (Ps. 78:10; Rom. 2:28, 29; 2 Cor. 5:17; Col. 2:11. The "Reformed" position holds that baptism of the believer's infant children makes them heirs to the covenant; however, the "Reformed" position does not offer the same "saving grace" to adults. See *Systematic Theology*, by Charles Hodge, in three volumes, III.546ff. Reprint by Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan. 1977. This pastor considers Hodge one of the greatest theologians of all time.)

In approaching the study of the Gospels, CI Scofield tells us that,

[T]he mind should be freed, so far as possible, from mere theological concepts and presuppositions. Especially is it necessary to exclude the notion a legacy in Protestant thought from post-apostolic and Roman Catholic theology that the Church is the true Israel, and that the Old Testament foreview of the kingdom is fulfilled in the Church. Do not, therefore, assume interpretations to be true because familiar. Do not assume that "the throne of David" (Lk. 1. 31) is synonymous with "My Father's throne" (Rev. 3.21), or that "the house of Jacob" (Lk. 1. 33) is the Church composed both of Jew and Gentile. (*Old Scofield Bible*, notes, p 989. CIS's tirade against historic Christianity up to his day continues. Those interested would do well to read his introduction to "THE FOUR GOSPELS." His militancy against any kind of "law" binding upon the child of God since Christ is appalling. I have together an argument that the Church is the new Israel of God, replacing the Old Testament nation of Israel. The argument is about one hundred pages long, so it is too long to go into at this point. Thus the promised blessings and curses given to Old Testament Israel are basically still in effect through Christ. )

Thus the gospel according to Scofield says that the historic teaching of the church that the Church is the new Israel of God was all wrong, so God raised him up to set the matter straight. (See CIS's introduction to THE FOUR GOSPELS.)

The covenant not only offered salvation to fallen man through faith in the

Messiah/Redeemer, it also offered conditional physical blessings for obedience to the law of the covenant.

Though there are many good men who argue for 1) or 2), I believe the overwhelming Scriptural evidence is for 3). Let me list just a couple of reasons: First, the overwhelming number of Old Testament passages concerning the covenant-promise that are quoted by the Spirit as references to the Church, e.g., Galatians 6:16. Second, the multitudes of New Testament passages that clearly say the Church is the heir to the promises, e.g.,

*Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; And did all eat the same spiritual meat; And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ. But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. (1 Cor 10:1-6.)*

1 Corinthians 10:1 is the last of twenty three references to **our fathers** in the New Testament. All the preceding references can easily be seen as refereeing to a literal Hebrew line. However, v. 1 above shows us that not all of the *our fathers* references refer to a physical Hebrew lineage. Paul was not speaking to national Israel nor to the physical decedents of those who followed Moses out of Egypt. He was speaking to the Corinthian church made up of both Jews and Gentiles. And thus the Spirit of God clearly identifies Christians as the "sons," i.e., heirs, of those who were delivered from Egypt. Paul uses God's dealings with *our fathers* as a warning to us, *upon whom the ends of the world are come*, v. 11. Dispensationalism deals with the problem, i.e., *our* refers to Christians and not exclusively to the "Jews," by "dispensationalizing" into another time frame passages not supportive to their theories.

In other words, the Christian faith is not a new fath; it is the continuation of the faith that was delivered to the saints of the Old Testament. (Jude 1:3; Rom. 3:21.)

#### The Old and New Covenant/Testament

*Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: (Jer. 31:31.) For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: (Heb. 8:8.) In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away. (Heb. 8:13.) And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel. (Heb. 12:24.)*

*For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. (Mt. 26:29.) And he said unto them, This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many. (Mk. 14:24.) Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you. (Lk. 22:20.) After the*

*same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. (1 Cor. 11:25.) Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life. (2 Cor. 3:6.) And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. (Heb. 9:15.)*

Covenant/Testament though the words are different in the New Testament, they are the same word, #1242. The Hebrew 8:8 quote of Jeremiah 31:31 shows that the promised covenant/testament to come was the new testament made with those redeemed by the blood of the Lamb, and clearly preached by the prophets of old. (Rom. 1:2; 3:21; 16:25-27; Eph. 2:20; 1 Pet. 1:10, &c.).

The 1689 London Baptist Confession identifies God's covenant thusly:

3 This covenant is revealed in the gospel; first of all to Adam in the promise of salvation by the seed of the woman, (Gen. iii. 15.) and afterwards by farther steps, until the full discovery thereof was completed in the New Testament; (Heb. I. 1.) and it is founded in that eternal covenant transaction that was between the Father and the Son about the redemption of the elect; (2 Tim. 1. 9, Tit. I. 2.) and it is alone by the grace of this covenant that all of the posterity of fallen Adam that ever were saved did obtain life and blessed immortality, man being now utterly incapable of acceptance with God upon the terms on which Adam stood in his state of innocency. (Heb. xi. 6, 13, Rom. iv. 1, 2, &c., Acts iv. 12, John viii, 56.) (Copy of *The London Baptist Confession of Faith of 1689* upon request.)

The New Testament Church is the heir to the covenant-promise as given to Abraham and later written down by Moses with its promised blessings and curses. The covenant was confirmed in the Old Testament by the blood of bulls and goats, and it was confirmed in the New Testament by the blood of the Lamb.

Accordingly, as we look at the laws, or conditions, God attached to His covenant, those conditions are easily traced into the New Testament and applied to the new covenant nation of God, the church.

## Leviticus 26

Leviticus 26 reads almost like Deuteronomy 28-32, the blessings and curses of obedience or disobedience. We should note, furthermore, that Stephen told the Jews that it was Christ who met Moses to give him the Law; Stephen's statement upset the Jews then as much as it does many today. Acts 7:30ff., and John 14:15.

The Lord God speaks to Israel from the Mount in Sinai, promising temporal blessings or curses to national Israel. We know, however, that the people soon turned from the commandments given in Sinai, and the threats came to pass. The people revealed their despite for His statutes, and their abhorrence for His judgments by refusing to *do all my commandments*, vv. 15, 43. Accordingly, though one dogmatically profess his or her love for the Law of the Lord and for the Lord Himself, if he or she does not do His *commandments*, he or she actually despises Him and His law. This law is

clearly repeated in the New Testament by the same One who gave it in Sinai:

*And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say? (Lk. 6:46.) If ye love me, keep my commandments. (Jn. 15:16.)*

The people refused to *do all my commandments*, and the results were just like the Lord promised: they ate their own children, lost the good land the Lord gave them, and were scattered among the heathen by Assyria and Babylon, vv. 29-33. The Lord God spoke from the Mount, giving the terms of the covenant so clearly everyone could understand them. The Lord placed conditions upon their claiming and keeping the promised temporal blessings; the covenant also had negative terms to it: do this, and these bad things will happen.

Notice that Leviticus 26 has only 10 "good" verses (vv. 4-12) while there are 24 "bad" verses (vv. 16-39, which, by the way, are placed between vv. 15 & 43, so there could be no mistaking the reason for the evils of vv. 16-39). Knowing the hardness of men's hearts, the Word of God contains far more threats against evil than it does promises of good. It is *the rod of reproof* that drives foolishness from the hearts of children, not the promise of good things. (Pr. 22:15, nor do words of reasoning change behavior—they did not change God's people's behavior.) God's children are no different:

*For all this they sinned still, and believed not for his wondrous works. Therefore their days did he consume in vanity, and their years in trouble. When he slew them, then they sought him: and they returned and enquired early after God. And they remembered that God was their rock, and the high God their redeemer. Nevertheless they did flatter him with their mouth, and they lied unto him with their tongues. For their heart was not right with him, neither were they stedfast in his covenant. But he, being full of compassion, forgave their iniquity, and destroyed them not: yea, many a time turned he his anger away, and did not stir up all his wrath. For he remembered that they were but flesh; a wind that passeth away, and cometh not again. (Ps. 78:32-39.)*

What a sad commentary of man, the sinner. God's goodness to His people only led them to turn their backs upon *all my commandments*. Romans 2, gives the same story: Paul soundly rebuked the Jews (v. 17) for misusing the *goodness, forbearance and longsuffering* of God to pursue their own lusts. In doing so, they were treasuring up for themselves God's wrath against the day of judgment. Clearly, the context of v. 4 says that the purpose of God's goodness was/is to lead the sinner to repentance and converting faith in Christ.

However, consider that *the goodness of God* can also refer to God giving the spirit of repentance:

*In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will. (2 Tim. 2:25, 26.)*

It is God in His goodness who gives fallen man the willingness to repent:

... Surely there is such a thing as being made willing without being forced. There is a middle ground between moral suasion and coercion. God

supersedes the necessity of forcing, by making us willing in the day of this power. (Rom. 4:2. Charles Hodge, *Romans*, 48, 49. Banner of Truth Trust. "The apostle, however, is not here speaking of gracious influence, but of the moral tendencies of providential dispensations.")

Leviticus 26:15, the Lord made it clear: His people could not blame Him for their return to bondage, for they themselves broke the clearly spoken agreement. However, the bondage would not last forever: they were to be returned to their land after the land enjoyed *her sabbaths*, v. 43. Both Ezra and Nehemiah record the return after their seventy years captivity.

*Come ye near unto me, hear ye this; I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; from the time that it was, there am I: and now the Lord GOD, and his Spirit, hath sent me. Thus saith the LORD, thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; I am the LORD thy God which teacheth thee to profit, which leadeth thee by the way that thou shouldest go. O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea: Thy seed also had been as the sand, and the offspring of thy bowels like the gravel thereof; his name should not have been cut off nor destroyed from before me. (Isa. 48:16-19.)*

The same Lord God, in the visible form of the Lord Jesus, spoke again from the Mount in Galilee, promising temporal blessings to the new Israel of God:

*But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. (Mat. 6:33.)*

The Lord clearly spoke the promised blessings of the covenant between man and the Lord God again on the Mount in Galilee, Matthew 5 through 7. Also echoed are the results of despising the *statutes*, abhorring the *judgments* and not doing *all* the *commandments* of the covenant, Matthew 5:13ff. Notice the Lord's serious three fold threat against hypocrisy in His people: *thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are, for they have their reward*, Matthew 6:2, 5, 16. Compare the Lord's three fold threat from the Mount in Galilee against hypocrisy with the hypocrisy of His people recorded Psalms 78:36, 37:

*Nevertheless they did flatter him with their mouth, and they lied unto him with their tongues. For their heart was not right with him, neither were they stedfast in his covenant.*

Note how clearly the Lord's sermon from the Mount in Sinai resonates in His sermon on the Mount in Galilee many hundreds of years latter:

First,

*Leviticus 26:1, Ye shall make you no idols nor graven image, neither rear you up a standing image, neither shall ye set up any image of stone in your land, to bow down unto it: for I am the LORD your God.*

The Lord warned about serving the gods of this world, e.g., *mammon*,

*Matthew 6:24, No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.*

Second,

Leviticus 26:17, *And I will set my face against you, and ye shall be slain before your enemies: they that hate you shall reign over you; and ye shall flee when none pursueth you.*

The Lord threatened His people with being trodden under foot of EVIL men if they departed from His words,

Matthew 5:13, *Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.*

Third,

Leviticus 26:23, 24, *And if ye will not be reformed by me by these things, but will walk contrary unto me; Then will I also walk contrary unto you, and will punish you yet seven times for your sins.*

The Lord warned against walking contrary to Him, that is, contrary to His law as given from Sinai, e.g.,

A) *Thou shalt not kill*, is developed in,

Matthew 5:22, *But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.*

B) *Thou shalt not commit adultery*, is developed in

Matthew 5:28, *But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.*

C) *Thou shalt not bear false witness*, (i.e., the tongue is controlled) is developed in

Matthew 5:34, *But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne...*

D) *Thou shalt not steal*, (i.e., restitution) is developed in

Matthew 5:39, *But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.* (It should be pointed out there that the Lord is referring to being persecuted for righteousness sake; obviously, He is not teaching that theft is to be ignored. See Ex. 21:16ff. [esp. v. 24]; Mt. 5:10; Rom. 8:36.)

E) *Thou shalt not covet*, is developed by the Lord not only on the Mount in Galilee, but throughout the New Testament, e.g., Matthew 5:43; Php 4:8.

We have already noted that Leviticus 26:1, is clearly regiven many times in the New Testament: we cannot serve two masters, the Lord God and the gods of this world, e.g., *mammon*. We have not, however, mentioned the Lord's sabbaths; they are clearly reiterated in dependance totally upon the Lord

for salvation, Matthew 7:21ff.; Hebrews 4.

Those militating against God militate against His law as given on the Mount (Ps. 2); militating against God, fallen man attempts to dismiss passages like Leviticus 26. However, the Lord Jesus clearly kept these passages in effect, even strengthening them in places like His sermon on the Mount. However, the ungodly try to dismiss the laws given by the Lord Jesus from the Mount in Galilee with such evil statements as this:

For these reasons the Sermon on the Mount in its primary application gives neither the privilege nor the duty of the Church. These are found in the Epistles. Under the law of the kingdom, for example, no one may hope for forgiveness who has not first forgiven (Mt. 6. 12, 14, 15). Under grace the Christian is exhorted to forgive because he is already forgiven (Eph. 4. 30-32). (CIS, p 1000.)

And thus Scofield sets Christ at odds with Paul, even dismissing "the Lord's Prayer" (Mt. 6:12-15) as not being for the "Church dispensation." However, this writer can not conceive how CIS can set the forgiveness required by the Lord in Matthew 6:12-15 at odds with the *forgiveness* required by Paul in Ephesians 4:32. The two requirements are precisely the same. Actually, CIS teaches that Christians have no responsibility to forgive others under the new covenant. In fact, he says, they have no responsibility at all:

(8) The New Covenant rests upon the sacrifice of Christ, and secures the eternal blessedness, under the Abrahamic Covenant (Gal. 3. 13-29), of all who believe. It is absolutely unconditional, and, since no responsibility is by it committed to man, it is final and irreversible. (p 1298.)

Clearly, men such as CIS have taught God's people that they have no responsibility to the thrice-holy God of all heaven and earth. They have taught God's people to *break* the *commandments* of God; if these false teachers are in heaven, they *shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven*. (Mt. 5:20 is it any wonder they want to make Christians irresponsible to the commands of our Lord's Sermon on the Mounts?) Men such as CIS have taught God's people to ignore the word of our Lord spoken from the Mounts, both the Mount in Sinai and the Mount in Galilee, and turning their backs upon God's Word has resulted in God turning His back upon them, e.g.,

Leviticus 26:15-17, *And if ye shall despise my statutes, or if your soul abhor my judgments, so that ye will not do all my commandments, but that ye break my covenant: I also will do this unto you; I will even appoint over you terror, consumption, and the burning ague, that shall consume the eyes, and cause sorrow of heart: and ye shall sow your seed in vain, for your enemies shall eat it. And I will set my face against you, and ye shall be slain before your enemies: they that hate you shall reign over you; and ye shall flee when none pursueth you.*

Matthew 5:13, *Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.*

An excellent example of the carryover of the Old Testament law into the New Testament is found in the first two verses of Leviticus 26: vv. 1, 2. V. 2,

is clearly given in Hebrews 10. Observe:

First, v. 1, **idols**, are strictly forbidden. Hebrews 10:19-22, the only proper approach to God the Father is through the Lord Jesus Christ.

Second, v. 2, **sabbaths** and **sanctuary** must be honored. Hebrews 10:25, presents the distinct command for God's people to *assemble* at the appointed time. (*The day approaching, i.e., the day of the destruction of the Jewish nation, Meyer, &c..* )

Third, vv. 14ff., define the *judgment and fiery indignation* which should be looked for by those who *sin wilfully after that they have received the knowledge of the truth*, Hebrews 10:26-31.

Fourth, vv. 3-13 promise God's blessings upon those who follow the commands of the Lord. Hebrews 10:35, 36, also promises God's blessings upon those who do not *cast away their confidence*, but continue in His commands.

However, CIS frees man from the "responsibility" problem presented by Hebrews 10 thusly. In his brief introduction to "The Jewish-Christian Epistles," we find these two points: He opens it with, "In Hebrews, James, First and Second Peter, and Jude we have a group of inspired writings differing in important respects from Paul's Epistles..." He then concludes the introduction with, "The two Epistles of Peter, however, are less Jewish and more truly catholic than the other Jewish-Christian writings. He addresses, in his first Epistle, neither Jews as such, or even Christian Jews of Jerusalem, or Judea, but of the dispersion; while Second Peter is not distinctively Jewish at all." (p 1289) In other words, he cannot make up his mind whether Peter is "distinctively Jewish" as is Hebrews, James and Jude, and thus not for the *Church age*, or is Peter actually for the *Church age*.

Clearly, the teaching that God's people have no responsibility to the commands given from the Mounts has permitted the *salt* to lose *his savour*; it is now being trod under the feet of evil men, and will continue to be until there is a change in attitude toward responsibility.

(the above about CIS is in a separate file for a mailing.)

### **Leviticus 26:1, 2.**

Though I dealt with the parallel passage, Leviticus 19:30, back there, there are some things we need to add here. The statement in v. 2 is important and ignored by the natural man, or the Lord would not have given it so plainly again. This section opens with the second and fifth commandments:

1) **no idols nor graven image...** We should add to this, **Neither shall ye set up any images in your heart.** It is worthy of note that this second commandment is given twice in Exodus twenty: v. 4 and v. 23. Absolutely forbidden is the use of any physical representation in worshiping the Lord God, e.g., the Church of Rome.

2) **my sabbaths, and my sanctuary...** places sabbaths and sanctuary in the same verse, and thus in the same command. The two are also found together in Leviticus 19:30, and follows the command with v. 31, forbidding

witchcraft-familiar spirits, wizards.

Christ reinforced the **sanctuary** law in Mark 11:16 where He *would not suffer that any man should carry any vessel through the temple*. Israel went into Babylon captivity while the land kept her sabbaths. WHAT HAPPENED over the sanctuary? We do know what the Lord said in Haggai 1:1-11 about the house of the Lord. The Lord's complaint, delivered through Haggai, was that the people sought personal comfort while neglecting the Lord's house. Commenting on Haggai 1:4, Gill points out that,

David was of another mind, 2 Sa 7:2 and truly religious persons will be more concerned for the house of God than for their own houses. (*Online Bible.*)

Leviticus 26:2 restates Leviticus 19:30 (*Ye shall keep my sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary: I am the LORD.*) which follows v. 19, *Ye shall keep my statutes.* (See my comments from that section for the importance and applications of the *statutes* given between v. 19 & v. 30.)

(Lev. 19) Vers. 19-32. The words, "Ye shall keep My statutes," open the second series of commandments, which make it a duty on the part of the people of God to keep the physical and moral order of the world sacred... (*Keil, I.421.*)

Ver. 30. The exhortation now returns to the chief point, the observance of the Lord's Sabbaths and the reverence for His sanctuary, which embraces the true method of divine worship as laid down in the ritual commandments. When the Lord's day is kept holy, and a holy reverence for the Lord's sanctuary lives in the heart, not only are many sins avoided, but social and domestic life is pervaded by the fear of God and characterized by chasteness and propriety... (*Ibid, 425.*)

In the command and its location in the law, *Ye shall keep my sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary: I am the LORD*, we see some things: First, the Lord's insistence upon purity in worshiping of Himself, and, second, man's attitude toward the Lord God will be reflected in man's attitude toward those things representing the Lord God upon earth, whether God's men or God's "house," *i.e., sanctuary*. Proper honor of the Lord God in the proper way, the *sabbaths* and His *sanctuary*, will keep one from idolatry.

Vers. 1 and 2 form the *introduction*; and the essence of the whole law, the observance of which will bring a rich blessing, and the transgression of it severe judgments, is summed up in two leading commandments, and placed at the head of the blessing and cures which were to be proclaimed... (*Keil, 1: 469.*)

Very frequently, in this book of the law, the Sabbath and the sanctuary are mentioned as antidotes to idolatry. (*JFB, 1: 505.*)

As the fulfilment of the promises and threats connected with the law (Ex. xxiii. 20-33, Lev. xxvi., Deut. viii. sq.) depends upon the attitude of the people with respect to the law, while still the final realization of the theocratic destination of Israel is beyond all question (Lev. xxvi. 44 sqq., Deut. xxx. 1-6, compare § 90, p. 197), so is it also with the teachings of prophecy. These, like the law, subserves, in the first place, an *educational* purpose, by making disclosures concerning the future to man for his good. (*Oehler, Theology*)

*of the Old Testament, 492.)*

The attitude of the people with respect to images, the Lord's sabbaths and the Lord's sanctuary determines to a very large extent whether they will receive the Lord's promised blessings or threats. We should note that the Lord's covenant concerning the sabbath, blessings or threats, is closely united with the attitude of His people toward the *sanctuary*.

As nothing tends more to corrupt religion than the use of images in devotion, so nothing contributes more to the support of it than *keeping the sabbaths* and *reverencing the sanctuary*. These make up very much of the instrumental part of religion, by which the essentials of it are kept up. Therefore we find in the prophets that, next to the sin of idolatry, there is no sin for which the Jews are more frequently reprov'd and threatened than the profanation of the sabbath day. (M.H.)

There are three conditions given here for receiving the blessings outlined in the following verses: 1) no idols nor graven images used in worshipping the Lord God (He, even in the OT, must be worshiped in spirit and in truth); 2) keeping the sabbaths, and 3) reverencing His sanctuary.

Observe:

**(Reverence)** In this discussion, biblical usages of *yare* are divided into five general categories: 1) the emotion of fear, 2) the intellectual anticipation of evil without emphasis upon emotional reaction, 3) reverence or awe, 4) righteous behaviour or piety, and 5) formal religious worship... (TWOT, 1: #907.)

There are many examples of the third usage listed above. Such reverence is due to one's parents (Lev 19:3), holy places (Lev 26:2), God (Ps 112:1), and God's name (Ps 86:11). Habakkuk's "fearing" of God's work (Hab 3:2) and the fear of Job's friends at seeing his misery are best considered as this kind of fear (Job 6:21)... (TWOT, 1: #907.)

Leviticus 19:2-4, *Speak unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say unto them: Ye shall be holy; for I the LORD your God am holy. Ye shall fear every man his mother, and his father, and ye shall keep My sabbaths: I am the LORD your God. Turn ye not unto the idols, nor make to yourselves molten gods: I am the LORD your God. Psalms 112:1, Hallelujah. Happy is the man that feareth the LORD, that delighteth greatly in His commandments. Psalms 86:11, Teach me, O LORD, Thy way, that I may walk in Thy truth; make one my heart to fear Thy name. Habakkuk 3:2, O LORD, I have heard the report of Thee, and am afraid; O LORD, revive Thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make it known; in wrath remember compassion. Job 6:21, For now ye are become His; ye see a terror, and are afraid.*

I added vv. 2 & 4 to Leviticus 19:3 to point out the context of the command to *fear every man his parents*:

First, holiness for God's people is identified in this passage with *fearing every man his parents*. This definition of holiness is clearly carried over into the New Testament in places such as 2 Corinthians 7:1 and 1 Peter 1:15, 16:

Matthew 5:48, *Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in*

*heaven is perfect. 2 Corinthians 7:1, Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. 1 Peter 1:15, 16, But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.*

Thus ones attitude toward the "house of God" reflects his attitude toward his parents.

Second, holiness for God's people is also identified equally with avoiding idols, *i.e.*, images used in worshiping the Lord God.

Three things are given at the opening of Leviticus: 1) no images of any kind permitted to aid in worshiping God; 2) keeping the sabbaths, and 3) *reverencing His sanctuary*. In Leviticus 19:27, the next command is to ignore and avoid those who *have familiar spirits*.

Leviticus 26:2, *my sanctuary*:

***miqdash. Holy place, sanctuary, chapel, hollowed part....***

The noun *miqdash* is used most frequently in the OT as the designation of the tabernacle and the temple. It is frequently translated "'sanctuary," in these cases. In keeping with the basic meaning of the word group that it represents (*qdash*), *miqdash* denotes that which has been devoted to the sphere of the sacred. When it refers to the sanctuary, it connotes the physical area devoted to the worship of God. This area was sacred because it was the place where God dwelled among the people (Ex 25:8) and its sanctity was not to be profaned (Lev 12:4; 19:30; 20:3; 21:12, 23).

The word also designated sanctuaries that were devoted to false worship (Lev 26:31; Isa 16:12; Ezk 21:7; Amos 7:9).

The word is used for the articles of the tabernacle that were devoted to the Levitical worship (Num 10:21). The portions of the sacrifices that were particularly holy were called *miqdash* (Num 18:29). The word *miqdash* may refer to the abode of God in Ps 68:35 [H 36], but some commentators see this [sic] as the temple in Jerusalem. Metaphorically the word is used to refer to a place of refuge (Isa 8:14; Ezk 11:16). (*TWOT*, 2: #1990f.)

Accordingly, Leviticus 26:1, 2, is a strong passage:

*Ye shall make you no idols nor graven image, neither rear you up a standing image, neither shall ye set up any image of stone in your land, to bow down unto it: for I am the LORD your God. Ye shall keep my sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary: I am the LORD.*

Straightly connected with the promises starting in v. 3 is the command to avoid any physical representation of God used in worshiping Him, keeping His sabbaths and *reverence my sanctuary*. Those "physical areas devoted to the worship of God" are to be respected: the command is just as straight forward as is the command for every person to honour their parents. In the context of Leviticus 26, respecting those areas is closely connected with inheriting the blessings promised in this section. (See Hag. 1:1-11.)

Bonar effectively sums up this "*sancuary*" command:

The Lord alone must be worshiped (ver. 1), and He must be worshiped as He requires (ver. 2). The Lord seeks our whole heart, our unaverted eye, our entire soul. "No idols," says He; any objects that sit on the throne of our heart, whether of silver and gold, or of flesh and blood, or of earth's common objects, like houses and lands, riches and honour, all these are [Hebrew word], "things of nought" utterly despicable in His view. "Graven images," and "standing images" (or pillars like obelisks), and "images of stone" (or "stones of imagery," such as Ezekiel (vii. 8) describes) all these are wholly abominable to the Lord. Set up no rival, none that approaches near to God; not even father or mother, wife or child. And in order to cherish this state of soul, His *Sabbaths* must be kept and His *Sanctuary* revered; the sinner must employ himself, amid holy scenes and at holy times, in bathing his soul in the love of God. If any one neglects *the time* set apart by God for this end "*the Sabbath*" how can such a one ever expect to feel steeped in the holy awe and love that is due to the Lord? When a man goes to the region of the Alps, he requires time to see the relative magnitude of objects; he does not at one glance see their immense height and sublime elevation. It is often days ere he arrive at a proper estimate, because he is now in a new and unfamiliar region. So it is with Divine realities; you must spend time, continuously and uninterruptedly, in order to have your soul truly affected. In like manner, also, *the sanctuary* must be frequented. It is the Lord's ordinance. Would you, who will not reverence the sanctuary, have refrained from taking the fruit of the forbidden tree as a test of obedience? Where is your childlike submission of will? Nay, where is your love to your Father, if you go not to the spot where He meets with His own so specially?

All declension and decay may be said to be begun wherever we see these two ordinances despised *the Sabbath* and the *Sanctuary*. They are the outward fence around the *inward love* commanded by ver. 1. (Bonar, *Leviticus*, 472, 473.)

## Conclusion

More than a few people have professed their love for the Lord while telling men they can "worship God anywhere," even on the golf course. However, Bonar makes a very good point: "Would you, who will not reverence the sanctuary, have refrained from taking the fruit of the forbidden tree as a test of obedience? Where is your childlike submission of will? Nay, where is your love to your Father, if you go not to the spot where He meets with His own so specially?" In other words, we say we love God; prove it by our attention to the place set apart for His "worship."

The "*sanctuary*" law is clearly restated for the Gospel Church in the New Testament, unless, of course, one dispensationalizes the book of Hebrews out of the Christian Bible:

Ye shall keep my sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary: I am the LORD.  
(Lev. 26:2.)

*Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching. For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of*

*judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. (Heb. 10:23-31.)*

The Spirit (Who is the Author of Hebrews) tells us that part of *the profession of our faith is exhorting one another through the Christian assembly, the assembling of ourselves together in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.*

#### Conclusion

The Christian assembly is identified by the Lord as, *two or three ... gathered together in my name, there am I also in the midst of them.* (Mt. 18:20.) *For if we sin wilfully is given in the context of Not forsaking the assembling of our selves together...*

This pastor must admit that as the church, generally, rejects more and more *of the knowledge of the truth* as defined by the Word of God, Lord Jesus Christ, it is becoming more difficult to find Christian assemblies. And thus we have a call for home churches. One family needs to find another family with like mindedness in *the truth* of Jesus Christ, and assemble themselves together.

#### Observe

##### First:

*Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and thy law is the truth.* (Ps 119:142. See also, Ps 15:2.)

Accordingly, those *assemblies* that reject the Law-Word of God, the Ten Commandments, as their standard for every thought and action cannot be Christian assemblies. (2 Tim. 3:16.)

##### Second:

*Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.* (John 14:6.)

Accordingly, those *assemblies* that fail to clearly teach the necessity of understanding of and faith in Jesus Christ's atoning work for the sinner cannot be Christian assemblies. There is NO OTHER WAY TO THE HEAVENLY FATHER than through the atoning work of Christ.

This pastor has been present in many pagan assemblies where speakers have told the people that they would be "saved" if the seeker would just ask Jesus into their hearts, or turn their lives over to the Lord, or other such nonsense. In fact, the major motivation for this pastor to write "The Other Jesus - The Gospel Perverted" was ACE's Dr. Howard's justification of the use of "Ask Jesus into your heart" in the ACE curriculum.

Mailing to here

**Vv. 3ff**, Temporal blessings for obedience.

The previous chapter, twenty four, closed with v. 55:

*For unto me the children of Israel are servants; they are my servants whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God.*

This first section of this chapter, twenty five, closes with v. 13:

*I am the LORD your God, which brought you forth out of the land of Egypt, that ye should not be their bondmen; and I have broken the bands of your yoke, and made you go upright.*

The Lord broke the bands of bondage. The Lord God has given the power to keep us from being servants and bondmen to this world, and that includes servants to the lenders and bankers of this world.

**Vv. 3-13, *If ye walk in my statutes, and keep my commandments, and do them:***

First, the point that gets my attention this time is found in v. 3, ***keep my commandments***. These three words are used together 11 times in the Old Testament:

Ex 16:28 *And the LORD said unto Moses, How long refuse ye to **keep my commandments** and my laws?*

Ex 20:6 *And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and **keep my commandments**.*

Le 22:31 *Therefore shall ye **keep my commandments**, and do them: I am the LORD.*

Le 26:3 *If ye walk in my statutes, and **keep my commandments**, and do them;*

De 5:10 *And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me and **keep my commandments**.*

1Ki 9:6 *[But] if ye shall at all turn from following me, ye or your children, and will not **keep my commandments** [and] my statutes which I have set before you, but go and serve other gods, and worship them:*

2Ki 17:13 *Yet the LORD testified against Israel, and against Judah, by all the prophets, [and by] all the seers, saying, Turn ye from your evil ways, and **keep my commandments** [and] my statutes, according to all the law which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you by my servants the prophets.*

Ne 1:9 *But [if] ye turn unto me, and **keep my commandments**, and do them; though there were of you cast out unto the uttermost part of the heaven, [yet] will I gather them from thence, and will bring them unto the place that I have chosen to set my name there. (Note the clear ref to Christ, Jn. 14, 15.)*

Pr 3:1 *My son, forget not my law; but let thine heart **keep my commandments**:*

Pr 4:4 *He taught me also, and said unto me, Let thine heart retain my words: **keep my commandments**, and live.*

Pr 7:2 ***Keep my commandments**, and live; and my law as the apple of thine eye.*

New Testament:

Joh 14:15 *If ye love me, **keep my commandments.***

Joh 15:10 *If ye **keep my commandments**, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.*

Note that the first **keep my commandments**, Ex 16:28, was given before the Ten Commandments were given, and it was given in regard to the sabbath. The Lord held the people accountable to the Fifth Commandment before it was given from the mount. The sabbath was a very serious commandment because it spoke clearly about the coming of the rest found only in Christ.

Then the second **keep my commandments** was given with the Second Commandment as the Ten were given: No graven images nor likeness to bow down to, or to aid in worshiping God. This commandment refers to the images of the heart, as well as outward images.

The **third** time, Lev. 22:31, is in the context of proper sacrifices, and is followed with God's command against profaning His name.

The **fourth** time is in our present text.

The **fifth** time is in Deut. 5:10, where Moses regives the Ten Commandments.

Thus five of the total Old Testament usages of **keep my commandments** are given in the Books of the Law, in the immediate context of the Ten Commandments. Moreover, by being the first five usages, the Lord establishes that the **commandments** He is referring to is the Ten Commandments.

The rest of the **keep my commandments** are interesting. In fact, they all are all but one given in a good context, e.g., **keep my commandments and live**. Of course, that is the only way the phrase will work.

Two negative uses are given: Exodus 16:28 why don't you keep my commandments, and 1 Kings 9:6 if you will not **keep my commandments**, here is the evil that will overtake you.

**Keep my commandments** is used twice in the New Testament and both times by **CHRIST**. Christ simply added love to the phrase: **love to Him will result in keeping His commandments**, and *keeping his commandments* will result in abiding in His love.

It, therefore, would have been obvious what Christ was referring to when He used the phrase, for His hearers knew the books of Moses and the rest of the Old Testament. It was the God of the Commandments speaking when He told the New Testament church to **keep my commandments**.

People talk about keeping Christ's commandments! Well, Christ used the Old Testament phrase, obviously, referring to the Ten Commandments. Neither the meaning nor the intent of the words were changed by the God Who changes not.

Note its usages:

1) God spoke as though the people had continually refused to *keep his*

*commandments*, Exodus 16:28.

- 2) He promises mercy to those who *keep his commandments*, Exodus 20:6.
- 3) They were God's people, and the sacrifices identified them with the Lord, as did keeping *his commandments* generally, Leviticus 22:31.
- 4) The Lord promises to bless for keeping *his commandments*, Leviticus 26:3.
- 5) The Lord promises to bless for keeping *his commandments*, Deuteronomy 5:10.
- 6) The Lord promises to curse for not keeping *his commandments*, 1 Kings 9:6.
- 7) The people ignored the *commandments* of the Lord, despite the threats of the Lord, 1 Kings 17:13.
- 8) The Lord promises to bless *if* His people will return to *his commandments*, Nehemiah 1:9.
- 9) The Lord promises to bless for keeping *his commandments*, Proverbs 3:1.
- 10) The Lord promises life for keeping *his commandments*, Proverbs 4:4.
- 11) The Lord promises life for keeping *his commandments*, Proverbs 7:2.

Then in the New Testament we have these two commandments:

1) John 14:15, *If ye love me, keep my commandments*. And, John, 15:10 *If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love*.

People talk about keeping Christ's commandments! Well, Christ quoted right out of the Old Testament law

Note, **IF-THEN**, and this statement is found throughout Scripture, including its common use by Christ above.

Start of mailing

Greater than Solomon

### **Vv. 3-5a, b**

Continuing on in Leviticus, we come to vv. 3-5. Bonar makes the division as vv. 1, 2, then 3-6, then vv. 7-10, and then 11-13. However, it appears to me a better division is vv. 1, 2, then 3-5a, b (material blessedness), then 5c-9 (military blessedness peace in the land through victory over physical enemies: as long as fallen men are around, there will be wars and fightings; v. 9 opens with *For*, linking it to v. 8), then vv. 10-13 (material and spiritual blessedness). We will follow what appears to me to be the natural division of the chapter.

Ver. 3. *If ye walk in my statutes, and keep my commandments, and do them.*] Both moral, ceremonial, and judicial, which had been delivered unto them, and now completely recorded in this and the preceding book;

for what follow in the two next are chiefly repetitions of what are contained in these. (Gill, *Online Bible*.)

What Adam lost by failing to *keep His commandments* in the Garden of Eden can be restored by doing what Adam failed to do.

The Lord made Israel "*Jeshurun*," *i.e.*, The Prosperous One, blessing him with all temporal things whenever Israel sought the spiritual. It was a scene like the unfallen age.

Israel was offered the privilege of being, even in respect of *temporal blessings*, a type of *Eden restored*. As their ceremonies and institutions were to the world a type of all the *spiritual* blessings which Jesus brings, so the very aspect of their land might have been the type of the *external* blessings which Jesus brings at His second coming to the earth. In Solomon's days, these blessings were probably realized more fully than at any period of Israel's history. His were the times of peace, so peculiarly typical of Messiah's reign in the latter day...

Surely Israel's land in such days as Solomon's, was intended to be typical of the earth's millennial rest! (Bonar, *Leviticus*, 473-475.)

Bonar thus places God's promised blessings for obedience to *his commandments*, v. 3, &c., off into a future literal reign by the Messiah. However, the major fallacy with such thinking is that it says Christ's work and the resulting Spirit of Grace from God indwelling His people cannot give them any more victory over sin in this life than what the Old Testament people had through the law. God's Spirit of Grace and Christ's work, according to Bonar, cannot do better than the old spirit of the law did under Solomon.

Though writing before 1846, Bonar expressed a very common, modern idea: Solomon established the peak of blessings and prosperity for God's people, and God's people cannot obtain any higher than what was established in Solomon's day. In other words, Solomon's day was the peak of the physical blessings and prosperity of God's people, and the only way that Solomon's abundance can be surpassed is under a physical reign of King Jesus with His *rod of iron*, forcing all of mankind to submit to His rule and authority with the threat of the sword, death. The whole world will *keep His commandments* only because they are threatened with losing their heads.

#### Problems

There are several major problems with the idea that the spiritual and physical blessings under Christ cannot exceed Solomon's:

*The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here.* (Mt. 12:42; Lk. 11:31. See also, 1 Ki. 10 & 2 Chron. 9.)

First, *behold, a greater than Solomon is here*. Christ was/is greater than Solomon.

Second, *greater than Solomon*... If Solomon ruled in peace, would not Christ rule in peace if His rule is greater?

Third, *is here*... The Lord did not say *will come*; He said, *is here*. The

blessings of the New Covenant started with His work here on this earth.

Fourth, how about the New Covenant? If the physical prosperity under Solomon was accomplished through the Old Covenant, which was written in stone and sealed with the blood of bulls and goats, how much more prosperity is promised under the New Covenant, which is written in the fleshly tables of the heart and sealed with the blood of Christ (Jer. 31:33; 2 Cor. 3:1-3; He. 9:14; 8:10 & 10:16). Can the prosperity under the New Covenant, King Jesus, be restricted to purely spiritual?

The idea that Christ cannot obtain a higher standard of physical blessings for obedience to *his commands* (Jn. 14:15 & 15:10, and thus to blessings less than Solomon's) than could His Old Testament people totally dismisses the power and effect of the Spirit of God acting under the New Covenant:

Observe the greatness of New Covenant over the Old Covenant, starting with the Old Testament promise:

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

*Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart. (2 Cor. 3:3) But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises. For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away. (Heb. 8:6-13.) For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your*

conscience from dead works to serve the living God? (Heb. 9:13, 14.) Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God. Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law; Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that he had said before, This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin. (Heb. 10:7-18.)

Clearly, the promised blessings of the New Covenant to be fulfilled under the *Greater than Solomon* are in every way *much better* than what was promised under the Old Covenant and fulfilled under Solomon. Therefore, how can we entertain the idea that Christ cannot obtain a higher standard of physical blessings for obedience to *his commands* than was obtained under Solomon?

Psalms 45:3-4, *Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most mighty, with thy glory and thy majesty. And in thy majesty ride prosperously because of truth and meekness and righteousness; and thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things. Thine arrows are sharp in the heart of the king's enemies; whereby the people fall under thee.*

According to C.H. Spurgeon:

Ver. 3. *Gird thy sword upon thy thigh.* Loving spirits jealous of the Redeemer's glory long to see him putting forth his power to vindicate his own most holy cause. Why should the sword of the Spirit lie still, like a weapon hung up in an armoury; it is sharp and strong, both for cutting and piercing: O that the divine power of Jesus were put forth to use against error. The words before us represent our great King as urged to arm himself for battle, by placing his sword where it is ready for use. Christ is the true champion of the church, others are but underlings who must borrow strength from him; the single arm of Immanuel is the sole hope of the faithful. Our prayer should be that of this verse. There is at this moment an apparent suspension of our Lord's former power, we must by importunate prayer call him to the conflict, for like the Greeks without Achilles we are soon overcome by our enemies, and we are but dead men if Jesus be not in our midst. *O most mighty.* A title well deserved, and not given from empty courtesy like the serenities, excellencies and highnesses of our fellow mortals -- titles, which are but sops for vain glory. Jesus is the truest of heroes. Hero worship in his case alone is commendable. He is mighty to save, mighty in love. *With thy glory and thy majesty.* Let thy sword both win thee renown and dominion, or as it may mean, gird on with thy sword thy robes which indicate thy royal splendour. Love delights to see the Beloved arrayed as becometh his excellency; she weeps as she sees him

in the garments of humiliation, she rejoices to behold him in the vestments of his exaltation. Our precious Christ can never be made too much of. Heaven itself is but just good enough for him. All the pomp that angels and archangels, and thrones, and dominions, and principalities, and powers can pour at his feet is too little for him. Only his own essential glory is such as fully answers to the desire of his people, who can never enough extol him. (CHS, *Treasury of David, Online Bible*, ver 7.0. *Treasury*, hard copy by MacDonald, I.317, 318. Note that neither MacDonald nor *Online* edited Spurgeon's words as some modern, well known, fundamental, dispensational publications reportedly do to make him agree with their system of doctrine.)

The sharp *swords* and *arrows* by which the Father conquers the enemies of His Son, the Redeemer, are not literal *swords* and *arrows* (that is, literal weapons of warfare by which the enemies' blood is shed) as used by David to obtain peace for his son, Solomon. The Heavenly Father uses the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God to obtain peace for His Son, Jesus Christ:

*Then he called for Solomon his son, and charged him to build an house for the LORD God of Israel. And David said to Solomon, My son, as for me, it was in my mind to build an house unto the name of the LORD my God: But the word of the LORD came to me, saying, Thou hast shed blood abundantly, and hast made great wars: thou shalt not build an house unto my name, because thou hast shed much blood upon the earth in my sight. Behold, a son shall be born to thee, who shall be a man of rest; and I will give him rest from all his enemies round about: for his name shall be Solomon, and I will give peace and quietness unto Israel in his days. He shall build an house for my name; and he shall be my son, and I will be his father; and I will establish the throne of his kingdom over Israel for ever. (1 Chron. 22:6-10.)*

God promised David a son who would *build an house for the LORD God of Israel*, and that house would be build under that son's peaceful reign. Obviously, the son is Christ, for only that Son's throne was established *for ever*. We are told in the New Testament that the promised house is the Gospel Church made up of those redeemed by God's high priest. (Heb. 3 & 10:21.)

The enemies of the King of kings and His kingdom are not conquered by their blood, as king David had to do, but by the blood of the Redeemer. By what stretch of the imagination can this King and His kingdom be reduced to less than Solomon and his kingdom?

Ver. 4. *And in thy majesty ride prosperously*. The hero monarch armed and apparelled is now entreated to ascend his triumphal car. Would to God that our Immanuel would come forth in the chariot of love to conquer our spiritual foes and seize by power the souls whom he has bought with blood. *Because of truth and meekness and righteousness*. These words may be rendered, *ride forth upon truth and meekness and righteousness*. -- Three noble chargers to draw the war chariot of the gospel. In the sense of our translation it is a most potent argument to urge with our Lord that the cause of the true, the humble, and the good, calls for his advocacy. Truth will be ridiculed, meekness will be oppressed, and righteousness slain, unless the God, the Man in whom these precious things are incarnated, shall arise for their vindication. Our earnest petition ought ever to be that Jesus would lay his almighty arm to the work of grace lest the good cause languish and wickedness prevail. *And*

*thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things.* Foreseeing the result of divine working, the psalmist prophesies that the uplifted arm of Messiah will reveal to the King's own eyes the terrible overthrow of his foes. Jesus needs no guide but his own right hand, no teacher but his own might; may he instruct us all in what he can perform, by achieving it speedily before our gladdened eyes.

Ver. 5. *Thine arrows.* Our King is master of all weapons: he can strike those who are near and those afar off with equal force. *Are sharp.* Nothing that Jesus does is ill done, he uses no blunted shafts, no pointless darts. *In the heart of the King's enemies.* Our Captain aims at men's hearts rather than their heads, and he hits them too; point blank are his shots, and they enter deep into the vital part of man's nature. Whether for love or vengeance, Christ never misses aim, and when his arrows stick, they cause a smart not soon forgotten, a wound which only he can heal. Jesus' arrows of conviction are sharp in the quiver of his word, and sharp when on the bow of his ministers, but they are most known to be so when they find a way into careless hearts. They are his arrows, he made them, he shoots them. He makes them sharp, and he makes them enter the heart. May none of us ever fall under the darts of his judgment, for none kill so surely as they. *Whereby the people fall under thee.* On either side the slain of the Lord are many when Jesus leads on the war. Nations tremble and turn to him when he shoots abroad his truth. Under his power and presence, men are stricken down as though pricked in the heart. There is no standing against the Son of God when his bow of might is in his hands. Terrible will be that hour when his bow shall be made quite naked, and bolts of devouring fire shall be hurled upon his adversaries: then shall princes fall and nations perish. (CHS, *Treasury of David.*)

The arrows of conviction are shot forth, and they strike the very heart of the enemy, not his head. Who can stand against His arrows?

Ver. 5. *Thine arrows are sharp in the heart of the King's enemies.* In a still bolder metaphor the arrows which are discharged from the bow of Christ are the preachers of the gospel, especially the apostles and evangelists. "*His sagittis,*" says S. Jerome, "*totus orbis vulneratus et captus est.*" Paul, the apostle, was an arrow of the Lord, discharged from his bow from Jerusalem to Illyricum, and from Illyricum to Spain, flying from east to west, and subduing Christ's enemies beneath his feet. *Christopher Wordsworth.* (Quoted by CHS, *Treasury of David.*)

Ver. 5. While beseeching the Redeemer to ride forth prosperously, and predicting his success, he seems suddenly to have seen his prayers answered and his predictions fulfilled. He saw his all conquering Prince gird on his resistless sword, array himself in glory and majesty, ascend the chariot of his gospel, display the banner of his cross, and ride forth, as on the wings of the wind, while the tremendous voice of a herald proclaimed before him: "Prepare ye the way of the Lord," exalt the valleys, and level the hills; make the crooked ways straight, and the rough places plain; for, behold, the Lord God comes; he comes with a strong hand, his reward is with him, and his work before him. From the bright and fiery cloud which enveloped his chariot, and concealed it from mortal eyes, he saw sharp arrows of conviction shot forth on every side, deeply wounding the obdurate hearts of sinners, and prostrating them in crowds around his path, while his right hand extended raised them again, and healed the wounds which his arrows had made; and his

omnipotent voice spoke peace to their despairing souls, and bade them follow in his train, and witness and share in his triumph. From the same bright cloud he saw the vengeful lightnings flashing thick and dreadful, to blast and consume everything that opposed his progress; he saw sin, and death, and hell, with all its legions, baffled, defeated, and flying in trembling consternation before him; he saw them overtaken, bound, and chained to his triumphant chariot wheels; while enraptured voices were heard from heaven exclaiming, "Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of God, and the power of his Christ." Such was the scene which seems to have burst upon the ravished sight of the entranced prophet. Transported with the view, he exclaims, *Thine arrows are sharp in the heart of the King's enemies; whereby the people fall under thee.*

Edward Payson. (Quoted by CHS, *Treasury of David*. Compare Rev. 12:7-11 with Lk. 10:17-20 Satan's defeat is not somewhere off in the future. It has already taken place.)

Ver. 6. *Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever.* To whom can this be spoken but our Lord? The psalmist cannot restrain his adoration. His enlightened eye sees in the royal Husband of the church, God, God to be adored, God reigning, God reigning everlastingly. Blessed sight! Blind are the eyes that cannot see God in Christ Jesus! We never appreciate the tender condescension of our King in becoming one flesh with his church, and placing her at his right hand, until we have fully rejoiced in his essential glory and deity. What a mercy for us that our Saviour is God, for who but a God could execute the work of salvation? What a glad thing it is that he reigns on a throne which will never pass away, for we need both sovereign grace and eternal love to secure our happiness. Could Jesus cease to reign we should cease to be blessed, and were he not God, and therefore eternal, this must be the case. No throne can endure for ever, but that on which God himself sitteth. *The sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre.* He is the lawful monarch of all things that be. His rule is founded in right, its law is right, its result is right. Our King is no usurper and no oppressor. Even when he shall break his enemies with a rod of iron, he will do no man wrong; his vengeance and his grace are both in conformity with justice. Hence we trust him without suspicion; he cannot err; no affliction is too severe, for he sends it; no judgment too harsh, for he ordains it. O blessed hands of Jesus! the reigning power is safe with you. All the just rejoice in the government of the King who reigns in righteousness.

Ver. 6. *Thy throne, O God.* The original word is, probably vocative, both in the Greek and in the Hebrew; and is so taken by modern Unitarians, who seek their refuge by explaining away [Greek word]. Henry Alford, D.D., on Heb 1:8. (Quoted by CHS, *Treasury of David*.)

Our God now in the present and in the form of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Redeemer "reigns on a throne which will never pass away." (Jn. 10:30, 33.) His throne was/is established forever by His own blood, not by the blood of His enemies, as was David's and Solomon's. (Ps. 145:13/1 Cor. 15:21-28; Isa. 9:6, 7; Heb. chs. 1 and 9, &c.) When Solomon's reign ended, so did the blessings God's people had under him (Jeroboam and Rehoboam, 1 Ki. 12); however, our King's reign shall never end. Nevertheless, there are always those around, e.g., "Unitarians," who militate against passages such as Hebrews 1:8:

*But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom.*

The subduing of the nations to the blessings of the rule of the *Greater than Solomon* is not with the literal sword, but with the sword of the Spirit of God's grace. Unlike David who had to subdue his enemies with the bloody sword, the King of kings goes forth with *truth, meekness and righteousness*, conquering the nations for the Kingdom of God from the heart  
They willingly submit to His government.

The choice comes down to two basic ideas: either the blessedness of Christ's kingdom is established by the literal blood of His enemies, or it is established by His own blood it is established through God's Spirit of grace and peace, or it is established through God's spirit of helplessness in the face of man's rebellion He must use literal force. A.H. Strong develops the idea thusly:

(d ) That the literal interpretation is generally and naturally connected with the expectation of a gradual and necessary decline of Christ's kingdom upon earth, until Christ comes to bind Satan and to introduce the millennium. This view not only contradicts such passages as Dan. 2:34, 35, and Mat. 13:31, 32, but it begets a passive and hopeless endurance of evil whereas the Scriptures enjoin a constant and aggressive warfare against it upon the very ground that God's power shall assure to the church a gradual but constant progress in the face of it, even to the time of the end. **[Note the following change of type face, smaller. Leave it]**

Dan. 2 34; 35 " Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon its feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them in pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken in pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors; and the wind carried them away so that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth " ; Mat. 13:31, 32 "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field: which indeed is less than all seeds, but when it is grown, it is greater than the herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the heaven come and lodge in the branches thereof.'" In both these figures there is no sign of cessation or of backward movement, but rather every indication of continuous advance to complete victory and dominion. The premillennial theory supposes that for the principle of development under the dispensation of the Holy Spirit, God will substitute a reign of mere power and violence. J. B. Thomas: " The kingdom of heaven is like a grain of mustard seed, not like a can of nitro-glycerine." Leighton Williams: "The kingdom of God is to be realized on earth, not by a cataclysm, apart from effort and will, but through the universal dissemination of the gospel all but lost to the world." E. G. Robinson: "Second Adventism stultifies the system and scheme of Christianity." Dr. A. J. Gordon could not deny that the early disciples were mistake in expecting the end of the world in their day. So we may be. Scripture does not declare that the end should come in the lifetime of the apostles, and no definite date is set. "After a long time" (Mat. 25:19) and "the falling away come first" (2 Thess. 2:3) are expressions which postpone indefinitely. Yet a just view of Christ's coming as ever possible in the immediate future may make us as faithful as were the original disciples.

The theory also divests Christ of all kingly power until the millennium, or, rather, maintains that the kingdom has not yet been given to him; see Elliott, *Horæ Apocalypticæ*, 1:94 where Luke 19:12 "A certain

nobleman went into a far country, to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return" is interpreted as follows: "Subordinate kings went to Rome to receive the investiture to their kingdoms from the Roman Emperor, and then returned to occupy them and reign. So Christ received from his Father, after his ascension, the investiture to his kingdom; but with the intention not to occupy it, till his return at his second coming. In token of this investiture he takes his seat as the Lamb on the divine throne" (Rev. 5: 6-8). But this interpretation contradicts Mat 28:18, 20 "All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth, . . . lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." See Presb. Rev., 1882:228. On the effects of the premillennial view in weakening Christian endeavor, see J. H. Seelye, *Christian Missions*, 94-127; *per contra*, see A. J. Gordon, in *Independent*, Feb. 1886. (A.H. Strong, *Systematic Theology*, 1012, 1013.)

"Second Adventism" explains away Daniel 2:34, 35, by saying the stone has not yet struck the image. And thus a whole system of Bible exegesis is turned on its ear.

V. 5, admittedly, a major problem Israel of old had was *fullness of bread*: Israel's prosperity led to pride and haughty abomination, *i.e.*, despising the oath in breaking the covenant, against Jehovah God. The result was God's move against Israel and its dispossession from the blessings of God, Ezekiel 16:49ff. However, Ezekiel promised an *everlasting covenant* much better than the old, vv. 60ff. We have already established that *everlasting covenant* as being the Spirit of Grace working in the hearts of those redeemed by the blood of the Lamb.

The idea that Christ, through His shed blood, cannot obtain a higher standard of physical blessings for obedience to *his commands* (Jn. 14:15 & 15:10, and thus to no higher blessings than Solomon's) than could His Old Testament people through law and through the blood of bulls and goats, totally dismisses the power and effect of the Spirit of God acting under the New Covenant.

end of mailing, but I may want to add the following to the previous. read and see

#### Vv. 5c-9

The conditions of God's blessings upon His people are listed in vv. 1-3: v. 3, **If ye will...** The positive results are listed in vv. 4-13. The first series of material results are listed as the blessings restored that Adam lost, tasted under Solomon and fulfilled under the Greater than Solomon, Christ. The second series of material results are listed as blessings concerning the enemies of God's kingdom on earth subdued before the King's people: safety and peace in their land, and decisive victory over those who would seek their harm. Again, this was all obtained for a short period under both David and Solomon. V. 9, says, *For I will have respect unto you, and make you fruitful, and multiply you, and establish my covenant with you. For links vv. 8 & 9.*

Leviticus 26:9, *I will...* The promised blessings contained in this section, vv. 3-13, are results of God's Spirit of free Grace at work, a point not overlooked by Bonar. Yet he still places the promised blessings in this "military" area off into a literal, future millennial reign by King Jesus;

Whose reign, they say, must be established upon the blood of His enemies. Those who do so must overlook several important points.

First, those looking for a literal millennial reign do so based upon the old national covenant made with Israel, for they look for a bloody reign as was David's in order to establish his son, Solomon, as king. (See my comments under Lev. 26:3-5a, b.) However, the new covenant is not like the old national covenant:

*But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises. For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. (Heb. 8:6-11.)*

Second, and make you fruitful... The Lord here obviously refers to the covenant made with Abraham:

*And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee. And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God. And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou, and thy seed after thee in their generations. (Gen. 17:6-9.)*

Paul makes it very clear that the seed referred to here is Christ, not the literal descendants of Abraham. (Gal. 3:16, 29.) Thus the promised blessings of fruitfulness though fulfilled after a manner under David and Solomon, looked forward to Christ.

Third, establish my covenant with you:

*Thus saith God the LORD, he that created the heavens, and stretched them out; he that spread forth the earth, and that which cometh out of it; he that giveth breath unto the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk therein: I the LORD have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; To open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house. (Isa. 42:5-7.)*

*Thus saith the LORD, the Redeemer of Israel, and his Holy One, to him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of rulers, Kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship, because of the LORD that is faithful, and the Holy One of Israel, and he shall*

*choose thee. Thus saith the LORD, In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee: and I will preserve thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages; That thou mayest say to the prisoners, Go forth; to them that are in darkness, Shew yourselves. They shall feed in the ways, and their pastures shall be in all high places. They shall not hunger nor thirst; neither shall the heat nor sun smite them: for he that hath mercy on them shall lead them, even by the springs of water shall he guide them. And I will make all my mountains a way, and my highways shall be exalted. Behold, these shall come from far: and, lo, these from the north and from the west; and these from the land of Sinim. (Isa. 49:7-12.)*

The covenant is not like the old national covenant made with Israel. The covenant is Christ, and it is made with all the redeemed. (Those in Christ are God's covenant people, for Christ is the covenant.) Leviticus 26:9, accordingly, tells us that the blessedness promised in vv. 3-13, are the blessings of the new covenant under Christ. We will see this fact further confirmed in v. 11, which is God's promise to *tabernacle amongst His people.* (Jn. 1:14; 2 Cor. 6:16; Col. 1:9; Heb. 8:2.)

*[A]nd five... hundred of you...* As His people act in one accord, the Lord provides victory:

*Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. (Mat. 18:19. See also Acts 1:14; 4:24; 12:5; Eph. 6:18, &c.)*

As an interesting point in closing this section, we see that safety and peace comes from military superiority. However, the Lord provides superiority as His people follow Leviticus 26:1, 2. Vv. 6-9, the Lord places fear in the hearts of the enemies as His people follow Leviticus 26:1, 2. Notice the opening and closing statements of Proverbs 21:

*V. 1, The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will. Vv. 30, 31, There is no wisdom nor understanding nor counsel against the LORD. The horse is prepared against the day of battle: but safety is of the LORD.*

Proverbs 21:30 & 31 are identified within the same paragraph marker in the *Online Bible*, telling us that we cannot understand the ways of the Lord. Proverbs 21 is a very good example of the ways of the Lord being contrary to the ways of man the ways man feels is right. The Lord God controls the heart of those who are against God, God's kingdom on earth and who are against God's people. Thus when God's people loose their fear of God, God removes His fear from the enemies, and they loose their fear of God. Loosing their fear of God, they no longer have any fear of God's people though His people might rant and rave against the evils of the ungodly around them. (Notice how little effect the modern threats of God's people have against the ungodly, e.g., Disney. I do notice, however, that the same efforts against Disney for its promotion of the sodomite agenda are not attempted against Microsoft, maker of Windows, though Microsoft has publicly declared the same sodomite agenda as has Disney. What is wrong with this picture?)

Solomon makes a very significant statement about fearing God:

*Hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place, and do according to all that the stranger calleth to thee for: that all people of the earth may know thy name, to fear thee, as do thy people Israel; and that they may know that this house, which I have builded, is called by thy name. (1 Ki. 8:43.)*

[*As do thy people...* Here Solomon (this takes place AFTER God gave Solomon exceeding much wisdom and understanding, 1 Ki. 4:29) tells us that the pagans will have the same basic attitude toward the Lord God as do His people. When God's people highly regard and fear the Lord, so do the pagans; when God's people place God on the shelf for emergency use only, then so will the pagans. Generally, God's people are not united in their fear of the Lord, for *fear of the Lord* is to depart from evil.

*Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil.*  
(Pro. 3:7. See also Job 28:28; Ps. 111:10; Ecc. 12:13; 2 Tim. 2:19; Ja. 3:13ff., &c.)

Illustration: One of our men coached a little league soft ball team. Another coach talked loudly of his dedication to the Lord and his desire not to play games on Sunday mornings. However, that other coach was "shacked up" with his girlfriend. Clearly, the god he claimed to follow and worship is not the Christian God of Scripture.

It is evident, today, God's people see the Lord as not much more than an escape from life's difficulties; He seems to be, more often than not, someone to serve if and when they have time. How can, therefore, we condemn the pagans for working to remove God from public life (e.g., the Commandments removed from the classroom) when, generally, the church has removed the Lord God from religious life?

Those who profess to be God's people refuse to fear the Lord, yet the same ones will complain against the ungodly because they do not fear the Lord.

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### **Vv. 10-13.**

This section continues the "positive" promises of vv. 1-3. V. 10 reiterates the promise of vv. 4 & 5, while vv. 11, 12 give the promise of God's presence among His people. Vv. 11, 12, tell us that the promises of obedience to the Word of God are continued through Christ, the Lord.

V. 11, is quoted in Ezekiel 37:27. The context of Ezekiel's quote, vv. 21-28, clearly show he refers to the redeemed, the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ. (See Eph. 2:22; Rev. 21:3, &c.) Gill's comments on vv. 11-13 are worth repeating:

*Ver. 11. And I will set my tabernacle amongst you, &c.]* Which God had directed them to make, and they had made, and also erected; but here he promises to fix and establish it among them, that so it might continue as a place for the public worship of him, and where he would take up his residence, and grant them his presence; so the Targum of Jonathan,  
"I will put the Shechinah of my glory among you:"  
*and my soul shall not abhor you; though in themselves, and because of their sins, loathsome and abominable; the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan are,*

"my Word shall not abhor you;"

and the whole may have respect to Christ, the Word made flesh, and tabernacling among them; the tabernacle being a type and emblem of the human nature of Christ, in which the fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily, and is the true tabernacle which God pitched and not man, #Joh 1:14 Col 1:9 Heb 8:2.

Ver. 12. *And I will walk among you, &c.]* As they journeyed from place to place, he walked among them, in the tabernacle built for him, see #2Sa 7:6; it may be expressive of the familiarity and communion which the Lord grants to his people, in and through Christ:

*and will be your God;* to provide for them, and supply them with all the blessings of his goodness, both in providence and grace; and to protect and defend them against all their enemies, temporal and spiritual: and ye shall be my people; appear to be a special and peculiar people of his, chosen, redeemed, and sanctified by him, and to whom he bore a special love, and took special care of; see #2Co 6:16; the Targum of Jonathan of the whole is,

"I will make the glory of my Shechinah dwell among you, and my Word shall be unto you for God the Redeemer, and ye shall be to my name for a people of Holy Ones."

Ver. 13. *I [am] the Lord your Lord, which brought you forth out of the land of Egypt, &c.]* Who, having done that, was able to fulfil the above promises; and which may be considered as an earnest and pledge of them, as well as be a motive to the Israelites, and an obligation upon them to obey the commandments of God, and walk in his statutes:

*that ye should not be their bondmen;* this was the end of their being brought out of Egypt, that they might be no longer in a state of bondage to the Egyptians, nor to any other, but to serve the Lord their God, by whom they were delivered; as those who are redeemed by Christ from worse than Egyptian bondage, from sin, Satan, and the law, are redeemed, that they might not be the servants of any, but be a peculiar people, zealous of good works to serve the Lord Christ (Deut. 14:2; 26:18; Titus 2:14; 1 Pe. 2:9, ed.):

*and I have broken the bands of your yoke;* which fastened it on their shoulders, that is, set them at full liberty, from the yoke of all their enemies, particularly the Egyptians, who made their lives bitter in hard bondage, making the yoke of it heavy upon them; as Christ has broken the yoke of spiritual enemies from off the shoulders and necks of his people, #Isa 10:27 (Mat. 4:16; Lk. 4:18; Eph. 5:8ff.; Col. 1:13, ed.) *and made you go upright;* who before stooped under the yoke, as well as were of dejected countenances, but now were made to walk in an erect stature, as the Targum of Jonathan, and so Jarchi and Aben Ezra, or in liberty, as Onkelos; see #Ga 5:1; and with heads lift up and countenances cheerful. (John Gill, *Online Bible*.)

It is evident: Though the passage looks forward to a fulfillment under David and Solomon, the long range prophecy and fulfillment is in Christ Jesus:

*And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me. (Lk. 24:44.) Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days. (Acts 3:24.)*

The section of promised blessings ends with v. 13, *and made you to go upright*. The fallen sons of Adam can and do walk in the ways pleasing to the Lord God; however, that walk that pleases God is the work of the Lord's Spirit in the hearts of His people His freely given grace. He promises His blessings for obedience to His Word, and then He gives the desire and power to be obedient to His Word. The Spirit of God working in the fallen children of Adam to cause them to willingly seek *first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness* shows God's manifold wisdom to all creation.

*Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord: In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him. (Eph. 3:8-12.)*

To those of His people who reject His blessings by despising His statutes and abhorring His judgments by not doing them, the Lord is a consuming fire:

*Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: For our God is a consuming fire. (Heb. 12:27, 28.)*

There are those today who, under the name "New Testament Christian," desire to avoid God's threats against those seeking freedom from the bands and cords of God's statutes and judgments. A way that appeals to man's fallen nature is to say that the book of Hebrews is not for the average Christian in the "Church Age." Rather, its purpose is to detach Christians from any worldly care, and is written specifically for the Jews. J.N. Darby said it this way. Hebrews is,

[F]or the purpose of detaching us (as walking on earth from all that would attach us in a religious way to the earth; even when-as was the case among the Jews-the bond had been ordained by God Himself. The epistle shews us Christ in heaven, and consequently that our religious bonds with God are heavenly, although we are not yet personally in heaven ourselves nor viewed as united to Christ there. Every bond with the earth is broken, even while we are walking on the earth.

These instructions naturally are given in an epistle addressed to the Jews, because their religious relationships had been earthly, and at the same time solemnly appointed by God Himself. The heathen, as to their religions, had no formal relationships except with demons. (John Nelson Darby, *Introduction to Hebrews*. Can be downloaded from: <http://ccel.wheaton.edu/pager.cgi?file=d/darby/synopsis/Hebrews.html&up=d/darby/synopsis>)

However, Darby's militancy against any kind of law, other than self-law, binding the Christian and God's conditional blessings upon His people does not change the fact: God's Covenant/Testament has blessings and curses attached to it. The curse side of the two-edge sword is now given:

Vv. 1-13, God promised His blessings for their following His word. The

problem has been one as old as mankind: Prosperity leads to pride; pride leads to forgetting God. (Deut. 4; 8:17ff.; 28:23. See also Isa. 63. Psalms 78 gives a good account of what man does.)

God Appoints Wicked Rulers

**Leviticus 26:14-33**

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There are major movements among professed Christians dismissing from Christianity God's judgments and commandments given to His people in the Old Testament. However, anyone who will honestly look at society will readily see that God's Word is just as much in effect today as it was in the Garden and in the day it was given to Moses.

This passage, like so many other Scriptures, tells us again that God's people many times bring the calamities of life upon themselves. Claiming to love God, they show their despite for Him by ignoring His inspired Word as the rule for their every thought and action.

Both Keil and Bonar divide the remainder of Chapter 26 into four degrees of curses for holding God's law in contempt.

Vv. 14, 15:

Ver. 14. *But if ye will not hearken unto me, &c.]* To his commandments, as the rule of their duty, and to his promises, as an encouragement to it, or to his prophets and ministers, explaining and enforcing his law, and exhorting to a cheerful obedience to it; so the Targum of Jonathan, "if ye will not hearken to the doctrine of them that teach my laws;" which was the sin of the Jews in later times, for which captivity and other calamities befell them, #Jer 7:25 25:3,4 44:5; *and will not do all these commandments;* which he had delivered to them by Moses, whether moral, ceremonial, or judicial, recorded in this book and in the preceding; even all of them were to be respected, attended to, and performed, for the law curses everyone that does not do all things it requires, #Ga 3:10.

Ver. 15. *And if ye shall despise my statutes, &c.]* Which is an aggravated sin; to be negligent hearers of the commands of God is bad, not to be doers of them worse, but to treat them with contempt is worse still:  
*or if your soul abhor my judgments:* which is worst of all, to despise them as if not wisely or righteously made is a dreadful reflection upon the Maker of them; but to abhor them as bad things, not fit to be regarded, but to be had in the utmost detestation, is shocking impiety: *so that ye will not do all my commandments;* nor any of them, but are set against them, and determined and resolved on the contrary:  
*[but] that ye break my covenant;* the covenant made with them at Sinai, when they promised, on their part, that they would hearken and be obedient, #Ex 24:7. (Gill, *Online Bible*, ver. 7.0.)

V. 14, *harken, and do...* We are plainly told here that those who listen to the Word of God, do the Word of God: Hearing and doing God's Law-Word cannot be separated from love for the Lord Jesus Christ. In fact, James makes it clear that though Christianity is not a result of Christian works

(for we are *by grace through faith* in Christ nothing added nor removed), it is impossible to separate the Christian faith from both Christian works and words, James chapters two and three.

V. 15, **despise...**,

Examination of some seventy-three uses of this verb reveals that men despise the Lord who is among them (Num 11:20) and thus merit God's rejecting them (Hos 4:6). When Israel requested Samuel to appoint a king over them, they rejected the Lord (I Sam 8:7; 10:19).

Wicked men do not despise evil (Ps 36:4 [H 5]); they just reject the knowledge of God (Hos 4:6), the law of the Lord (Amos 2:4; Isa 5:24; Jer 6: 19) the word of the Lord (I Sam 15:23, 26; Isa 30:12; Jer 8:9), the righteous decisions of God (Ezk 5:6; 20:13, 16), the covenant made with Abraham (II Kgs 17:15), the statutes of God (Lev 26:15; Ezk 20:24), and the disciplinary chastening of the Lord (Prov 3:11). In fact, they have totally rejected the "Stone" which has now become the "capstone of the building" (Ps 118:22).

Especially reprehensible in God's eyes is Israel's externalized religious practice. God hates and despises their feast days and offerings since they come to him without any genuine affection (Amos 5:21).

God rejects men who do not listen to him (Hos 9: 17). However, he will never reject them totally, for that would break his covenant (Lev 26:44). God has chosen the seed of Abraham, his servant, and he will never cast them away (Isa 41 :9). In fact, as long as God keeps his covenant with day and night (Jer 33:25) so long will he refrain from rejecting his covenant made with David and Levi (Jer 33:24). He will not despise the seed of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and David (Jer 31:37; 33:26). True, Ps 89:38 [H 39] does seem to contradict this strong affirmation by saying God has indeed rejected his anointed (cf. 11 Kgs 17:20; Jer 6:30; Ps 78:59, 67). This statement, however, refers only to individual participation and not to the abiding promise which remains open to all who will believe. (TWOT, I.488.)

Observe:

First, wicked men reject the knowledge of God; they reject God's Law-Word and statutes; they reject His righteous decisions, and they reject the covenant God made with Abraham (see below). Hosea 4:6 (*My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge*) is, therefore, given in the context of men rejecting God's Law-Word as revealed through Moses:

*My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.*

It is not given in the context of not knowing about the secret plans of evil men nor not knowing the Constitution, as some would lead us to believe as they raise vast amounts of money. The price paid for rejecting King Jesus' rule is high, their children. Hosea says the same thing as did Moses: *I will punish them for their ways, and reward them their doings...*, v. 9.

Second, Israel despised the Lord's rule from over themselves, and asked for

a king. The king they got was Saul, who made life miserable for them. As we know, Israel was only united under three kings, and David was the only one under whom the people did not suffer. (1 Ki. 12:3, 4.) After the kingdom split in two, the vast majority of the kings made life even more miserable for the people.

Third, Paul tells us that the chosen seed of Abraham is Christ; the covenant was between the Father and the Son, and all who are in Christ by faith are joint heirs with Him.

Fourth, *TWOT* uses the same words in both Leviticus 26:15 and Ezekiel 20 (21-26):

*Notwithstanding the children rebelled against me: they walked not in my statutes, neither kept my judgments to do them, which if a man do, he shall even live in them; they polluted my sabbaths: then I said, I would pour out my fury upon them, to accomplish my anger against them in the wilderness. Nevertheless I withdrew mine hand, and wrought for my name's sake, that it should not be polluted in the sight of the heathen, in whose sight I brought them forth. I lifted up mine hand unto them also in the wilderness, that I would scatter them among the heathen, and disperse them through the countries; Because they had not executed my judgments, but had **despised** my **statutes**, and had polluted my sabbaths, and their eyes were after their fathers' idols. Wherefore I gave them also **statutes** that were not good, and judgments whereby they should not live; And I polluted them in their own gifts, in that they caused to pass through the fire all that openeth the womb, that I might make them desolate, to the end that they might know that I am the LORD.*

The Lord tells us that when men refuse to execute His judgments (*i.e.*, "to exercise the processes of government." *TWOT*, 1: 947 that is, judgement according to righteous judgment, [Jn. 7:24] including: "1. To act as a ruler... 2. ... to decide cases of controversy as judge in civil, domestic, and religious cases...," [the judge's duty is to justify the righteous and condemn the wicked, Deut 25:1 (Rom. 13, ed.)]) and when men reject, *despise*, His statutes (*i.e.*, duties [precepts and rules to be obeyed] imposed by God upon man, *TWOT*, 1: 317), then He will give statutes (*i.e.*, duties [precepts and rules to be obeyed] imposed by man, *TWOT*, 1: 317.) that lead to death.

In other words, when God's people refuses to judge righteous judgment according to the total of God's Word in all affairs, civil, domestic and religious, God will *appoint* wicked rulers over the people whose job will be to judge unrighteously; their God-ordained job will be to make life miserable for those who have rejected God's Law-Word as their standard of judgment. The end purpose of the unrighteous rulers over the people is *that they might know that I am the LORD.*

#### Illustration

I do not find it shocking that sodomy is generally accepted, even in many churches, in Lafayette, just 20 miles north of us, for Purdue University is located there. However, I do find it shocking that sodomy is becoming accepted in Crawfordsville, just 10 miles south of us. The Lord recently sent a family our way who was beginning to think there was something wrong with them. In the church where they had been faithful, sodomites were being

accepted by the church leadership, and even allowed work in places of leadership. When the family tried to stand against what they saw being accepted, they were accused of being "trouble makers." They left that church, and went to probably the largest Baptist Church in the area. However, they soon faced the same situation there the leadership refused to take a stand against sodomy, obviously fearing some people who were being advanced in leadership would be offended.

When those who profess to be God's people refuses to judge righteous judgment according to the total of God's Word in all affairs, civil, domestic and religious, God will *appoint* wicked rulers over the people whose job will be to judge unrighteously; their God-ordained job will be to make life miserable for those who have rejected God's Law-Word as their standard of judgment. The end purpose of the unrighteous rulers over the people is *that they might know that I am the LORD*.

V. 15, **abhor**:

This root indicates an intense aversion which is expressed often in punitive or adverse action.

If Israel kept the Lord's law, the Lord would not abhor them but continue to dwell among them (Lev 26:11), but if they abhorred the divine statutes, then God would bring judgments on the people (26:15). The attitude which the Lord would hold toward those on whom he would visit judgment is expressed by this root (26:30), indicating a rejection of those persons. The divine abhorrence is paralleled on the part of the people by their abhorrence and their contempt for the Lord's statutes and ordinances (26:43). But the Lord's abhorrence of them would not extend to their destruction in the land of their exile or to forgetting them (26:44). The judgment predicted in Lev 26 finds its fulfillment in the time of Jeremiah who used this word to describe the Lord's attitude toward Israel when he afflicted them in accordance with the cursing formulae of the covenant. The abhorrence of the sanctity of marriage obligations is the root from which arises progressively deeper transgressions illustrated by the worsening spiritual state of the "daughters" Sodom and Jerusalem in comparison with their "father," the Hittite and their "mother," the Amorite (Ezk 16:45). David implies that the vile death of Saul and Jonathan is inconsistent with their status (II Sam 1:21), except that rejection of God may result in that kind of death. (*TWOT*, 1: 169, 170.)

Observe:

First, though the people *abhor* the Lord by *abhorring* His divine statutes, resulting in judgments, the Lord did not forget His people, even in their judgments.

Second, "The abhorrence of the sanctity of marriage obligations is the root from which arises progressively deeper transgressions. The "deeper transgressions" are clearly seen in the rise of Sodomy in a society. In other words, those who are protesting Sodomy are hypocrite if they are not protesting "shacking up" more loudly than they protest Sodomy.

Illustration:

I cannot recount the number of professed Christians I have personally met

who apparently see nothing wrong with sex outside of marriage. The number of professed Christians who "live together" before marriage is astounding. Though professing to be Christians, they abhor marriage, or they would marry.

Certainly, enough condemnation cannot be said against sodomy, but sodomy and public acceptance of that wicked life-style are simply results of ignoring "the sanctity of marriage obligations." Sodomy and the social acceptance of sodomy will continue to increase in society until there is a social turnaround (genuine conversion) concerning the "sanctity of marriage."

We should develop the word **commandments**, v. 15:

***miswâ. Commandment.*** In a deed of purchase for a plot of land, *miswâ* refers to the terms of the contract (Jer 32:11). It is also the word used by the wisdom school for the instruction of a teacher to his pupil (Prov 2:1; 3:1). More frequently the commandments are the particular conditions of the covenant. It is used for the Ten Commandments in Ex 24: 12.

God clearly reveals his commandments in order that they be available to all the people. No one has to spend a lifetime in search of them (Deut 30:11). They are right at hand. The Lord reaches out to man long before man seeks him. God's commandments are considered pure (Ps 19:8 [H 9]), true (Ps 119: 151), reliable (Ps 119:86), righteous (Ps 119:172). The man of faith has his delight in God's commandments; and he is called blessed (Ps 119:47; 112:1). The commandments of Yahweh provide insight into the meaning of life in order that it may be lived to its fullest significance (Ps 19:8f. [H 9f.]; cf. Deut 5:29; 6:2; 8:11). Following God's commandments gives one wisdom and the respect of his neighbors (cf. Deut 4:5f.). Consequently the one who follows them often rises to a place of leadership. So too, Israel would become a leading nation if she remained true to the Lord's commandments (Deut 28:13). The splendor which it experienced under David and Solomon bears witness to the validity of this affirmation. The reason Israel was to obey the commandments rests in God himself (Lev 22:31). By his very nature he knows what is best for his people and by his very position they are bound to serve him. The one who loves God keeps his commandments (Deut 11:1 [Jn. 14:15, 23 ed.]). Thereby he shows his reverence for (or fear of) God and develops a walk with God (Deut 8:6; 13:4 [H 5]). God extends his love (*hesed*) to those who obey him (Deut 5:10 [Jn. 14:21; 16:27, ed.]).

To do the commandments, man must remember them. The Hebrews were to make fringes (or tassels) on the corners of their garments to remind them of the law (Num 15:39). Also they were to bind God's words on their foreheads and on their hands and write them on the doorposts of their houses. The fathers were to teach them to their sons and to speak of them frequently (Deut 6:6-9). And they were preserved by being written in the book of the law (Deut 30:10). However, the commandments possess no real value if they are considered only a human document learned by rote (Isa 29:13f.).

Furthermore, man in his depravity is tempted on the one hand to reject God's commandments and on the other hand to add to them by interpreting them very minutely. The latter leads to the sense of secure arrogance that one is even doing God a favor. Therefore God declares that one is not to add to or to diminish from the commandments given (Deut 12:32 [H

13:11; cf. 5:32).

The violation of any commandment results in guilt and the need for atonement (cf. Lev 4). But whoever goes so far as to spurn God's commandments is cut off from God's people (Num 15:31). Solomon's failure to follow the commandments in his later life resulted in the division of the kingdom (11 Kgs 11:31-39; 14:8). Then the continued disobedience of various kings, especially Manasseh, led to the end of David's dynasty. But God extended his mercy to Israel even in captivity (cf. Neh 1:8f.). And he will fulfill his promise to David through the Messiah.

In the postexilic period the scribal class developed. They were skilled in the commandments, i.e. they interpreted the law for the people (Ezr 7:1 1).

The writer of Eccl searched every possibility for meaning to life and came to this conclusion: "The end of the matter; all has been heard. Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man" (12:13). (TWOT, 1: 757, 758.)

Observe:

First, "More frequently the commandments are the particular conditions of the covenant. It is used for the Ten Commandments in Ex 24: 12."

Second, the whole duty of man is summed up: "Fear God, and keep his commandments."

Though man may work (through science falsely so-called, education, theology, &c.) to break the cords and bands of God's Word from himself, it is impossible to do. The terms of the covenant of blessings are clearly given, and when men willfully reject those terms, he rejects God's blessings.

Keil titles this section, THE CURSE FOR CONTEMPT OF THE LAW. His opening comments on vv. 14, 15, are excellent:

The following judgments are threatened, not for single breaches of the law, but for contempt of all the laws, amounting to inward contempt of the divine commandments and a breach of the Covenant (vers. 14, 15), for presumptuous and obstinate rebellion, therefore, against God and His commandments. For this, severe judgments are announced, which were to be carried to their uttermost in a fourfold series, if the hardening was obstinately continued. (Keil, 1: 471, 472.)

Grace has been offered; "millennial-like" blessings beyond all one could ask or think had been offered if they would *walk in my statutes, and keep my commandments, and do them*, v. 3. Vv. 4-13, had not been offered to the pagans; rather, they had been offered to God's chosen people. However, with the abundant blessings promised for obedience, comes abundant curses for despising the offered blessings. The following "curses" are not promised against the pagans; they are promised against God's people. If *our God is a consuming fire* against His unfaithful people, think of what He is to those who reject Him! (Heb. 12:29.) The Lord God promises blessings beyond all other peoples for His peoples' obedience, so the other side of the coin must be "curses" above all other peoples for His peoples' disobedience. His word is a two-edged sword. (This section reads very much like Deut. 28-33.)

Thus the following "judgments" are against "presumptuous and obstinate

rebellion," not against "single breaches of the law." This statement sounds very much like what is given in Hebrews 10:26ff.

Vv. 14, 15, "obstinate rebellion" vs. "single breaches"... Thus one's attitude toward God's law. This leads us to some very interesting situations in the New Testament, which we develop elsewhere. **(See Message, MO, for two types of sin. removed it from here)**

The judgments, or curses, are for breaking the covenant: The people refused to *do all my commandments*. If the judgments, or punishments, did not bring the people to repentance, the judgments increase in intensity, vv. 18, 21, 23, 27, the worse of all possible judgments eating their own children..

Vv. 16, 17, **I will appoint:** illness upon them and the wicked exalted.

Vv. 18, 19, **I will punish you:** the fruit of their labours will be greatly hindered.

Vv. 21, 22, **I will bring, I will send:** the wild beasts exalted among them.

Vv. 25, 26, **I will bring, I will send:** they will die at the hands of the enemies of God's kingdom on earth, and famine will prevail.

Vv. 29-33, **I will chastise you in my fury:** the very worst thing that could happen to them: they will be forced to eat their own children, their cities destroyed and the people carried away captive into other lands.

The purpose of each "judgment" was to get the people to return to Him, and keep His commandments. In the end, however, they were totally destroyed as a nation. We should also note that the Lord Himself appointed the judgments.

But if these punishments did not answer their purpose, and bring Israel back to fidelity to its God, the Lord would punish the disobedient nation still more severely, and chasten the rebellious for their sin, not simply only, but sevenfold. This he would do, so long as Israel persevered in obstinate resistance, and to this end He would multiply His judgments by degrees. This graduated advance of the judgments of God is so depicted in the following passage, for four times in succession new and multiplied punishments are announced: (1) utter barrenness in their land, that is to say, *one* heaver punishment (vers. 18-20); (2) the extermination of their cattle by beasts of prey, and childlessness, *two* punishments (vers. 21, 22); (3) war, plague, and famine, *three* punishments (vers. 23-26); (4) the destruction of all idolatrous abominations, the overthrow of their towns and holy places, the devastation of the land, and the dispersion of the people among the heathens, *four* punishments which would bring the Israelites to the verge of destruction (vers. 27-33). In this way would the Lord punish the stiffneckedness of His people. These divine threats embrace the whole of Israel's future. But the series of judgments mentioned is not to be understood historically, as a prediction of the temporal succession of the different punishments, but as an ideal account of the judgments of God, unfolding themselves with inward necessity in a manner answering to the progressive development of the sin. (Keil, I.472, 473.)

**Vv. 16, 17.**

V. 16, **I will appoint:**

*set (over), make overseer, 2 K 25.23; + [Hebrew word] Gn 39.4 Je 1.50+8*

t., fig., acc. of punishment, Lv 26.16; + [Hebrew word] Je 40.5+3t.; + [Hebrew word] and [Hebrew word] 1 K 11.28; + [Hebrew word]...1 S 29.4 *where thou hast stationed him*, ins. also v 10... (BDB, 623, 624.)

### Godless Rulers Appointed by God

The Lord God promises to *appoint* godless foreign governors over them:

The majesty of His love is wronged by the indifference of the sinner, as well as by the obstinate rebellion of the sinner. Israel was made to feel this. "*Terror*," instead of calm, serene peace; "*consumption and ague*," instead of health and strength, once characteristic of the people of the God of Jeshurun; blasted hopes and labours, defeated armies, foreign governors in their cities, and their own heart sinking in haplessness. The Lord did this in the days of *the Judges*;... The Lord appointed these judgments. The word is [Hebrew word], the same as in Ps. cix. 6, "Set thou a wicked man over him," and the same as in Isaiah lxii. 6, "I have set watchmen over thy wall, O Jerusalem." The word means, that a charge is given to these instruments to execute a certain purpose; they are appointed to the office of seeing to this being done... The Lord appointed these judgments... (Bonar, *Leviticus*, 480, 481.)

In Exodus 15:26 and 23:25, the Lord promised to deliver His people from the diseases mentioned here. However, the Lord promises here that if they fail to do all His commandments and if they break His covenant, then He will deliver His people to the diseases mentioned here He will bring upon them terror, consumption, burning ague, sorrow of heart, &c. He promises to personally *appoint* evil rulers over them whose job it will be to make life miserable for those who rejected His rule, v. 15.

*[S]low your seed in vain...* sure sounds like the tax man taking the increase.

Ver. 17. Yea, the Lord would turn His face against them, so that they would be beaten by their enemies, and be so thoroughly humbled in consequence, that they would flee when no man pursued (cf. ver. 36). (Keil, I.472.)

Though the average church leader today vehemently denies any kind of application of this passage to the New Testament Gospel Church, the parallel applications to the Church are so real that they can not be coincidental, e.g., Matthew 5:13ff. (Though Scofield attempted to break the bands and cords of God's Word as revealed in Matthew 5 by placing it into another dispensation, the Lord laughs from heaven at his feeble efforts Matthew 5 is still binding upon man regardless of man's personal opinions. See *Scofield* mailing.)

Clearly, the enemies of God's kingdom on earth have been exalted by *the most High* to rule over the whole earth.

*That they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and they shall wet thee with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over thee, till thou know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will. And whereas they commanded to leave the stump of the tree roots; thy kingdom shall be sure unto thee,*

*after that thou shalt have known that the heavens do rule. (Dan. 4:25, 26.)*

The reason is plainly spelled out so anyone can understand it.

*And if ye shall despise my statutes, or if your soul abhor my judgments, so that ye will not do all my commandments, but that ye break my covenant: I also will do this unto you; I will even appoint over you terror, consumption, and the burning ague, that shall consume the eyes, and cause sorrow of heart: and ye shall sow your seed in vain, for your enemies shall eat it. (Lev. 26:15, 16.)*

Men, particularly in the average church, abhor the Lord's *judgments*, refusing to *do all His commandments*, and seem to delight in breaking the law of the covenant. Having departed from the firm foundation of God's Law-Word and fearing what man can do, the average Christian, including church leaders, is cowering in the corner, fearful that he or she might do something to offend the wicked who now rule.

Churches are fearful to do anything that is not "politically correct." Even more evident is that pastors are fearful of offending the "big givers" who might be in their churches, so their love of money forbids taking a stand. Holy Christian boldness is obviously missing from the modern pulpits, and, accordingly, from society.

**Vv. 18-20: A stroke on their possessions.**

Vers. 18-20. *First* state of aggravated judgments. if they did not harken [Hebrew word], "*up to these*" (the punishments named in vers. 16, 17), that is to say, if they persisted in their disobedience even when the judgments reached to this height, God would add a sevenfold chastisement on account of their sins, would punish them seven times more severely, and break down their strong pride by fearful drought. (Keil, I.473.)

*Seven times*, the number of perfection: 1) God's perfect judgment against sin; 2) God's strength in chastisement (Keil); 3) God's perfect work in His people, and 4) His perfect plan upon this earth.

Every offer of grace, especially if accompanied by warning as to the fatal consequences of rejection, brings sevenfold guilt on the rejecter. (Bonar.)

This curse was literally fulfilled, and can readily be seen in the present sterility of Palestine.

The Lord uses the natural elements to break man's pride. He will punish them seven times more for their sin. The purpose is to get them to repent.

**Vv. 21, 22: A stroke upon their children and cattle.**

They continue to walk contrary to His commandments, so He brings seven times more plagues upon them; wild beast and the loss of their children.

The Lord warns, and the people refuse to heed the warning as they continue in their sin. Whereas the Lord's blessing contains man's dominion over and peace with the "wild kingdom" (Isa. 11:6; 65:25), the Lord's curse contains the "wild kingdom's" rebellion against man. The curse of this passage was

literally fulfilled in the wild beasts roaming among the Israelites, e.g., 2 Kings 2:24; 1 Kings 13:24; 17:26; Jeremiah 2:15.

But it is evident that their existence in so densely a peopled land was somewhat miraculous; it was by Divine appointment. It was to keep Israel in mind of this passage of the law; and whenever wild beasts multiplied, they were to see herein a proof that they had advanced far onward in rebellion, this being the third stage of the Lord's wrath. (Bonar, *Leviticus*, 483.)

There are a couple interesting applications here:

First, the pagan Gentiles throughout Scripture were compared to the wild beasts of the field. (Ac. 10, 11.) So the exaltation of the pagans over God's people is a fulfillment of this "curse."

*Woe unto you that desire the day of the LORD! to what end is it for you? the day of the LORD is darkness, and not light. As if a man did flee from a lion, and a bear met him; or went into the house, and leaned his hand on the wall, and a serpent bit him. Shall not the day of the LORD be darkness, and not light? even very dark, and no brightness in it? (Amos 5:18-20.)*

Gill's comment on v. 19 is worth repeating:

Ver. 19. *As if a man did flee from a lion, and a bear met him, &c.]* That is, should the day of the Lord come as they desired, they would not be the better for it; it would be only going from one trouble to another, like escaping Scylla, and falling into Charybdis: or as if a man, upon the sight of a lion, and at his yell, should take to his heels, and flee "from the face" of him, as the phrase is {I}, and a bear, a less generous, and more cruel and voracious creature, especially when: bereaved of its whelps, should meet him, and seize him: or should: he get clear of them both, *or went into the house, and leaned his hand on the wall, and a serpent bit him;* should he get into a house, and so escape the lion and the bear, and lean upon the wall of the house to support and ease him, being out of breath in running from these creatures; yet a serpent lurking in the wall of an old house bites him, and the venom and poison of it issues in his death; so he gains nothing by fleeing from the lion, or escaping the bear. These proverbial expressions signify that the Israelites would be no gainers by the day of the Lord, but rather fall into greater evils, and more distressing calamities. Some Jewish writers interpret the lion and the bear of Laban and Esau; the lion (they say {k}) is Laban, who pursued after Jacob to take away his life; the bear is Esau, who stood in the way to kill all that came, the mother with the children; but are much better interpreted of the Chaldeans, Persians, and Grecians, by Jerom; whose words are,

"fleeing from the face of Nebuchadnezzar the lion, ye will be met by Ahasuerus, under whom, was the history of Esther; or the empire of the Assyrians and Chaldeans being destroyed, the Medes and Persians shall arise; and when upon the reign of Cyrus ye shall have returned, and at the command of, Darius shall have begun to build the house of the Lord, and have confidence in the temple, so as to rest in it, lean your weary hands on its walls; then shall come Alexander king of the Macedonians, or Antiochus, surnamed Epiphanes, who shall abide in the

temple, and bite likes serpent, not without in Babylon, and in Susa, but within the borders of the holy land; by which it appears that the day ye desire is not a day of light and joy, but of darkness and sorrow."

The interpretation is pretty and ingenious enough, since the characters of the lion, bear, and serpent, agree with the respective persons and people mentioned; Nebuchadnezzar is often compared to a lion, #Jer 4:7 50:17; and the Babylonian and Chaldean monarchy is represented by one in #Da 7:4; and the Persian monarchy by a bear, #Da 7:5; to which the Persians are compared, the Jews say {l}, because they eat and drink like a bear, are as fat as bears, and hairy like them, and as restless as they; and so the Persians were noted for their luxury and lust, as well as their cruelty; and, wearing long hair, are called hairy persons in the Delphic oracle, which Herodotus {m} interprets of them; see Gill on "Da 7:5"; and Antiochus may not unfitly be compared to a serpent; see Gill on "Da 8:23"; see Gill on "Da 8:24"; see Gill on "Da 8:25"; see Gill on "Da 11:23"; but what is to be objected to this sense is, that the words are spoken to the ten tribes, or Israel, who were carried captive by the Assyrians; and not the two tribes, or the Jews, who fell into the hands, first of the Chaldeans, then the Persians, and then the Grecians, particularly into the hands of Antiochus; see #Da 7:4,5 Ezz 1:1.

{I} ynpm "a facie", V. L. Pagninus; "a faciebus", Montanus; "a conspectu", Mercerus.

{k} Pirke Eliezer, c. 37. fol. 41. 1.

{l} T. Bab. Kiddushin, fol. 72. 1. & Avoda Zara, fol. 2. 2.

{m} Erato, sive l. 6. c. 19. Vid. Calliope, sive l. 9. c. 81.

Amos 5:19, there is no place to flee and hide from the Lord.

Second, we are seeing a couple things in this once Christian nation, America. Wild animals are moving into the suburbs, losing their fear of man. And the bureaucrats are trying to repopulate the West with wild animals that are very dangerous to man and to domestic animals, e.g., wolves.

Basically, the curse here is that rather than man having dominion over the wild beasts, the wild beasts have dominion over him. Note that **sin reverses the order established by God in the beginning.**

V. 22 sounds almost like the gangs and thugs that make life unsafe, as crime rules the streets.

#### Vv. 23-26.

Vers. 23-26. The *third* stage.- But if they would not be chastened by these punishments, and still rose up in hostility to the Lord, He would also engage in a hostile encounter with them, and punish them sevenfold with war, plague, and hunger.

Ver. 25. He would bring over them "the sword avenging (i.e. executing) the covenant vengeance." The "covenant vengeance" was punishment inflicted for a breach of the covenant, the severity of which corresponded to the greatness of the covenant blessings forfeited by a faithless apostasy. If they retreated to their towns (fortified places)

from the sword of the enemy, the Lord would send a plague over them there, and give those who were spared by the plague into the power of the foe. He would also "break in pieces the staff of bread," and compel them by the force of famine to submit to the foe. The means of sustenance should become so scarce, that ten women could bake their bread in a single oven, whereas in ordinary times every woman would require an oven for herself; and they would have to eat the bread which they brought home by weight, *i.e.* not as much as every one pleased, but in rations weighed out so scantily, that those who ate would not be satisfied, and would only be able to sustain their life in the most miserable way. Calamities such as these burst upon Israel and Judah more than once when their fortified towns were besieged... (Keil-Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*, 1:474.)

In this *third* stage:

1) the punishment inflicted for unfaithfulness corresponded to the greatness of the blessing promised for faithfulness to the law of the covenant (the Ten Commandments).

2) it is impossible to avoid the results of unfaithfulness the people might hide behind their fortifications from the sword of the Lord's anger, but He promises a pestilence in the sword's place. Famine will also be sent by the Lord against the unfaithful and ungrateful people. There is no hiding from the *third* stage.

How many times have I "wished" to be alone somewhere away from the social corruption and its responsibilities; however, the Lord tells us that there is no escaping the results of sin and indifference on the part of Christians. We must admit that social corruption today is a result of indifference on the part of God's people. Either Christians heed God's warnings and get involved in claiming every area of life and thought for Christ, or they WILL reap the results. If not at the hands of an invading army, then at the hands of **pestilence**:

**deber. Pestilence, murrain, and plague.** This masculine noun is commonly mentioned together with such words as famine, evil, blood, judgment, sword, and noisome beast (KJV; RSV "evil beast"). Jeremiah in his predictions of dire events quite often combines sword, famine, and pestilence (14:12; 21:7, 9; 24:10; 27:8, 13; 29:17-18; 32:24, 36; 34:17; 38:2; 42:17, 22; 44:13).

Any kind of pestilence which results in death is meant. Aside from about five instances, all uses of *deher* relate to pestilence as sent by God as punishment. Solomon in his prayer at the temple dedication speaks of the possibility of pestilence as a basis for prayer (I Kgs 8:37; II Chr 6:28). However, God in his response says, "If I send pestilence" (I Chr 7:13). Jehoshaphat speaks like Solomon but he puts the statement on the possibility of pestilence as a basis for prayer towards the temple in the mouth of the people (II Chr 20:9). Psalm 91:3, 6 refers to God saving from evil pestilence. All other references are statements of historical occurrences, or threats or prophecies of punishment from the Lord. (TWOT, 1: 180, 181.)

Accordingly, *pestilence among you* refers to any kind of disease resulting in death. Today, as societies remove God and His Word further and further from themselves, we are seeing diseases that were once thought to be

controlled reoccur with a vengeance. We are also seeing new diseases appear that are very devastating, for which there is no known cure nor control, e.g., Eboli.

Man cannot do his own thing and then hide from the results of his sin, even in the heavens.

*Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee. (Ps. 139:7-12.).*

### **Vv. 27-33.**

The *fourth* and most sever state of God's punishment for their sins. Up to this point, the punishment had taken place in their land. Now, they will be removed. Notice that the quarrel is between the people and His covenant-law. This time they will eat their children, and lose all they have their cities and land. They will be scattered everywhere, but this still will not stop the chastening. The Lord will send a sword after them and faintness into the hearts of those who escape the sword, v. 36. The faintness is described as fear, v. 37.

This judgment is more minutely described in its four principal features: viz. (1) the destruction of all idolatrous abominations (ver. 30); (2) the overthrow of the towns and sanctuaries (ver. 31); (3) the devastation of the land, to the amazement of the enemies who dwelt therein (ver. 32); and (4) the dispersion of the people among the heathen (ver. 33). (Keil.)

The promised curse here was literally fulfilled. Three times, Israel ate their own children: 1) under the Syrians, 2 Kings 6:28, 20; 2) under the Chaldeans, Lamentations 2:20, and 3) under the Romans, in the Roman war of extermination under Titus. (Keil, *The Third book of Moses*, 475.)

Under Jeroboam, unauthorized "high places," or *sanctuaries*, were built where the people were told they could worship the Lord God. Not only were these *sanctuaries* destroyed, but so was the *Temple* at Jerusalem in these sieges.

From the time the Law, Leviticus 26, was given until the final destruction in 70 AD was about 1500 years. Though the Lord God was extremely long-suffering, He did not forget His promise. (Ecc. 8:11.)

### **Vv. 34-39**

The Sabbath

The sin of Israel lay in their *manner* of keeping Sabbath-days and Sabbath-years. Their God was not honoured; they did not give spiritual service. They also turned the observance of the seasons appointed into times of pleasure riding in their chariots, probably, and giving themselves to amusements. But the reference is chiefly to cases of such neglect occurring, not to the continuance of it so long a time as

seventy years. Nay, their land lies desolate still for that same sin. Men shall suffer if they keep not God's way. Your land " shall atone for her Sabbaths" (Gesenius). Alas; our land see ns near its day of doom ! Incessant movement of men over its breadth and length ! *Where is the rest?* But so it shall be as the time draws near wherein the *Sabbath* of earth shall arrive, when the disturbers of its rest are brought to silence. (Bonar, *Leviticus*, 488, 489.)

Rejecting the *Lord of the sabbath* (Mt. 12:8; Mk. 2:28; Lk. 6:5), natural Israel finally *perished among the heathen*, v. 38. The regathering of vv. 40 on is finally fulfilled in the Gospel Church. (Bonar, however, holds that the cowardice under oppressions continues today in natural Israel. Thus he contends that there natural Israel is still object of God's final attention, rather than the Gospel Church. I cannot agree with his opinion here at all. When natural Israel cried out against the Lord of the Sabbath, *His blood be on us, and on our children* (Mat. 27:25), it was finished it was broken off to be replaced in the Abrahamic covenant-promise by the Gople Church, according to God's eternal plan, of course.

This section tells us that 70 AD was not really referred to in the *fourth* stage; rather, its fulfillment was at the hand of God's servant, Nebuchadnezzar, 2 Chronicles 36:11-21.

V. 21, *To fulfil the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her sabbaths: for as long as she lay desolate she kept sabbath, to fulfil threescore and ten years.*

In Nebuchadnezzar's siege, the people ate their children, Lamentations 4:1-12.

V. 10, *The hands of the pitiful women have sodden their own children: they were their meat in the destruction of the daughter of my people.*

However, Leviticus 26:34, 35, could be "spiritually" fulfilled:

*Then shall the land enjoy her sabbaths, as long as it lieth desolate, and ye be in your enemies' land; even then shall the land rest, and enjoy her sabbaths. As long as it lieth desolate it shall rest; because it did not rest in your sabbaths, when ye dwelt upon it.*

According to Hebrews, particularly chapter four, the Sabbath rest spoke of the rest by faith in Christ, the **Lord of the Sabbath**.. When national Israel rejected that promised Sabbath rest, Christ, it was finally and totally destroyed. Rome completely laid Jerusalem waste, sold the Israelites into every nation at its disposal and carried back a great many as trophies of war to the city of Rome. The final words of Christ against Israel explain the whole situation:

*Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. (Mt. 23:38.) Behold, your house is left unto you desolate: and verily I say unto you, Ye shall not see me, until the time come when ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord. (Lu. 13:35.)*

The final desolation came in 70 AD.

The point that should stand out to any reader of vv. 1-39, is the many

times God says, **I will**.

**I will** is used in a promised blessing, vv. 1-13, 5 times.

**I will** is used in a promised curse, vv. 14-40, 17 times.

**I will** is used in a promised renewal, vv. 44-46, 2 times.

We must note that the horrible destruction that came upon God's people in the form of illnesses, natural disasters (weather, &c.) and extremely evil armies that raped and killed was sent by the Lord God. Thus there was no escape.

The lightning of God's wrath struck down their high places and idolatrous images; not a vestige of these can be found by any traveler. (Bonar.)

V. 27, the purpose of all the evils that came upon God's people was to get them to return to the Lord that is, obey His word. When people walk contrary to the Lord, then He walks contrary to them. And the clear understanding is that the "walk" is according to His Law-Word.

**I will** is used many times over: *I, even I, will chastise you...* Events don't just happen: they are ordered by the Lord God, whether good or bad. The "God is love" crowd refuses to admit that the Lord God is the One who brings these things to pass, even sending the illnesses, wild beasts and the evil armies against His disobedient people.

*Slay utterly old and young, both maids, and little children, and women: but come not near any man upon whom is the mark; and begin at my sanctuary. Then they began at the ancient men which were before the house. (Ezek. 9:6.)*

**I will** make your cities wast... (v. 31.) He sent the armies to destroy the cities and kill and carry away the people. The Lord God is the commander of the great, terrible armies.

Sanctuaries... were places where the Lord was supposedly worshiped. However, the Lord God gave clear instructions as to how He was to be worshiped. Failure to do it His way brought His wrath.

*Hear the word of the LORD, ye rulers of Sodom; give ear unto the law of our God, ye people of Gomorrah. To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the LORD: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he goats. When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts? Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting. Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them. And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood. (Isa. 1:10-15.)*

The above thought is give many times throughout Scripture: The people go through all the outward motions of worshiping and serving the Lord, yet their hearts are controlled by sin. The call is for them to repent or else:

*Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow. Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land: But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it. (Isa. 1:16-20.)*

V. 18, *Come now...*, is used quite often as a "salvation" verse, but its context is a call for God's people to give ear and obey God's law, v. 10. He threatens them with destruction if they do not, and v. 18 is a call to repent.

V. 13, all the sacrifices in the world without love for and obedience to God's law are worthless.

Leviticus 26:36, there is no avoiding nor escaping the Lord's movement against lawlessness. Notice the problem is in the individual and his relationship with the Lord God.

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Israel Restored

**Leviticus 26:14-39** described the "destruction" of Israel.

**Vv. 40-46**, describes the **RESTORATION OF ISRAEL**

Now arises the question: is this promised restoration the restoration of Old Testament national Israel; is it the New Testament Israel of God, or does it refer to both? Compare v. 40 with Zechariah 12:10 :

*If they shall confess their iniquity, and the iniquity of their fathers, with their trespass which they trespassed against me, and that also they have walked contrary unto me...*

*And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn. (See also Isaiah 53.)*

Zechariah tells of the day to come when *the inhabitants of Jerusalem* will receive the pouring out of *spirit of grace and supplication*. (See Eph. 6:18.) The result will be that they will repent of their sins, and come to the Saviour. Zechariah tells us, furthermore, that this repentance will start in *the tents of Judah first*, and expand. The purpose of the repentance starting in *the tents of Judah* is so the rest who come to the Messiah will not be lifted up with pride against *Judah*. Did not Paul warn the Gentiles against being lifted up with pride against the natural *branches* who were broken off so the Gentiles could be grafted in (Romans 11)? In other words, the Gospel message found its first receptive audience among the Jews. The first few chapters of Acts shows the tremendous working of *spirit of grace and supplication* in *the tents of Judah first*.

*[S]hall look upon me whom they have pierced* was first fulfilled in Acts 2:37, *Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?* It is also clearly referred to in many other passages that pertain to the Gospel Church: 2 Corinthians 7, Paul compares Godly sorrow with worldly sorrow; The author of Hebrews tells us that the Church must be *Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith...* (12:2.)

According to Ezekiel 39:23-29, after *Israel has borne their shame*, He will gather them into their own land where He will not *hide His face any more from them: for I have poured out my spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord God.* The promise there is the regathering of God's people, *the Israel of God*, in Christ, and is His Church made up of both Jews and Gentiles. The basic promise of the *pouring out of my spirit* (Joel 2:29) was fulfilled in Acts 2:17, and consisted of pouring out of the Holy Ghost upon the redeemed, Acts 2:33. The fact that the promise of the Holy Ghost went to both Jews and Gentiles alike was astonishing to the first preachers of the Gospel, and caused the first church to call them into question, Acts 10:45; 11:15.

Therefore, though Leviticus 26:40ff., has an immediate fulfillment in national Israel, it also looks forward in final fulfillment in the Gospel Church of the Lord Jesus Christ. (Bonar holds to dispensationalism, saying that Abraham's promise will yet be fulfilled in natural Israel, a position that is untenable from the New Testament.)

#### Immediate & Future

First, vv. 14-39 describe what took place under the Syrians and under the Chaldeans; therefore, vv. 40-46 describes what took place in Daniel chapter nine:

*In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the seed of the Medes, which was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans; In the first year of his reign I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem. And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes: And I prayed unto the LORD my God, and made my confession, and said, O Lord, the great and dreadful God, keeping the covenant and mercy to them that love him, and to them that keep his commandments; We have sinned, and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, even by departing from thy precepts and from thy judgments: Neither have we hearkened unto thy servants the prophets, which spake in thy name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people of the land. O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto thee, but unto us confusion of faces, as at this day; to the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and unto all Israel, that are near, and that are far off, through all the countries whither thou hast driven them, because of their trespass that they have trespassed against thee. O Lord, to us belongeth confusion of face, to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have sinned against thee. To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgivenesses, though we have rebelled against him; Neither have we obeyed the voice of the LORD our God, to walk in his laws, which he set before us by his servants the prophets. Yea, all Israel have transgressed thy law, even by departing, that they might not obey thy*

voice; therefore the curse is poured upon us, and the oath that is written in the law of Moses the servant of God, because we have sinned against him. And he hath confirmed his words, which he spake against us, and against our judges that judged us, by bringing upon us a great evil: for under the whole heaven hath not been done as hath been done upon Jerusalem. As it is written in the law of Moses, all this evil is come upon us: yet made we not our prayer before the LORD our God, that we might turn from our iniquities, and understand thy truth. Therefore hath the LORD watched upon the evil, and brought it upon us: for the LORD our God is righteous in all his works which he doeth: for we obeyed not his voice. And now, O Lord our God, that hast brought thy people forth out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand, and hast gotten thee renown, as at this day; we have sinned, we have done wickedly. O Lord, according to all thy righteousness, I beseech thee, let thine anger and thy fury be turned away from thy city Jerusalem, thy holy mountain: because for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and thy people are become a reproach to all that are about us. Now therefore, O our God, hear the prayer of thy servant, and his supplications, and cause thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary that is desolate, for the Lord's sake. O my God, incline thine ear, and hear; open thine eyes, and behold our desolations, and the city which is called by thy name: for we do not present our supplications before thee for our righteousnesses, but for thy great mercies. O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not, for thine own sake, O my God: for thy city and thy people are called by thy name. And whiles I was speaking, and praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God for the holy mountain of my God; Yea, whiles I was speaking in prayer, even the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation. And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding. At the beginning of thy supplications the commandment came forth, and I am come to shew thee; for thou art greatly beloved: therefore understand the matter, and consider the vision. Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy. Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate. (Dan. 9. See Jer. 25:9-12.)

Jeremiah 40:9, *Fear not to serve the Chaldeans...* Babylon was sent by God to judge Israel's sin of disobedience to her God. God's people would remain in servitude until the judgment was complete, so they were to submit to it. The rebellious men of Jeremiah's day did not like the message, so they rebelled again, v. 14. Daniel saw the end of the seventy years; Cyrus gave

the command to rebuild Jerusalem, Ezra 1, which started the *seventy weeks*. The *seventy weeks* were completed when the *Messiah* was *cut off*.

**V. 41, and they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity:** In other words, Israel of old was told to *accept the punishment of their iniquity*. After they accept the **punishment**, then the Lord remembers the covenant, and restores old Israel to its land under Ezra and Nehemiah.

I fully realize v. 41 referred to Israel of old, and its bondage to Babylon for its sin. However, there seems to be some clear applications for our day: Note Gill's comments and my notes:

Ver. 41. *And [that] I also have walked contrary unto them, &c.]* Showed no regard unto them, as if he took no care of them, or in a providential way concerned himself for them, but let what would befall them; yea, came out in the way of his judgments against them, as if he was an enemy to them, see Gill on "Le 26:24";

1) The new Israel of God appears to have forgotten who its God is, the Lord Jesus Christ. Showing no regard for the Lord, the Lord seems to be, for a time, showing no regard for the Church, treating it more as an enemy than a friend.

*and have brought them into the land of their enemies;* should acknowledge the hand of God in it, that he himself brought them out of their own country into an enemy's land, as Assyria, Babylon, and other nations: and that this was not the chance of war, or owing to the superior power or skill of their enemies, but to the just judgment of God upon them for their sins, who on that account delivered them up into the hands of their enemies:

2) The Lord Himself exalts the enemies of the Church to the place where they can oppress the Church, *i.e.*, delivered the Church into their hands, not because they are stronger or more skillful than God's people. It has been delivered because it is exalted in self-importance and is pursuing the god of this world, mammon. Most of the pastors I know absolutely refuse to admit that the Lord God would exalt the enemies of His people, and make His people (the Church) serve the wicked. Even though dispensationalism places almost all of the Revelation in the future, dispensationalism refuses to acknowledge what passages such as Revelation 9:15; 13:7; 17:17, &c., teach that the ungodly do not exalt themselves nor does Satan exalt them. The Lord God alone exalts the ungodly to places where they can oppress the people of God.

*if then their uncircumcised heart be humbled;* their foolish proud heart, as the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan; it signifies a sinful, wicked, hard, and impenitent heart, brought to a sense of sin, to repentance and humiliation for it. Jarchi interprets it, "or if their uncircumcised heart", &c. as in #Ex 2:23; and observes another sense of the word, "perhaps their uncircumcised heart", &c. not only would in words confess their sins, but be truly humbled at heart for them: (Gill, *Online Bible*.)

3) **[H]umbled...** is an important theme throughout both the Old and New Testaments:

*From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members? Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not. Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts. Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God. Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy? But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble. Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded. Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up. (James 4:1-10. See also, Dan. 9 above and 1 Pet. 5.)*

*[F]riendship of the world is enmity with God, and when God's people walk contrary (at enmity) to God, He walks contrary to them. The call to God's people throughout the Word of God is for God's people to cleanse their hands of sin, purify their hearts, mourn and weep in genuine repentance over their sins, humble themselves in the sight of the Lord by returning in obedience, and **he shall lift you up.***

*and they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity; take it well at the hand of God, bear it patiently without murmuring, or thinking themselves hardly dealt by, but freely owning it is less than their iniquities deserve; or complete and finish the punishment of their sins, as Aben Ezra, which upon their humiliation should be put an end to, and cease. Jarchi takes the word in the sense of atonement and pacification, as if by their chastisement their sins were expiated {d}, and God was pacified toward them: but rather it denotes the free and full pardon of their sins, manifested to them upon their repentance and humiliation for sin.*

*{d} Siphri apud Yalkut, ut supra. (par. 1. fol. 197. 2.) (Gill, Online Bible.)*

4) **[A]nd they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity...** This statement is given twice, v. 41 and v. 43; it, therefore, is not a statement to be taken lightly. "[B]ear it patiently without murmuring...", is described by Peter:

*For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. (1 Pet. 2:20.)*

For your **faults** {ham-ar-tan'-o} That is, sin (missing the mark), not **iniquity** {an-om-ee'-ah} lawlessness. **Buffet** (strike, or violence of some kind) is used five times in the New Testament, four times in suffering for righteousness, and this fifth, receive violence for sin. 1 Peter chapter two is a strong passage that requires God's people to bear maltreatment with patience. If they do not deserve the violence against them, they will be rewarded by the Lord; if they do deserve the violence, or *buffeting*, they have no cause to complain. Note 1 Peter 2:12:

*Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they*

*Speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.*

Though I personally am not in the "secular" work place, I am close enough in touch with what is going on to make this informed statement: Most of the charges of evildoers against professed Christians are true the average "Christian" can be identified with G. Gordon Liddy. Listening to him, he is a man with a very dirty mind: he readily and openly makes all kinds of sexual comments, some by innuendoes and some as openly as can be done on a public broadcast. Yet he readily claims to be a "Christian." He continually says that each person is to establish his own standard. The average "Christian" temper is "every man doing what is *right in his own eyes*." (Deut. 12:8; Jud. 17:6; 21:25.) One of our men who worked at Caterpillar readily tells of co-workers who profess to be Christians, yet their public actions are worse than those who make no such profession the "Christians" will quickly stab someone in the back who might stand in their way toward making themselves look good or might stand in their way of more money. God's people are clearly serving the gods of the surrounding pagans, in violation of the Law of God:

*Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments. (Exo. 20:4-6; Deut. 5:9. See Exo. 34:7; Lev. 5:17; 18:25 [the land itself vomited out the Canaanites and the Israelites for their iniquity]; 20:17ff. [everyone involved in immorality]; Num. 5:15ff. [immorality within marriage]; Josh. 22:20 [Achan did not perish alone in his iniquity of taking what belonged to the Lord]; 1 Sam. 28:10 [King Saul promised no **punishment** for the witch to do her thing]; Ps. 51, &c. There are 213 uses of #5771 [iniquity, punishment] in the Old Testament.)*

Numbers 14:34, presents an interesting though concerning *iniquity*:

*After the number of the days in which ye searched the land, even forty days, each day for a year, shall ye bear your iniquities, even forty years, and ye shall know my breach of promise.*

The people did not believe God could deliver the promised land, Canaan, to them, so they refused to go claim it. The result was that they and their children had to spend *forty years* in the wilderness to *bear their iniquities*. The average "Christian" thought today (since the early 1088s) is that it is impossible that God can fulfill Matthew 28:19, 20 that is, convert the nations of the world to Christ. The result is that God has exalted the wicked into places of authority where the wicked can trod "Christianity" under their feet. (Mat. 5:13.) "Christianity" is today bearing the *iniquity* of their faithless fathers. The Second Commandment (quoted above) promises that God will *visit the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me...* That *hatred* is shown by disregarding the Ten Commandments.

In other words, it appears obvious to me that what is taking place today through oppressive civil government is no more than God exalting the wicked

into places of authority because of the wickedness in those who profess to be His people.

(In fact, it is hard to describe the anger this pastor experienced from "Christians" by the proper plan of salvation. We lost several families from Linden Baptist Church throughout the first six or so years, and all left over the plan of salvation. They depended upon "ask Jesus into your heart," and similar things, and when confronted with the truth, they left rather than admit error. See "The Other Jesus," by this pastor.)

Therefore, not until **they shall confess their iniquity...** will the Lord **remember my covenant with... Abraham.**

Ver. 42 is very remarkable in the Hebrew. It is literally, "I will remember my covenant, Jacob," &c. There is no "with." May God not speaking here to these patriarchs whose God He is at this moment, and saying, "I will remember my covenant, O Jacob, made with thee! and my covenant, O Isaac, with thee; and I will remember my covenant, O Abraham, with thee, and the land wherein thou wast a stranger... (Bonar, 491.)

Though Bonar restricts the *promised land* wherein Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were strangers to Palestine, Hebrews 11:13 tells us that the *land* wherein *they were strangers and pilgrims* was the earth. (*These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.*) Accordingly, the whole earth was promised to Abraham's seed, Christ. Those who are in Christ are commanded to go forth and conquer *all nations* through the preaching of His Gospel. (Mt. 28:19, 20. 1 Pet. 2:11 note the significant NT use by the Spirit of the same words, *Dearly beloved, I beseech you as **strangers and pilgrims**, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul...* See also, 1 Cor. 1:17-2:8. Note that *the power of God* to subdue hardened sinners is the sword of the Spirit, the Gospel, not the literal sword.)

The promised result of accepting **the punishment of their iniquity** is also given twice, v. 42 and vv. 44, 45 the Lord will remember the covenant He made with Jacob, Isaac and with Abraham. The Abrahamic covenant, upon which all the rest are built, is found in Gen 12:1-3. V. 3b:

*And in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed;* that is, in his seed, as in #Ge 22:18 and which is interpreted of Christ, #Ac 3:25 Ga 3:8,16 meaning not every individual of all the families or nations of the earth; but that as many as believe in Christ, of all nations, are blessed in him; and that whoever of them are blessed, they are blessed and only blessed in him, and that they are blessed for his sake with all spiritual blessings; see #Eph 1:3 such as redemption, justification, remission of sins, sanctification, adoption, and eternal life. (Gill.)

The covenant is "the salvation which God made with Abram, is neither stable nor firm except in Christ," (Calvin) and the promised blessings to His people through Christ. (We will not go into all that here, for I deal with it thoroughly in "Israel's Identity/Israel's Conversion.") **[A]cept of the punishment of their iniquity...** Hebrews 12, in my opinion, is clearly parallel to this passage in Leviticus (26:40-46). From Hebrews 12, observe:

First, the Spirit calls for patient endurance in the Christian race. We are

to look to Jesus as our example, for if we do not, we will grow weary and *faint in your minds*, vv. 1-3. Weariness and faintness of the mind will result in failed and forsaken Christian actions.

Second, the people of God are called upon to patiently *endure chastening*. Obviously, the Heavenly Father does not *chasten* His children after His *own pleasure*, as human fathers do. Rather, He does it for His children's *profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness*. Chastening, though it is not *joyous* at the time, *yieldeth the peceable fruit of righteousness unto them that are exercised thereby*, vv. 4-11.

Third, the New Testament people of God, Christians, are compared to the Old Testament people of God who gathered at the foot of the mount in Sinai, vv. 18-24. It was at this location at the foot of the mount that the law was given, including the law we are looking at in Leviticus 26.

Fourth, Moses was the mediator of the old covenant given at the mount, through the blood of bulls and goats; Jesus, through His blood, is the mediator of the new covenant.

Fifth, the sight at the giving of the first covenant, of which Leviticus 26 is part (see v. 46), was so terrible that Moses himself said, *I exceedingly fear and quake*.

Sixth, after rehearsing to those under the new covenant the terribleness of the first covenant, even instantaneous death, the Spirit warns concerning the second covenant, of which Jesus is the mediator, sealed with His own blood. The serious warning, even more serious than the warning issued at the foot of the mount, is, *See that ye refuse not him that speaketh...*, vv. 25, 26.

Seventh, the Lord is shaking the things that can be shaken so that the things which cannot be shaken may remain. The result will be that those who *serve God acceptable with reverence and godly fear* will receive a *kingdom which cannot be moved*, vv. 27, 28.

Eighth, Moses feared and quaked at the appearance of God at the mount, but God's people today seem to be totally oblivious of the same God today. So the Spirit ends His warning concerning God's *chastening* with v. 28, *For our god is a consuming fire*.

All that to say this: The chastening by God of His people under the old covenant given at the mount and sealed with the blood of bulls and goats (promised in passages such as Leviticus 26) is not near as bad nor serious as the chastening of His people under the new covenant given at the new mount Sion and sealed with the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. Let us quote Gill again on Leviticus 26:41:

*and they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity; take it well at the hand of God, bear it patiently without murmuring, or thinking themselves hardly dealt by, but freely owning it is less than their iniquities deserve; or complete and finish the punishment of their sins, as Aben Ezra, which upon their humiliation should be put an end to, and cease. Jarchi takes the word in the sense of atonement and pacification, as if by their chastisement their sins were expiated {d}, and God was pacified toward them: but rather it denotes the free and full pardon of their sins, manifested to them upon their*

repentance and humiliation for sin.

In light of Hebrews chapter twelve, the above statement concerning Leviticus 26:41 (40-45) should take on a very applicable meaning. In other words, God has today exalted the wicked over His people because they have forsaken the Lord of the New Covenant; they have clearly ignored His Word, secure in their false confidence that surely He will not reward His "beloved" people according to their attitude toward His Law-Word.

Just as sure as His people of old could not successfully "rebel" against the oppressors the Lord exalted, they cannot today. Not until His people admit they justly deserve, *accept*, the situation they are in today will the Lord fulfill the covenant made with Abraham, and bless the whole earth through Christ and His people, the Gospel Church. By *accepting the situation* we must mean, as it did of old, realizing that the Lord God of heaven is using the wicked to chasten His people for their sins, confessing the sin of rejecting the Law of the Lord as the rule of every thought and action, and renewing the commitment to follow His Law-Word in every area (which includes being involved in every area of life by taking Godly, Lawful Christian laws into areas as civil government, charity, occupation, &c. (See 1 John 1:9 and Pro. 28:13, 14.) After His people humble themselves *under the mighty hand of the Lord*, the Lord will *lift them up*, even delivering the pagans into their hands (conversion of the world to Christ).

Note how easily and clearly the *ancestors* of Leviticus 26:45 (*But I will for their sakes remember the covenant of their ancestors, whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt in the sight of the heathen, that I might be their God: I am the LORD.*) are traced into the New Testament, where it is applied to the Church:

*Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; And did all eat the same spiritual meat; And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ. But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted... (1 Cor. 10:1-6.)*

At the risk of "spiritualizing" too much, the *ancestors*, whom the Lord brought forth out of the land of Egypt, **are** the fathers of the Gospel Church in 1 Corinthians 10:1. Therefore, the promise of the covenant blessings upon God's people found in Leviticus 26:40-46 looks forward to its final fulfillment in the Gospel Church of the Lord Jesus Christ:

*Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God... (2 Cor. 1:21.)*

Ver. 20. *For all the promises of God in him [are] yea, &c.]* This is a reason or argument proving what is before said, that "in" Christ "was yea", since "all the promises of God in him are yea"; and shows, that God has made many promises to his people: mention is here made of "promises", and of "all" the promises; or, as the words may be rendered, "as many promises of God". There are some which concern the temporal good of the saints; as that they shall not want any good thing; and

though they shall be attended with afflictions, these shall work for their good, and they shall be supported under them. Others concern their spiritual good; some of which relate to God himself, that he will be their God, which includes his everlasting love, his gracious presence, and divine protection. Others relate to Christ as their surety and Saviour, by whom they are, and shall be justified and pardoned, in whom they are adopted, and by whom they shall be saved with an everlasting salvation: and others relate to the Spirit of God, as a spirit of illumination, faith, comfort, strength, and assistance, and to supplies of grace by him from Christ: and others concern everlasting life and happiness, and are all of them very ancient, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began; are exceeding great and precious, suited to the various cases of God's people; are free and unconditional, immutable and irrevocable, and will all of them have their certain accomplishment. These promises are all "in" Christ; with and in whom could they be but in him, since he only existed when they were made, which was from everlasting? with and in whom should they be of right, but in him with whom the covenant, which contains these promises, were made, and who undertook the accomplishment of them? where could they be safe and secure but in him, in whose hands are the persons, grace, and glory of his people? not in Adam, nor in angels, nor in themselves, only in him. Moreover, these promises are "in him yea"... (Gill.)

*Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all. (1 Cor. 15:24-28.)*

*And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. (Heb. 6:15.)*

Thus Leviticus 26:40-46, in the final analysis, looks forward to the modern Israel of God, the Gospel Church. The covenant, v. 42, clearly speaks of the Church. Today the church is under oppression; not until it does vv. 40 and 41, will it be restored to its power in Christ. The promised covenant was the new, everlasting covenant which God made with His new people, the new Israel of God, the Church. (Jer. 24:6, 7; 32:37-41.)

I am convinced that the promised restoration of vv. 40-46 is made to the new Israel of God. The promised regathering is that "Israel" is gathered to the Ensign, which is Christ. I will not go into the argument here, for it is presented in "Israel's Identity/Israel's Conversion." However, I will mention a few things that come to mind.

V. 43 (vv. 34, 35), ***then shall the land enjoy her sabbath...*** The context refers to national Israel: While it was in Babylon for the seventy years, the land rested. However, we must not overlook the promised rest of the land that is part of Christ's redemptive work:

*For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. (Rom. 8:22.)*

Paul tells us that the sabbath rest the land (the whole world) is waiting to enjoy is accomplished in Christ.

Vv. 40, 41, the purpose of the previous negative **I wills** is to call the people to repentance of their sins against the Lord God and His law. Vv. 40, 41, *If they shall confess...* that they have *walked contrary unto God's law*, if they will humble themselves before the Lord **and they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity: Then...** (Bonar uses this to say that the Lord here promises Israel's restoration to the old estates. P 491.)

Vv. 40-42, the promised blessing for confession and repentance of sin.

V. 40, the people **walked contrary** to the Lord; **then** He walked contrary to them.

V. 41, we come upon the Old Testament doctrine of circumcision: it is spiritual, of the heart, not physical. God's people of old were judged for being uncircumcised of heart, not for being uncircumcised in the flesh.

[added, September 16, 1995. But went through the whole chapter again in 97 after I got Bonar from dad.]

**Confess the iniquities of your fathers...** Genuine, godly confession means admitting one is wrong and then setting about to change that wrong, Proverbs 28:13, 14. Thus confession of the *iniquities of the fathers* means that we confess where they were wrong and we **set about changing** the wrong things they put into practice, e.g., the state education system. It **DOES NOT** simply involve admitting the fathers were wrong, but that what they did was wrong and we need to change it. I cover his point in Lev 25, Sinful Enquiry. MO.

Note the steps involved: The striking thing is the number of times the Lord warned them before the final judgment came. I wonder which step we are in?

For notes on **Ch. 27**, see my notes on Exodus 22.