



Seek The Old Paths

“Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths. . . and walk therein”
(Jeremiah 6:16)

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BLESS AMERICA????

Charles Box

***We, the citizens of the United States of America, have done;
or we are sitting quietly while something far worse is being done,
than what that horrible religion did to the US on 9/11.***

I had wanted to write this and post it on September 11, 2014. Out of respect for the families of those who died that day and out of the sadness of remembering the horrors of the events of September 11, 2001, I decided to wait a few days. That horrible attack on our nation is simply brought to mind when someone says 9/11. The godless attacks of that day consisted of a series of four terrorist attacks launched by the Islamic terrorist group al-Qaeda against the United States. The attacks were designed to bring devastation in New York City and Washington DC. September 11, 2001 will long be a day of infamy in the United States of America. On that day at least 2,985 of our people died. We still grieve for the families and friends of our fellow citizens who were murdered that day. The attacks caused at least \$10 billion in property and infrastructure damage.

The events of September 11, 2001, again prove that the Islamic religion is a religion of violence. There are at least 109 verses in the Quran where Muslims are called upon to war with nonbelievers for the sake of Islamic rule. How could our President or any US citizen believe that the Muslim religion is a good religion? It is a religion of hatred, violence, plundering and destruction. The Muslim religion has no respect for women, for Christians or for Jews.

Here are a few of the many horrible things the Quran says:

Quran 3:19, The only true faith in God's sight is Islam.

Quran 3:148, Lord...give us victory over the unbelievers.

Quran 8:12, I shall cast terror into the hearts of the infidels. Strike off their heads, strike off the very tips of their fingers.

Quran 47:4, When you meet the unbelievers in the battlefield strike off their heads and, when you have laid them low, bind your captives firmly.

Sadly, though, we the citizens of the United States of America have done; or we are sitting quietly while something far worse is being done, than what that horrible religion did to the US on 9/11. It is estimated that there are about 3,562 abortions per day performed in the United States. This is the low estimate. This means that from September 11, 2001 until September 11, 2014 there have been 16,901,690 abortions in the US. That is not a typo, the number is correct; there have been 16.9 million abortions in those thirteen years. Most estimates say that a more accurate estimate would be 3,700 abortions daily. This would mean that there have been 17,556,500 abortions in the US since 9/11. How horrible! To put this sick circumstance into some kind of understandable fashion, think about this; there are only nine

cities in the United States with a population of over 1 million. Only four US states have a population greater than 16 million.

Abortion is a HORRIBLE THING. The Bible teaches that life begins at conception. Science tells us that from the moment fertilization takes place, the child's genetic makeup is already complete. At conception, many things have already been determined with the child such as hair color, eye color, skin color and height. The only thing needed now is time for this human being to become fully functioning and developed.

God revealed to us that He knew His prophet even before conception (Jer. 1:5). David also wrote, *“For thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother's womb”* (Psalm 139:13). David was David while he was in his mother's womb. He said, *“Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them”* (Psalm 139:16). Again David said, God saw his unformed body while in the womb.

Abortion is horribly evil — it is wrong. Under the Old Law of Moses, God commanded the penalty of death for someone who committed murder.

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Bless America????...



Editorial...

ERRORS BELIEVED CONCERNING THE LORD'S SUPPER

Garland M. Robinson

Some are telling us the Bible mandates no specific day of the week as to WHEN the church is to assemble and observe the Lord's supper. As a result, we are told Christians can partake of it any day of the week or every day of the week if they so choose. We are also being told there is no EXAMPLE of the first century disciples assembling to eat the Lord's supper on a specific day of the week. However, the New Testament reveals that the first century church assembled on the first day of the week (the Lord's day) to eat the Lord's supper (Acts 20:7) and were also commanded to "give of their means" on that day (1 Cor. 16:1-2). Let's examine what the Bible says.

THE DAY WE CALL SUNDAY IS THE LORD'S DAY

The phrase "Lord's day" appears only one time in the Bible. The apostle John said, "I was in the Spirit on the **Lord's day**..." (Rev. 1:10). On what day of the week is the Lord's day?

There are those who cling to the Law of Moses (the Old Testament), saying we must worship God on the sabbath day (Saturday, the 7th day of the week). Therefore, they consider Saturday to be the Lord's day. They refuse to acknowledge that God changed the Law, including not only the *acts of worship*, but the *day of worship* as well.

The Law of Moses was given by God to the children of Israel at Mt. Sinai after they left bondage in Egypt. It was there that "sabbath keeping" was made known to man for the first time. Nehemiah 9:13-14 makes this clear. Deuteronomy 5:1-3 also makes clear that the ten commandments were given to the Israelites and to them alone. Neither their ancestors (fathers) nor any

other people in history received the ten commandments (which included the law of the Sabbath).

The New Testament makes it clear that today, all humanity, including the Jews, are not under *any part* of the Law of Moses (the ten commandments). The Old Law (including the Sabbath) was taken away when Jesus died on the cross (Heb. 9:15-17; 10:9; Col. 2:14). Anyone today who seeks to be justified by the Old Testament (the 10 commandments and/or sabbath keeping) have cut themselves off from God (Gal. 5:1-4; 2:16; Rom. 3:20; Acts 13:38-39). To keep any part of the Old Testament law makes it essential to keep it all (cf. Gal. 3:10-13; 5:1-4). We can't pick and choose which part(s) we will observe and which part(s) we won't.

Was there a specific day of the week that the church in the first century was to assemble? To answer this question, answers the question about which day of the week is the "Lord's day." We learn by both **command** and **example** that the **first day of the week**, the day we call Sunday, was/is the day chosen by God for the church to assemble and worship.

COMMAND. The **church at Corinth** was told, "Now concerning the collection for the saints, as **I have given ORDER to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week** let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him..." (1 Cor. 16:1-2). Notice that churches everywhere were given the same command. First day of the week worship is not optional! It is a divine command.

EXAMPLE. We learn from the common practice of the church in the first century which day was recognized as the Lord's Day. Second Thessalonians 3:6 speaks of the "tradition" received from the inspired apostles. Acts 16:4 shows there were

divinely inspired "decrees for to keep." So, what was the common practice of the church in the New Testament? What inspired tradition did they follow? What inspired decrees did they keep?

Concerning the **church at Troas** we read, "And upon the **first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread**..." (Acts 20:7). First day of the week worship is not optional! It is a divine example.

Notice these important and essential facts concerning the first day of the week:

- 1) Jesus was raised from the dead (Mark 16:9),
- 2) Jesus was declared to be the Son of God "by the resurrection from the dead" (Rom. 1:4),
- 3) Jesus met with his apostles the day of his resurrection and the next Sunday as well (John 20:1,19,26),
- 4) The Holy Spirit fell on the apostles (Acts 2:1-4),
- 5) The church began on Pentecost which was always the first day of the week (Acts 2:1-4,41,47; Lev. 23:15),
- 6) The first Gospel sermon was preached (Acts 2:22-36),
- 7) The first converts (about 3,000 souls) obeyed the Gospel (Acts 2:41).
- 8) Church members were commanded to give of their means (1 Cor. 16:1-2),
- 9) The church met to "break bread" — observe the Lord's supper (Acts 20:7).

Is it simply a coincidence that all these things occurred on the first day of the week? Some would have us believe so.

In the New Testament we learn of:

- 1) A *new covenant* (testament), made not with just one nation, but with all humanity. It involved new commandments (Heb. 8:6-13; 9:9-10; Matt. 28:18-20),
- 2) A *new institution* — the church, the body of Christ, the "called out of the world" (Eph. 1:20-23; Col. 1:18),
- 3) A *new day* of worship, the first day of the week (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:2),
- 4) A *new term* to express the new day, the Lord's day (Rev. 1:10).

When John said he was in the spirit on the Lord's day, he was referring to **the first day of the week**.

The first day of the week is the day we call Sunday. Also, secular history confirms that the church met on the first day of the week and has done so since the church began in the first century.

WHEN TO EAT THE LORD'S SUPPER

Jesus instituted the Lord's supper as a memorial of His suffering and death (Matt. 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:14-20; 1 Cor. 11:23-30). The "bread" is unleavened bread, representing the Lord's body. The "cup" is fruit of the vine (grape juice), representing His blood. Jesus instituted the "supper" with the apostles the night of his betrayal and said he would not eat it again with them until they were in the Father's kingdom (the church).

The Lord's supper has been observed on the first day of the week since the beginning of the church in 33 A.D. This was the precedent set by the apostles as they were guided into all truth (cf. John 16:13; cf. 1 Peter 1:3). Even secular history (from numerous sources) records that Christians met on the first day of the week.

The church began on Pentecost after the Lord's death (Acts 2). The common practice of the church/kingdom in those early days is summed up in Acts 2:42 where brethren "...continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." Notice these four items are spiritual in nature. This is different from what we read in Acts 2:46 where "breaking bread from house to house" is said to be eating meat (food) — that which is physical in nature.

While there is no direct command regarding *when* to eat the Lord's supper, there is a divine example of the church observing it. While Paul "hasted" (speed, earnestly desiring) on his way to Jerusalem hoping to get there by Pentecost (Acts 20:16), he arrived in Troas and stayed there seven days (Acts 20:6). "And upon the first [day] of the week, WHEN the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them..." (Acts 20:7).

Since he was in a hurry, why did he stay in Troas a full week? It had to be because that was the day the church assembled to eat the Lord's

supper and he wanted to be there. If the communion can be observed any day of the week as some contend, then wouldn't the presence of the apostle Paul authorize such an occasion? He was in such a hurry that when he left Troas he bypassed Ephesus, sending word to the elders of the church there to meet him at Miletus (Acts 20:15-17). So, why wait in Troas for seven days? It's because the first day of the week was the day churches everywhere assembled to eat the Lord's supper (Acts 20:7). Where did they learn that except from "holy men of God" preaching and writing as they were guided by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit (2 Peter 1:21; 2 Tim. 3:16-17; cf. 2 Thess. 3:6; Acts 16:4)? There was no possibility of moving the observance of the Lord's supper to another day of the week. It had been set by heaven to be observed on the "first day of the week" as this divine example proves.

Though brethren have the option to assemble and worship God any day of the week as we do during Gospel meetings in singing, praying, and preaching; Sunday worship, first day of the week worship, is not an option. It's on this day that we eat the Lord's supper (Acts 20:7), give of our means (1 Cor. 16:1-2), sing (Col. 3:16), pray (Acts 12:5) and preach (2 Tim. 4:2). The tradition of the apostles (cf. 2 Thess. 3:6; Acts 16:4) was/is divine tradition. Every church has been given the same order/command regarding worship in both the Lord's supper and giving.

Heaven's order concerning "giving" is authorized by command in First Corinthians 16:1-2 — "upon the first [day] of the week."

Heaven's order concerning "the Lord's supper" is authorized by example in Acts 20:7 — "upon the first [day] of the week."

What God has joined together, let no man put asunder (cf. Matt. 19:6).

THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD

It is being said that ALL references to "breaking bread" in the New Testament mean nothing more than a common meal and never refers to the Lord's supper. As a result, it is denied that the "breaking of bread" in Acts 2:42 and "break bread" in Acts 20:7, refers to the Lord's supper. It is said the church at Troas simply came

together to eat a common meal. What does the Bible say?

In the New Testament, there are seven references that mention breaking bread: Luke 24:35, Acts 2:42, Acts 2:46, Acts 20:7, Acts 20:11, 1 Cor. 10:16, 1 Cor. 11:23-30. Let's examine each one.

In Luke 24:13-35 (on the day of His resurrection), Jesus sat down to eat with some disciples at Emmaus where He took bread and brake it (v.30). That same night these disciples went to Jerusalem and told the apostles how that Jesus was made known unto them in breaking of bread (v.35). This was obviously a common meal. The kingdom/church had not yet been established (cf. Matt. 26:29; Acts 2).

In Acts 2:42 we read, "And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." This verse summarizes the practice of the brethren (days, months, years) after the establishment of the church. Notice the spiritual nature of every item: doctrine (1 Tim. 1:3), fellowship (1 John 1:3-7), breaking bread (Acts 20:7), prayers (Acts 12:5). In the Greek, the definite article "the" is used in verse 42, making the phrase to read, "the breaking of the bread." It refers to not just any bread, but to a specific bread, a definite bread, a special bread. The definite article is not used when a common meal is under consideration. This verse is obviously a reference to the Lord's supper.

Acts 2:46 describes the conduct of Christians in Jerusalem in the early days of the church. They continued "daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart." "Daily" indicates the frequency of their meeting together. Notice also there is nothing in the phrase "breaking bread from house to house" that indicates a church assembly, which is where the Lord's supper is to be observed (cf. 1 Cor. 11:20-30; Acts 20:7). Breaking bread is explained in the text (v.46) as eating meat (food, nourishment). It is translated "food" in Acts 24:17 and James 2:15. Acts 2:46 obviously refers to a common meal.

Acts 20:7 reads, "And upon the first [day] of the week, when the disci-

ples came together to **break bread**....” This verse also specifies a specific, special bread with the word “the” attached to it in the Greek text as in Acts 2:42. This was a church assembly on the first day of the week when they came together to worship. Their purpose was to break the bread, i.e., eat the Lord’s supper. Their assembly was not just what they decided to do in their local situation. They were following the decrees (Acts 16:4) and tradition (2 Thess. 3:6) of the apostles. This is a divine example regarding worship on the first day of the week in observing the Lord’s supper.

Acts 20:11 reads, “When he therefore was come up again, and had **broken bread**, and eaten, and talked a long while, even till break of day, so he departed.” “Broken bread” is explained as food — obviously dif-

ferent than the breaking bread of verse 7.

First Corinthians 10:16 says, “The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? **The bread which we break**, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?” Notice how this verse connects the communion, the breaking of bread and the Lord’s table (v.21) together as one. What further proof do we need that the breaking of bread is a common expression concerning the communion, the Lord’s supper?

1 Cor. 11:23-30. The whole point of this text is to explain the Lord’s supper. It needs no further comment.

The very fact that Jesus took bread, broke it, and instituted the Lord’s supper is a clear and undeniable fact (Matt. 26:26; Mark 14:22; Luke 22:19; 1 Cor. 11:23-25). When

studying the seven references that speaks of “breaking bread,” how could anyone deny that breaking bread is not only used to refer to eating a common meal (Luke 24:35; Acts 2:46; 20:11) but also is used to refer to eating the Lord’s supper (Acts 2:42; 20:7; 1 Cor. 10:16; 11:23-30)?

The phrase “breaking bread” is a figure of speech called a *synecdoche* where a “part stands for the whole.” That is, breaking bread includes both the unleavened bread and fruit of the vine. It is simply a reference to the “Lord’s supper” (1 Cor. 11:20), the “Lord’s table” (1 Cor. 10:21), the “communion” (1 Cor. 10:16), and “break bread” (Acts 20:7).

The Lord is with us every Sunday when we meet together to break bread in His kingdom/church (cf. Matt. 26:29).

Bless America????...

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He commanded the same punishment for anyone who would cause the death of a baby in his mother’s womb. “If men strive, and hurt a woman with child, so that her fruit depart from her; and yet no mischief follow: he shall be surely punished, according as the woman’s husband will lay upon him; and he shall pay as the judges determine. And if any mischief follow, then thou shalt give life for life, Eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, Burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe” (Exodus 21:22-25). Abortion is not a matter of choice. It is the matter of the life or the death of a human being that was made in God’s image (Gen. 1:26-27).

The Bible is clear in showing that what is in a pregnant woman’s womb is a “Baby.” When both Mary and Elizabeth were expecting BABIES, Mary visited Elizabeth. The Scripture says, “And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost: And she spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For, lo, as

soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy” (Luke 1:41-44). The same word babe or baby that was used for the child inside Elizabeth’s womb is the same word used for child outside of the mother’s womb. In fact, that same word was used to refer to Jesus after He was born. “And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the **babe** wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger” (Luke 2:12). John was called a babe before his birth and Jesus was called a babe after His birth — same word!

For those who have had an abortion, remember that the sin of abortion is no less forgivable than any other sin. Through faith in Christ and obedience to his Gospel, all sins can be forgiven (Acts 2:36-38). We bear the responsibility to speak for those innocent, unborn children who cannot speak for themselves. “Open thy mouth for the dumb in the cause of all such as are appointed to destruction” (Prov. 31:8).

Look at all the sad and horrible things happening in our nation and to our nation. God may be sick of us! We may not even have a right to pray this simple prayer because of our spiritual condition right now as a nation, but I do pray, God Bless America.

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WHY I LEFT THE MORMON CHURCH #11 (PART 2)

Nathan Franson

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints is driven largely by a creed of thirteen “Articles of Faith.” To see our ongoing examination of these “Articles,” go to seektheoldpaths.com/stop2014.htm.

This article will continue to address the tenth Mormon Article of Faith which reads, “*We believe in the literal gathering of Israel and in the restoration of the Ten Tribes; that Zion (the New Jerusalem) will be built upon the American continent; that Christ will reign personally upon the earth; and, that the earth will be renewed and receive its paradisiacal glory.*”

The topics of *premillennialism* and *postmillennialism* are not new to the religious world. A man named Cerinthus in A.D. 100 was an early premillennialist who taught that Christ would establish a kingdom on earth, centered in Jerusalem, followed by the millennium to be spent in wedding festivities. Since then, it has developed into the doctrine that Christ will reign on earth at His second coming. This teaching contradicts what the Bible teaches, but religions such as the **Mormon Church** have, none the less, adopted it into their faith system.

ZION ON THE AMERICAN CONTINENT?

The belief that Zion will be reestablished on American soil is connected to the Mormon teaching that Christ literally walked on the American continent during His earthly ministry. The Book of Mormon states, “*And it came to pass in the thirty and sixth year, the people were all converted unto the Lord, upon all the face of the land, both Nephites and Lamanites, and there were no contentions and disputations among them, and every man did deal justly one with another.*” (2 Nephi 4:2)

An article on the official LDS website declares,

The remarkable community of Zion described in 4 Nephi was established on the American

continent sometime between the 34th and 36th years after the birth of our Lord. Discipleship in Christ was the foundation of that community. All social progress and goodness centered in Jesus Christ, whose visitation to America after His Resurrection established an age of righteousness lasting about 165 years. Every individual was wholly converted to the Savior — to His ideas and exemplary behavior... (Skinner).

A plaque located at Temple square in Salt Lake City, Utah reads, “*During His ministry in the New World [America, nef], Jesus Christ taught the people, ‘Ye are they of whom I said: Other sheep I have which are not of this fold’*” (3 Nephi 15:21).

This is a teaching incorrectly based on the words of Christ. John writes, “I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep. And **other sheep** [emph. mine] I have, which are not of **this fold**: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be **one fold**, and one shepherd” (John 10:14-16). Consider that Jesus’ audience when He made this decree were Jews. In other words, He had “other sheep...not of this [Jewish, nef] fold.” The only other sheep at that point not of the Jewish fold were Gentiles.

Christ came to set up a universal system for salvation and His point was that both Jews and Gentiles would become “one” under his system. Paul affirms this in his letter to the Corinthians, “For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit” (1 Cor. 12:13). He further writes, “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise”

(Gal. 3:28-29).

Micah prophesies, “But in the last days it shall come to pass, [that] the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it. And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem (Micah 4:1-2).

Jew and Gentile would become one flock, i.e. one church. There is absolutely no evidence in the Bible or anywhere else that supports the false claim that Christ set foot on the American continent. In fact, the Mormon Church is the only religious organization to make such a statement, and certainly to the degree that it will even be restored as the “New Jerusalem.”

WILL CHRIST REIGN PERSONALLY UPON THE EARTH?

Neither the premillennial nor postmillennial teaching that Christ will physically walk on the earth at His second coming can be found in the Bible. Rather, the Bible reveals an opposing description.

Paul writes, “But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive [and] remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive [and] remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever

be with the Lord” (1 Thess. 4:13-17).

Nowhere does it mention that Christ will set foot on earth. What it says is that we will meet Him “in the air.” This will happen “in the twinkling of an eye” (1 Cor. 15:52). There is no reason for the Son of God to be on earth. His kingdom was established once and for all (Acts 2), and is a kingdom that will last forever (Dan. 2:44). It was/is a kingdom that fulfilled prophecy and is now the hope of eternal glory. Jesus told Peter, “upon this rock I will build my church” (kingdom, Matt. 16:18-19). Both John the Baptist and Jesus preached “the kingdom of heaven is at hand” (meaning near, close, Matt. 3:2; 4:17).

Some premillennialists claim that Jesus *thought* the kingdom was “at hand,” but that He did not expect to be rejected. Paul disagrees. He writes, “Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins *according to the scriptures*; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day *according to the scriptures*” (1 Cor. 15:1-4).

Mark writes, “And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power” (Mark 9:1). If the kingdom has not already been established, some to whom the Lord spoke are still alive today! However, an examination of history verifies that those who heard these words of the Lord, including all the apostles, are indeed deceased. Paul states that

when Christ comes, the kingdom will be delivered up to the Father, not established on earth (1 Cor. 15:23-26).

Premillennialism and Postmillennialism implies certain things about the Christ. First, it implies that He is not powerful enough to do what He came to do, i.e. set up His kingdom. Second, it implies that His omnipotence is called into question. Finally, if He was unable to set up His kingdom the first time, what assurance is there that He will not fail again? It further implies that the church was an after-thought or a stop-gap measure rather than a part of the eternal plan of God as Ephesians 3:8-11 says. The thought that the Savior is limited like this is not only ludicrous but also profane.

WILL THE EARTH BE “RENEWED?”

Numerous religious groups who believe there will be a “new earth” have adopted this concept. However, the Bible once again declares the truth on the subject.

Peter writes, “Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, *reserved unto fire* against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men” (2 Peter 3:6-7). That judgment will come quickly and suddenly.

Peter continues, “But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in *the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up*. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of

God, wherein *the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat*” (2 Peter 3:10-12).

First, it is significant to notice that Peter never said there would be a new refurbished earth for the Lord or anyone else to inhabit. No Biblical writer attests to this because it is simply not true. John writes, “And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband” (Rev. 21:1-2). “Heaven” and “earth” refer to places of existence. John was describing a realm for the saved. Again, there is absolutely no mention of a physical earth. Jesus proclaimed, “Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal” (Matt. 6:19-20). There is no room in His vivid description about a physical earthly paradise.

CONCLUSION

Mormonism falls short in capturing the glory of Heaven by, once again, trying to substitute man’s error for Bible truth. Eternal glory awaits everyone who is faithful to the teaching of Christ and who is added to the church that He very successfully and carefully planned before the foundation of the world. As the hymn indicates, “How beautiful Heaven must be.”

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IS THERE A PATTERN FOR NEW TESTAMENT WORSHIP?

Rusty Stark

How about some common sense? How can the question asked in the title be asked with any degree of seriousness? Many people would be better off if they would think before they talk.

If there is such a thing as New Testament worship, then there is a *pattern* for worship. If one claims there is no pattern, he might as well just admit that New Testament worship does not exist. Either wor-

ship is prescribed by the New Testament or it is not. If it is prescribed, then it can be called New Testament worship because it follows the prescription (pattern). If the New Testament gives no such prescription, then

no worship can be called New Testament worship. There simply is no such thing.

So the real question is, does the New Testament prescribe, describe, or set forth worship that is distinct under the New Covenant?

DIFFERENT KINDS OF WORSHIP

There are four different kinds of worship described in the New Testament. To consider them brings forth obvious answers to the question of worship according to a pattern. The Bible describes:

1. **Vain Worship** (Matt. 15:9). Worship is made vain (useless) by teaching the commandments of men. This obviously is not acceptable to God.

2. **Ignorant Worship** (Acts 17:23). Paul speaks of the “unknown god” whom the people of Athens ignorantly worshipped. The NKJV says, “the one whom you worship without knowing.”

3. **Will Worship** (Col. 2:23). “...Signifies simply a mode of worship which a man chooses for himself, independently of the revelation which God has given” (Adam Clarke).

4. **True Worship** (John 4:23-24). Jesus speaks of true worshipers who worship according to truth, i.e., the Scriptures.

These concepts imply a multitude of things about worship. Worship must be in accord with the commands of God, not men, or it is vain (Matt. 15:9). Such constitutes “will-worship” (Col. 2:23). Worship that is ignorant of God or his commands can only be done according to the commands of men, so it is vain. But, there is a worship that is according to truth — directed by God, revealed in his word. Therefore, there is a pattern for worship. It doesn’t take a lot of common sense to see that if there is such a thing as true worship, there has to be a pattern to engage in true worship.

THE OLD-TIME GOSPEL

Galatians 1:6-9, “*I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel*

from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.”

Jude 3, “*Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.*”

Here also we need a little common sense. The Gospel is not a changing thing. It is God’s power to save (Rom. 1:16), and it cannot be changed (Rev. 22:18-19). Therefore, whatever the Gospel teaches about worship is unchanging during the Christian age. It is wrong to depart from it, pervert it, or teach anything new and innovative.

The faith was once and for all time delivered (Jude 3), and from that point onward it needed to be defended (Phil. 1:7,17). It needed loyal men who would contend for it. It was not supposed to be a changing, culturally-based, evolving thing. It was delivered once, and intended to be followed for all subsequent generations.

A WARNING FROM HEBREWS

Sadly, some desire to abandon “pattern theology.” Fortunately, this desire was anticipated by the Holy Spirit, and He gave clear and dire warnings concerning it.

The writer of Hebrews deals with this matter very plainly. He contrasts the old with the new. He shows we have a different and better law-giver (Heb. 1:1-4; Phil. 2:9-11). We have a different and better high priest (Heb. 2:17; 4:14-15; 7:26). We have a different covenant (Heb. 8:6; 7:22), different sacrifices (Heb. 9:11-14, 23), and different promises (Heb. 8:6; 10:34). Hebrews shows plainly that the New Covenant is “not according to the old covenant” (Jer. 31:31-32; Heb. 8:6-13). It is different. It is better.

But one area in which the New Testament is not different from the Old is that God still expects us to follow the pattern he has given.

The Hebrews writer reminds us of the Old Testament obligation to follow the pattern. Hebrews 8:5,

“*Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou **make all things according to the pattern** shewed to thee in the mount.*”

Does Hebrews tell us that ancient Israel had a pattern, but we should not worry about such things? Does it declare that the new covenant is better than the old because we no longer need be concerned about a pattern for how things are to be done? The answer is No. Hebrews warns us that obedience is even more essential for us because of the greatness of the new covenant. “*See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven*” (Heb. 12:25).

God spoke to Israel from a physical mountain, and those who defied him were destroyed. God speaks to us from heaven (in his word). Can we escape if we defy the things he has laid down for us? No.

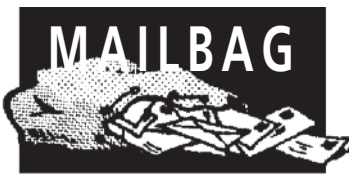
We are every bit as responsible to a pattern as they were in the Old Testament. Obedience has not become optional. Punishment for disobedience is in fact “sorer” (Heb. 10:29) for those under the new covenant.

How about just a little common sense? Why would God care how Cain and Abel worshiped (Gen. 4), destroy Nadab and Abihu for offering unauthorized fire (Lev. 10:1-2), and then allow us to do anything we please?

Tis true among theologians — common sense is not common.

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