



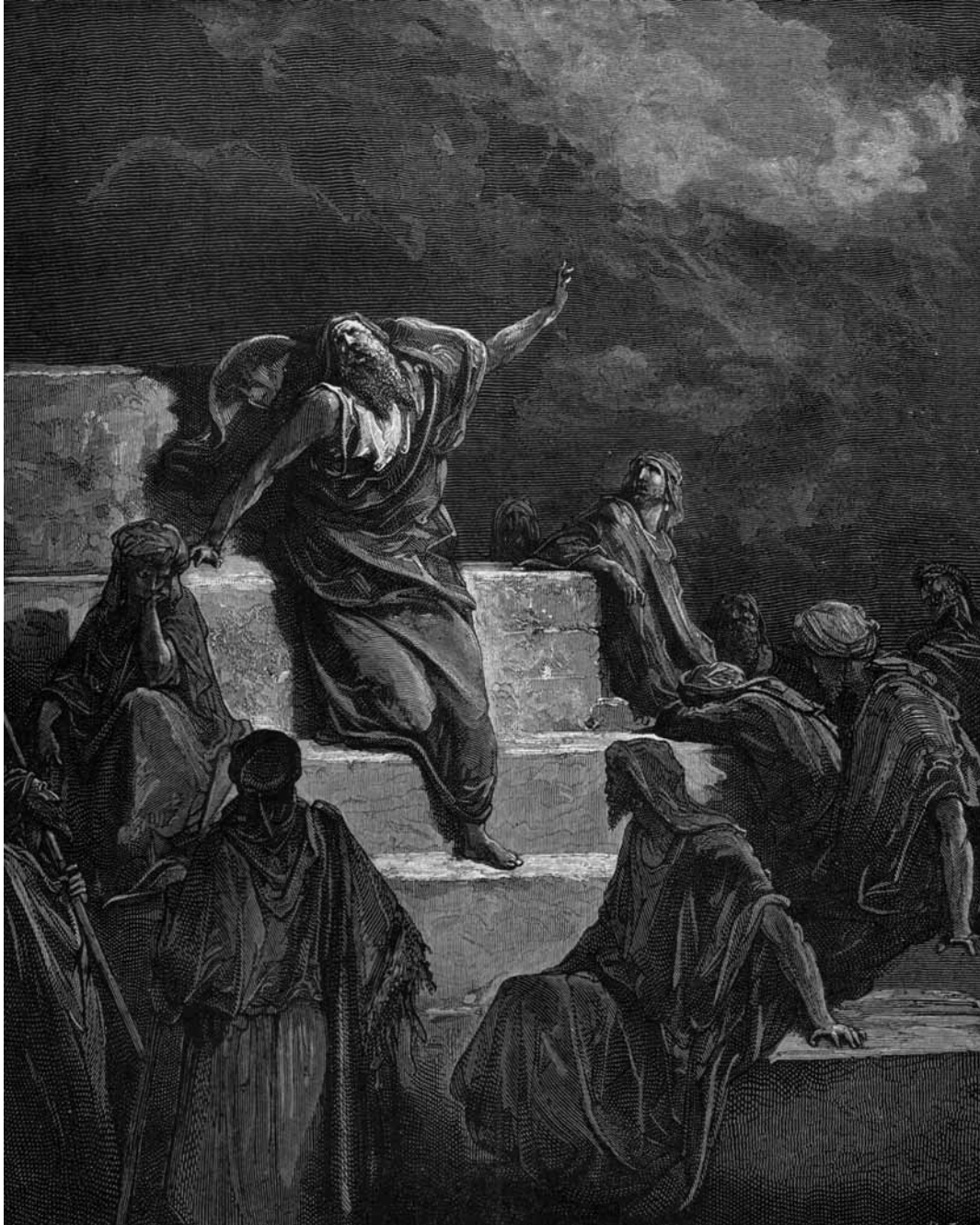
JESUS PEOPLE NEWSLETTER

4338 Third Avenue, Sacramento, CA 95817

FREE

The "Reality Check" Zine

Editor: Thomas Adcock



JEREMIAH

And the Lord said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth. See, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant. . .

Jeremiah 1:9, 10

STATEMENT OF FAITH

We Believe:

In the Trinity: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Jesus Christ is True God and True Man. The Holy Spirit is a Divine Person. The Old and New Testaments are God's Divinely Inspired words. All have sinned and come short of the Glory of God and are in need of salvation. Salvation has been provided through Jesus Christ for all men. It is the will of God that every believer be filled with the Holy Spirit. Healing is available to every believer only when it is God's will to act. Ultimate healing is at the resurrection of the body. The Church consists of all those who have received Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Saviour. There shall be a bodily resurrection of the just and the unjust. In the personal, visible, imminent return of Jesus Christ. In water baptism, and observance of the Lord's Supper.

“Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you; Before You were born I sanctified you: I ordained you a prophet to the nations.”
Jeremiah 1:5 [NKJV]

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NOTICES

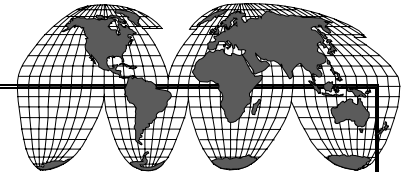
1. Free Bible correspondence course to prison inmates.
2. Free Christian literature and Bibles to 3rd world countries, as the Lord leads.
3. Bible course by mail comparing cults with Biblical Christianity. 12 lessons, \$25 ea. Each lesson includes books. Send \$25 for lesson one or \$300 for the entire course. We make no profit on this.
4. Join our Jesus People Book Club. For a \$25 or more tax-deductible donation per month, to help us supply free literature worldwide, we will send you a quality Christian book every month.
5. **Our newsletters are available in bulk orders: 50 copies for \$30; 100 copies for \$55. We pay shipping on all bulk orders. Mini-bulk order: 7 copies for \$5.00. These prices are for the United States only.**
6. For a free subscription to receive our newsletter write us.

Send for above requests to:

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e-mail: jesuspeoplemin@sbcglobal.net

website: <http://www.mission.org/jesuspeople>



Places where we have sent free Christian literature for the last 37 years:

U.S.A.- every state	France	Liberia, W. Africa	
American Samoa	Finland	Madagascar	
Argentina, S. America	Germany	Malawi, Africa	
Australia	Ghana, W. Africa	Malaysia	
Belgian Congo, Africa	Greece	Mexico	
Belgium	Greenland	Micronesia	
Belize, C. America	Guam	Mozambique, Africa	
Benin W. Africa	Guinea, Africa	Myanmar	
Botswana, Africa	Guyana, S. America	Namibia, S. Africa	
Brazil, S. America	Haiti	Nepal	
Bulgaria	Hong Kong, China	Netherlands	
Burma	Hungary	New Zealand	
Cameroon, W. Africa	Iceland	Niger, Central Africa	
Canada	India	Nigeria, W. Africa	
Chad, Africa	Indonesia	Norway	
China	Ireland	Pakistan	
Colombia. S. America	Israel	Panama	
Cuba	Italy	Philippines	
Denmark	Ivory Coast, W. Africa	Poland	
Ecuador, S. America	Jamaica, W. Indies	Portugal	
Egypt	Japan	Puerto Rico	
England	Kenya, E. Africa	Republic of Congo, Africa	
Ethiopia, E. Africa	Kuwait	Republic of S. Africa	
			Rhodesia (Zimbabwe), S. Africa
			Rwanda, Africa
			Romania
			Russia
			Scotland
			Sierra Leone, W. Africa
			Singapore
			South Korea
			Spain
			Sri-Lanka
			Sweden
			Switzerland
			Taiwan
			Tanzania, E. Africa
			Thailand
			Tibet
			Togo, W. Africa
			Trinidad, W. Indies
			Uganda, Africa
			Ukraine
			Zambia, Africa

Free literature goes out constantly

REDEEMED!

10 WAYS TO GET OUT OF THE GAY LIFE, IF YOU WANT OUT

BY CHARLENE E. COTHRAN, VENUS MAGAZINE PUBLISHER

OVER THE PAST 29 YEARS OF MY LIFE I have been an aggressive, creative and strategic supporter of gay and lesbian issues. I've organized and participated in countless marches and various lobbying efforts in the fight for equal treatment of gay men and lesbians. I have kept current on the issues and made financial contributions to those organizations doing work about which I was most passionate.

As the publisher of a 13 year old periodical which targets Black gays and lesbians, I have had the opportunity to publicly address thousands, influencing closeted people to 'come out' and stand up for themselves, which is particularly difficult in the African-American community.

But now, I must come out of the closet again. I have recently experienced the power of change that came over me once I completely surrendered to the teachings of Jesus Christ. As a believer of the word of God, I fully accept and have always known that same-sex relationships are not what God intended for us.

I don't expect that this message will be widely received, quite the contrary. But, I do know that there is someone, possibly reading this very article, who is tired and unhappy living this way. Someone, in your heart of hearts, is searching for a way out, but you just can't seem to break free on your own. I am speaking to my gay and lesbian brothers and sisters who want real peace; the kind you've heard about, sung about, read about. It is simpler than you think to acquire it and there is no condemnation once you've entered it.

Although I have lived as a lesbian for my entire adult life, it is without a doubt my soul's purpose to use my gifts to LOVINGLY share the truth about how we got here: how we came to be gay or lesbian, how we came to enjoy our 'lifestyle' and how we came to believe that this was OK with God. [Romans 1:21-28]

Many argue that each individual should determine for themselves what God intends for him or her. This would indicate that we each have a separate set of biblical rules to live by. This is untrue. If you are ready for change and willing to open yourself to the truth, God's love can bring your current belief system in line with His Word. Jesus will cleanse and forgive all confessed sin from a willing heart. Homosexuality is only one of them. It is no greater sin than any of the others, but it is sin.

By now you're asking, 'Has she lost her mind? My answer is NO. I didn't lose it, I gave it away! In fact, I traded it in for a new one! [Romans 12:1-2]

ONE TUESDAY MORNING

I WAS MINDING my own business one fine New Jersey morning when I received a call from a local pastor, the Rev. Vanessa M. Livingston. I had never spoken to her previously. She was calling to add a statement to an article about her gospel groups in another paper we own called the Kitchen Table News.

I don't remember how we got on the subject of salvation but she could not have known how much I had been struggling with trying to reckon my spiritual upbringing with my lesbian lifestyle.

My stiff-necked resistance to the truth arose in me as she ministered. I honestly figured that if I simply mentioned the 'L' word that she'd drop the phone, anoint it with oil and that would be the last I'd hear from her. But that's not what happened. The pastor prophetically confirmed what I've known for years, 'one day you will come out of that world and bring many gay and lesbian souls out with you.' She asked if today was the day that I would choose but I said no. I felt the power of conviction upon me as she spoke but I resisted and hardened my heart against the truth as I had done many times before. I was not willing to hear her or give up my all to God, especially knowing that I had a confirmed speaking engagement scheduled the following week at the Schomberg Center during New York City Gay Pride.

HAVE MERCY

AS I BLURTED out that I was a proud card-carrying lesbian, the pastor reminded me that God's mercy allowed me to survive my experiences as He developed my gifts, all as a part of His plan to lead others to Him, others who will not perhaps hear her or other ministers who have not LIVED this experience.

She could not have had a clue about my encounters with the mercies of God. Mercy had indeed covered me during those dark 1993 days when my good friend Venus Landin, for whom this magazine is named, was shot and killed. I recalled how I went with her to her ex-lover's home to recover her things, how the woman had built a fire using Venus' precious journals as fuel, how she burned her clothes and how the flames and debris had fallen out of the fireplace's box and were ablaze along the carpet.

I remember the look on the woman's face and in her eyes. I know in my heart that she had intended to murder Venus that night but she did not expect me to arrive with her. There, I stood at the very gates of hell. Given her state of mind, there was no reason for the woman not to have killed us both, then turn the gun on herself as she did Venus a week later. When I received the call that they were both found dead, I knew instantly that mercy had covered me, but why?

I YIELD

THE SPIRIT OF God spoke directly into my soul and said you will choose this day who you will serve and if you make the wrong choice, I will allow you to drift so far away from me that you will never hear my voice again.

I gave God my heart and soul in the parking lot of the mall, right there in my car. A river of tears flowed as Jesus washed me and forgave me and redeemed me for His work. I intend to be just as 'out' about my transformation as I was about my lesbian life. I have given every gift I have back to God,

including VENUS Magazine. The target audience will remain the same but the mission has been renewed. Our new mission is to encourage, educate and assist those in the life who want change but can't find a way out. My brother, my sister, please follow me out of this.

1. Establish and accept for yourself that God's Word is true AS-IS. Do not allow gay theology to divorce the Old Testament from the New or the written words of the Apostles from the spoken words of Jesus Christ. This is a good trick, but it's no longer working because God is preparing to bring millions of gays and lesbians back to His feet. He has already chosen many of us for this specific purpose and He is waiting for YOU to accept His call.

2. Seek the truth within the scriptures about homosexuality and it will be revealed to you as you read and pray. Know that we were NOT born this way. This myth was fashioned by the gay establishment as a basis for changing laws in favor of gay rights. Again it works for their purposes, but it is biblically UNTRUE. There is no way that anyone, without an agenda, can come away from the Bible with an endorsement by God of the gay lifestyle. Gay theology starts with an agenda ['Let's make the Bible say gay is O.K.'] in order to arrive at its conclusions, but it is a lie.

3. Do not resist God's call on your life. Get alone with God and let Him minister the truth directly to you. That conviction you feel is a gift to keep you near the cross. If you keep resisting Him and hardening your heart, He will eventually stop calling you. You can then have a great time fulfilling all the fantasies of the flesh without feeling a thing, but what awaits you at the end of such a life?

4. Know with certainty that You are loved by God exactly where you are and that your experiences are of great value for kingdom work. I have BEEN tired, but the enemy kept my mind trapped for years by convincing me that I could not be of any real use to God having lived as an openly gay publisher, but that was a lie.

5. Say Yes. That's really all it takes to accept the truth which is accepting Jesus Christ. Pray this prayer of repentance with me now. "Lord, I'm coming to you because I believe your Word and I need your help. I can't change myself, I've tried. Please forgive me for every thing I've done that did not glorify you. I believe that you ARE the Word, I believe that Jesus IS your son, I believe that He DIED for my sins, and BECAUSE I believe this, I AM NOW SAVED BY YOUR GRACE. Thank you for saving me! Amen." [A prayer for all sinners.]

6. Make your salvation real. Keeping the good news of your personal salvation a secret is another trick the enemy uses to buy time as he tries to pull you back to your former life. We must believe with our hearts AND confess with our mouths. You need to 'out' yourself by immediately sharing your testimony with SOMEONE about how the Lord has revealed the truth directly to you; about the level of joy and peace you now

have which you could not reach without full repentance; about the welcomed change this brings in your life, and all the wonderful things He has done for you. [Romans 10:9]

7. Experience paradise NOW! Consult God first, then go ahead and live your life! Welcome new friendships, start that new venture, expand your experiences, obtain nice things, just don't put them before God. Enjoy your life to a new degree, without the burden of sin AND with the confidence of ALL of God's promises on your side! It is totally possible to live for God in this present age and enjoy yourself immensely. When I say live for God I mean totally 'sold out' for God. But you cannot be 'sold out' for God and live a gay/lesbian lifestyle at the same time. [Titus 2:11-12]

It is possible to have a BETTER time than you did in the clubs, in the parks, BETTER than all those secret encounters with folks whose names you've long forgotten, BETTER than your long-term relationship, BETTER than all your priceless possessions, BETTER than money! Most of us have experienced some of this AND WE WERE STILL MISERABLE. But thanks to God's mercy and saving grace we don't have to wait years and years to get to heaven to experience paradise. The earth is the Lord's, the fullness thereof, the world, and they that dwell therein. Enjoy God's earth, now. [Psalms 24:1]

8. Walk Carefully or 'circumspectly' as the scriptures describe. This is about being careful to keep your spirit clean and fresh. Prayer, along with reading and hearing the Word AND seeking ways to apply it to your daily life is the way to STAY saved and delivered from any sinful habit.

Isn't it interesting that we sometimes give our garments of clothing more care than we give our very souls. When we put on an outfit, we're so careful not to lean against anything that might soil it. We protect it while we're eating so as not to get a spot on it. We sit in such a way to prevent it from wrinkling. Treat your soul's salvation with at least this much care. [Ephesians 5:15-16]

9. Have fellowship with believers. We know that the church has largely failed gays and lesbians by not being a welcoming place for those who have sought spiritual change. The invitation to 'come as you are' seems to be extended to everyone but us. However, God has people everywhere who are open, real and willing to walk out with you. Ask the Lord to lead you to a loving, caring, Bible-believing fellowship where you can be nurtured, be blessed, grow AND be a blessing. [Hebrews 10:25]

10. Stay in touch. We'd love to hear from you! If this article has helped you, please let us know. Also, if you'd like to share YOUR testimony with VENUS readers, email us at editor@venusmagazine.org or write CHARLENE E. COTHRAN MINISTRIES, BOX 353378, PALM COAST, FL 32135

COURTESY OF ACMTC, HC 60, BOX 11, FENCE LAKE, NM 87315
FOR FREE LITERATURE, WRITE TO ACMTC OR EMAIL THEM
AT: livingword@aggressivechristianity.net

We do NOT have a Pen-Pal Program.

WE GET LETTERS Thousands of them – Here are a few



Jesus People.

..... Please send me your free literature on the Lord Jesus Christ.

Satya Sheel Tandon, Delhi, India

Dear Brother,

I'm doing 99 years... Please send me some more Christian books for my spiritual growth.

Juan Jaimes, State Prison, Livingston, TX

Tom,

Thank you for the bundle of your tracts "God's Simple Plan of Salvation". I pass them out here on the street....

Larry Barnhizer, Manteca, CA

Dear Jesus People,

Please send me Dave Hunt's book against Calvinism "What Love is This?". It will be put to good use in here....

George Aduddell, State Prison, Corcoran, CA

Brothers,

Sorry to take so long on last Bible lesson... The stuff you sent me is being used to win souls in here I assure you....

Terrence Bell, Mound Correctional Facility, Detroit, MI

Jesus People,

Please send me your magazine advertised in Christianity Today that exposes frauds like Benny Hinn and Todd Bently...

Henry Ceslewski, Lakewood, OH

Dear Jesus People,

I thank God our Father of our Lord Jesus Christ for the free newsletter and gospel tracts you sent me. I have discovered how helpless I am without Him....

Les Montgomery, Elmira Heights, NY

Jesus People,

Please send me your newsletter exposing frauds in the church....

C. Uran, Provo, Utah

Jesus People,

I'd like your free Bible course....

J. Melon, State Prison, Nashville, TN

Jesus People,

I want to thank you for all the very informative books you send to me. I gratefully read them and pass them on... In 2001 I was gunned down by gang members. In here I was stabbed in the stomach with a knife... Please pray for me...

Jason Hawkins, Ironwood Prison, Blythe, CA

Jesus People,

I'm way out here in the desert doing a one year discipleship at Centrum Ministries. I was very moved when I found and read one of your newsletters here. Please send your newsletters to my two friends still in Prison...

Jason Jensen, Pahrump, NV

Greetings Brother,

Thanks for all the material on Jehovah's Witnesses. I showed it to one man here who has a little boy and how they don't allow blood transfusions because they don't know how to interpret the Bible....

Daniel Barker, Pleasant Valley State Prison, Coalinga, CA

Dear Brother,

Please send me your free Bible Course....

Troy Fitzgerald, Marion County Jail, Ocala, FL

Dear Tom,

I don't know how I got your newsletter but I'm glad. I am a Christian... Please keep up the good work. Your fellow servant in Christ,

John Shank, Editor, Military Magazine, Sacramento, CA

Dear Tom,

I remember in 1960 we knew each other... I still remember the unbelievable car wreck you had... I remember how gifted you were but also crazy and seemed determined to self-destruct... After you left Florida all I heard was that you had become a "Jesus Hippie". From your testimony I'm glad you met the right girl...

Bill Gallaher, Antioch, TN

Editor: Yes, good to hear from old friends and yes, I had a wreck in summer of 1960. Rolled my car seven times. Had my body packed in ice and was in a coma for one week – even that didn't change me. Nothing could change my wild life but Jesus Christ. He is the truth worth living for!

Greetings,

I'm in prison right now... A Christian brother wrote me and told me you had the best free Bible course and I would like it...

Larry Crumb, Prison, Dixon, IL

Jesus People,

Please send me free Bible...

Cesar Armenta, State Prison, Florence, AZ

Jesus People Center,

Hello.... Please send us Bibles and study books...

Pastor Nasser Hamalile, Copperbelt, Zambia, Africa

Dear Sir,

I'm in prison here... I'd like your Bible studies....

Shawn Jones, Polk County Justice Center, Benton, TN

Tom,

Please send me a book on your list... The preacher here says anyone speaking in tongues today is of the Devil...

Abel Acosta, Cal. State Prison, Tehachapi, CA

Dear Tom,

Thank you for the newsletters and Christian books...

Vince Barrios, County Jail, San Jose, CA

Jesus People,
I'm requesting one Bible for my own, we can only check them out for a short while here...
Beverly Brockett, Valley Women's Prison, Chowchilla, CA

Jesus People,
Please sign me up for your free Bible course...
Russ Burch, Martin Correctional Inst., Indiantown, FL

Jesus People,
Please send me 4 or 5 of your free newsletters. I want to give them to a few of my students. I saw your ad in Military Magazine.
Professor Richard Liba, Michigan Technological Univ.
Houghton, MI

Sir,
I came to know your organization by others you helped... We need tracts, CDs, Bibles as we go house to house preaching Jesus here...
Tim James, Prakasam District, India

To Whom It May Concern
.... I heard about free magazines and books you send out, please send me some...
Christina Teska, Women's Prison, Corona, CA

Hi People,
Please send me your books and magazines. I don't want to forget God's word...
Ruby Bash, Valley State Women's Prison, Chowchilla, CA

Dear Mr. Adcock,
I want to say thank you for all the books you sent me...
Zam Lam Thang, Yangon, Myanmar

Dear Brothers,
I'm enclosing my completed lesson and I thank you for the book about the Sabbath Day questions. I see now Jesus is my Sabbath Rest...
Victor Perez, Kern Valley Prison, Delano, CA

Greetings,
I learned about you from a pen-pal. I would love your magazines and Christian books...
David Patterson, Low Security Corr. Inst., Butner, NC

Attention,
I'm writing to ask for a Spanish Study Bible... I thank you if you can help me. Jesus is doing a great work even in such a place as this...
Frank Burton, Prison, Houtzdale, PA

Dear Jesus People,
I love my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I'm locked up due to bad choices I made. I've read some of the books you have sent here... I would love more Christian reading material from you...Michelle Dittrich, Valley Women's Prison, Chowchilla, CA

Jesus People,
Please keep sending me your free newsletters...
Francis Rajathurai, Singapore

Counselor,
Please see it in your heart to gift me a Bible. I will be very grateful...
Sheila Simpson, County Jail, Clearwater, FL

Jesus People,
I'm Mexican and accused of bad crimes.... I want to change my life so bad
Ricardo Morales, State Prison, Florence, AZ

Tom,
Thank you for the books "Rebellion In The Church" by B. Koerselman. I will put them in appropriate hands and David Servant's book "The Great Gospel Deception"...
Dr. Twilah Fox, Tulsa, OK

Jesus People,
I would like to learn more about the word of God...
Richard Parrish, State Prison, Huntsville, TX

Jesus People,
Please send me your wonderful Christian books...
Lupe Jaureau, Valley Women's Prison, Chowchilla, CA

Dear Tom,
Grace and Peace... Wow your newsletter I requested got here fast.. It is wonderful and so desperately needed... I have shared it widely... Ken Copeland, Joyce Meyer, Duplantis, Benny Hinn, Creflo Dollar and all the rest of the prosperity preachers have deceived so many people in prison here in Canada... I need help to correct these false teachings...
Ryan Gabourie, Prison, Saskatoon Sask, Canada

Dear Sir, I read your website, so good and Biblical articles... Please send us some literature as we try to save the Muslims in northern area of our country...
Peter Ndegwa, Kenya, Africa

Dear Sir,
I greet you... I am in charge here of one-to-one evangelism and we need tracts and Bibles for those who are serious...
Delroy Stephenson, Kingston, Jamaica, West Indies

Friends,
I'd like to get all your newsletters. I read one a friend in here showed me...
Bruce Windsor, Prison, Canada

Jesus People,
I have got now Jesus Christ as my Savior by reading your tract, "Beyond The Sunset"...
Chanka Thompson, Ondo State, Nigeria

Jesus People,
I read Bernie Koerselman's book Rebellion In the Church, and want so bad to follow now the teachings of Jesus. I do witness to other inmates but want to make sure I follow Jesus the right way myself...
David Henderson, Waupun Corr. Inst., Waupun, WI

Jesus People,
Please send me your free magazines...
Robert Castorena, Sacramento, County Jail, Sacramento, CA

Jesus People,
You helped me before... Can you give me books on the following cults we have in here...
Jose Torres, Eastern Correctional Facility, Napanoch, NY

Jesus People Information Center,
I just received today the beautiful books and literature you sent me. Thank you! I will pass them on after I read them. I'm sure God will bless your generosity. When I look around here inside this place and read newspapers from outside I know many people will not escape God's wrath. Why don't they see eternal life or eternal punishment is the only important thing?...
James Brashears, State Prison, Avenal, CA

Hi,
I'm here in prison... I would like to get any and all Christian guidance you can give me. I am a Roman Catholic, but I am seeking the true way of God. I am also now an ex gang member and have turned that page in my life...
Steve Barrara, McConnell Unit, Beeville, TX

Dear Brothers in Christ,
God put me the responsibility of leading six lay missionaries to go into asylums, hospitals, and prisons here and we spread God's word from home to home also. We need booklets, tracts and Bibles or New Testaments to give to new converts...
Luis Fortes Dos Santos, Brazil, South America

Jesus People,
Please I saw your ad in the Christian Examiner newspaper for your free newsletter exposing false prophets in the church...
David Theis, Sayre, OK

Editor: I have to pay for these ads to give away free material. I need regular financial help to do this.

Dear Jesus People,
Hello, please send me all your old newsletters and send all new ones. We desperately need this truth in here...
David Johnson, Mule Creek State Prison, Ione, CA

Dear Partner,
I am a protestant chaplain here. Please keep sending your Bible courses to the men here...
Chaplain Alan Tofflemire, Putnamville, Corr. Facility, Greencastle, IN

J.P.I.C.
I saw your ad in Christianity Today about false prophets in the church. I need this information...
Abraham Koech, Kenya, Africa

Jesus People,
You wrote a newsletter about Todd Bentley, Benny Hinn and Ken Copeland last June 2008. I would like to see this please.
Teresa Lopez, State Prison, Gatesville, TX

Jesus People,
I'm 42, widowed and here for drugs, possession of firearms and escape from prison. I've had it. I would please like your free Bible course...
James Bailey, Red Onion State Prison, Pound, VA

Jesus People,
Please send me your books about the false prosperity preachers and false prophets in the church...
Tommie McDowell, Ely State Prison, Ely, NV

Hello,
I'm here in SHU program and please send me Bible studies by Ken Copeland and Morris Cerrullo...
Elizabeth Cotton, Valley Women's Prison, Chowchilla, CA

Editor: I sent her a Bible study against almost everything Copeland and Cerrullo teach.

Jesus People,
I am a woman age 21. I would like some of your studies on the Bible...
Cecilia Kotima, Malawi, Africa

Hi,
I went on the internet and found you. Please send your excellent newsletters like ones you have on your website and send my friend in prison a Bible...
Tavia Larson, Glendora, CA

Editor: No more. Prisoners must write us. Too many incorrect addresses, or prisoner gets transferred, etc. Plus I only give away expensive books to those inmates who want them. If they are serious at all, they have to write us themselves.

Sirs,
Please send me information about masonry...
John Mears, Prison, Dallas, PA

Dear Brother,
I have distributed many of your free tracts in the inner city Houston, Texas area. Now I am in a situation where many Muslims, Mormons and Jehovah's Witnesses are converting people and I need your tracts on these subjects. Sorry to say, I'm temporarily in jail...
Roy Hall, Pinellas County Jail, Clearwater, FL

Sir,
Can you help me with Bible study books?...
Larry White, Prison, Calico Rock, AZ

Jesus People,
Please help me with your free literature. My mother-in-law supports the fraud Benny Hinn and I want facts to show her.
Ken Thompson, Bellefonte, PA

Hi,
I would love to get your Christian newsletters...
Victor Garcia, Orange County Jail, Santa Ana, CA

Jesus People,
I thank you so much for the global priority mail parcel you sent me... It is good Bible teaching. You sent me the Bible and book "The Believers Conditional Security". The magazine about errors of 7th Day Adventists, two Jesus People newsletters, a media Spotlight magazine, 10 tracts and 4 cassette tapes. I am so glad to receive these all from you.
Pastor Moses Chikuta, Malawi Africa

Dear Jesus People,
I just love you and the newsletters you have been sending me.
If I had money I would buy some books. I am learning to know the Lord better. If you have anything I can have free about 7th Day Adventists and Jehovah's Witnesses I would like it...
Janice Minch, Sacramento, CA

Tom,
Enjoyed speaking to you on the phone...I'm recommending your free Bible course to men serving life sentences...
Chaplain Joseph Dulmage, Volunteers of America, Alexandria, VA

Hello,
I am a Christian but it is so hard to be a follower of Christ in here. I'm doing my best and then I found a tract of yours in here and it made me remember what Jesus did for me and brought me out of my depression. I am an ex-druggie gang member... Please send me your free newsletter and other tracts...
Jennifer Deveraux, Women's Federal Correctional Inst., Dublin CA

Jesus People,
Please add me to your mailing list for Christian readings...
Jason Wayo, Jefferson Correctional Inst., Monticello, FL

Jesus People,
I was given your address by another prisoner. I'm 42 and I've got a sad story. No one in my family ever hugged me...
Adam cook, Prison, Vacaville, CA

Jesus People,
The chaplain here gave me your address to write. I please want a Bible. I can read, my eyes aren't good. All the Bibles the Chaplain has have very, very small print...
Gerald Cruse, State Prison, Brickeys, AR

Greetings,
I am pastor of New Testament Church here and we need books...
Pastor Edward Grabovenko, Perm, Russia

Dear Sir,
Greetings... May you kindly, as the Lord provides, send me Christian readings....
Nestor Rodriguez, State Prison, Lancaster, CA

Jesus People,
Hello... Can you send me some of your true books about prisoners getting saved?...
Stephen Sares, Gabilan Prison Conservation Camp, Soledad, CA

Jesus People,
I found a book you sent here. It was an explanation and breakdown of the 10 Commandments... Like God meant "do not murder" not "do not kill," etc.... I appreciate and need help to understand the Bible...
Gary Cameron, State Prison, San Luis Obispo, CA

Jesus People,
Thanks for remembering me. I loved the books "Rebellion In The Church" and "From Crime To Christ" you sent me...
Kevin Kennedy, Prison, Vacaville, CA

Jesus People,
I saw your newsletter. Do you have Bible study books you can send me?...
David Duke, Cal Men's Colony, San Luis Obispo, CA

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Like you I am not a preterist, but partial preterist...
Enclosed are 50 copies of my booklet... We can trade as you said, Send me "The Apocalypse Code" by Hanegraaff and "Before Jerusalem Fell"...
(Baptist) Pastor Thomas Williamson, Chicago, IL

Editorial comment: I was saved in 1969, read all the commentaries by J. Vernon McGee, Clarence Larkin, M.R. DeHaan, M.D, Dr. Harry A. Ironside, et al, and hundreds (plural) of books on prophecy and I was a dispensationalist for about 10 years, with a few reservations about what they taught. I continued to study. Now, I don't see any gap between the 69th and 70th week of Daniel. Ezekial's temple is not some third future physical temple. Jesus and all God's people are and will be the New Jerusalem temple. The "great tribulation" happened in the first century. I don't believe hardly anything dispensationalists teach about prophecy anymore. The Second Advent (coming of Christ) is future and could happen at any time, as is the resurrection for all the dead, the Final Judgment and the New Heaven and new earth where all believers will live forever with God. That is what I'm looking forward to. We have several books on the subject listed on our website—or you can take our Bible course and one part of it presents all the different views on the subject, in great detail, and you can make an intelligent choice yourself. It's not an essential doctrine that should divide Christians however. P.S. I strongly support the state of Israel and their right to defend themselves.

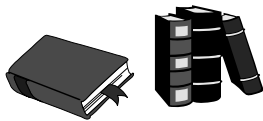
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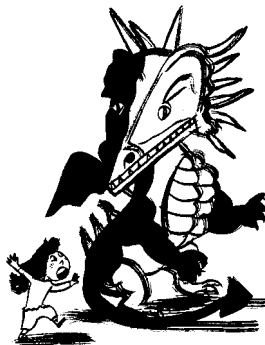
Modern Myths About Satan and Spiritual Warfare

By David Servant

MYTH #5:

“We can pull down demonic strongholds in the atmosphere through spiritual warfare.”

There is, according to Scripture, no doubt that Satan rules over a hierarchy of evil spirits who inhabit the earth's atmosphere and who assist him in ruling the kingdom of darkness. That those evil spirits are “territorial,” ruling over certain geographical areas, is a concept that is also contained in the Bible (see Dan. 10:13, 20-21; Mark 5:9-10). That Christians have the authority to cast demons out of other people and the responsibility to resist the devil is scriptural (see Mark 16:17; Jas. 4:7; 1 Pet. 5:8-9). But can Christians pull down evil spirits over cities? The answer is that they can't, and to attempt to do so is a waste of their time.



God's Word. We must be cautious in making any assumption that cannot be clearly proven from what the Bible says, or else we could find ourselves believing something that is not true.

This kind of misinterpretation is often made, however, by many Christians. Just because we can cast demons out of people, we should not assume that we can pull down evil spirits over cities. There are numerous examples of casting demons out of people in the gospels and the book of Acts, but can you think of even one example in the gospels or the book of Acts where someone pulled down an evil spirit that was ruling over a city or geographical area? You can't because there are no such examples. Can you think of one instruction anywhere in the epistles about our responsibility to pull down evil spirits from the atmosphere? No, because there are none. For this reason, we have no biblical basis to believe that we can or should be waging “spiritual warfare” against evil spirits in the atmosphere.

Extrabiblical or Unbiblical?

Errors of assumption are often justified by the argument, “I may not be able to prove what I am doing is correct according to the Bible, but you can't prove that it is incorrect either.” Claiming that there is vast difference between what is *unbiblical* and what is *extrabiblical*, they justify their practice, classifying it as not necessarily supported by Scripture, yet not refuted by Scripture either.

This is a weak argument indeed. If God wants us to know something or do something, He makes it quite clear in Scripture. Why would anyone want to practice a kind of spiritual warfare for which there is no instruction or example in the Bible? Why not rather practice that which is clearly revealed as God's will in Scripture, such as casting demons out of people, preaching the gospel, making disciples, and praying scripturally?

Moreover, as we study Scripture closely, that which may be classed by some as extrabiblical is often exposed as being very unbiblical. Such is the case with the concept of pulling down territorial spirits.

Before we expose the error of this particular myth, it would be helpful for us once again to consider another common-sense rule of sound Bible interpretation. Let's begin by looking at an example of some Christians in the Bible who misinterpreted, because of an assumption, a statement Jesus once made. Our example is found in John's gospel, and occurred after Jesus' resurrection. Upon learning from Jesus about future persecution he would suffer, Peter questioned the Lord about his fellow disciple, John:

Peter therefore seeing him [John] said to Jesus, “Lord, and what about this man?” Jesus said to him, “If I want him to remain until I come, what is that to you? You follow Me!” This saying therefore went out among the brethren that that disciple would not die; yet Jesus did not say to him that he would not die, but only, “If I want him to remain until I come, what is that to you?” (John 21:23-21).

Here is a classic example of some Christians who misinterpreted Jesus' words because they read into His statement more than He intended. Jesus never said that John would not die; He only said that if He wanted John to be alive at His return, it was His own business, and none of Peter's!

I'm sure you can see how it would have been tempting to read into Jesus' words and assume that John would not die. But we must be careful that we don't make a similar error when we interpret *any* of

Pushing Parables Too Far

Reading more meaning into the Bible than God intended is an error Christians often make when they read scripture passages containing metaphorical language. The Bible is full of comparisons, because they help us understand spiritual concepts. When Jesus said, “the kingdom of heaven is like,” He took something His listeners did understand to explain something they did not understand. Metaphors are extremely helpful in aiding the learning process.

We must not forget, however, that every comparison is imperfect, because the two things compared are not usually identical in every respect. A metaphor is defined as a comparison of things *basically unlike* but having *some* striking similarities. For this reason, we must be cautious that we do not force a meaning upon a metaphor that God never intended. For example, Jesus once said:

“The kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet cast into the sea, and gathering fish of every kind; and when it was filled, they drew it up on the beach; and they sat down, and gathered the good fish into containers, but the bad they threw away (Matt. 13:47-48, emphasis added).

What did Jesus mean in this comparison? Like most of His parables, He wanted to convey one point. In this case, He wanted us to know that not everyone will automatically get into the kingdom of heaven, but that there will be a separation into two categories, good and bad. But that is where the similarities between His story of the gathered fish and the kingdom of heaven end.

Certainly Jesus was not trying to teach us that the kingdom of heaven will consist of fish! Or that the good fish in heaven will be put into containers! Or, if you are smart enough to realize that the fish in the story represent people, Jesus does not want us to think that those people are going to be caught in a big dragnet or that their judgment before God will take place on a beach! Moreover, Jesus was not trying to teach us, as “good fish,” that our good works earns our salvation. Any of these conclusions would be reading more into His parable than He intended.

Yet how often this is done by some who try to read meaning into every minor detail of Jesus’ more lengthy and detailed parables. They end up confused, because they fail to realize that in every comparison, at some point, similarities turn to dissimilarities.

Because Scripture so often contains metaphorical language, we must be careful that we don’t fall into

that trap, as unfortunately, many who teach about spiritual warfare have done. Satan is a master at twisting Scripture (see Matt. 4:5-7). He loves it when we misinterpret what God says.

“Pulling Down Strongholds”

The Bible does sometimes use military terminology when describing the Christian’s responsibility. Yet, in those cases, we must ask ourselves if we are “pushing the parables too far,” by reading more into metaphorical language than was meant. For example, a classic text that is often misinterpreted is 2 Corinthians 10:3-6:

For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ, and we are ready to punish all disobedience, whenever your obedience is complete (2 Cor. 10:3-6).

The *King James Version*, rather than saying “we are destroying speculations,” says we are “pulling down strongholds.” From this one metaphorical phrase, practically an entire theology has been built to defend the idea of doing “spiritual warfare” in order to “pull down the strongholds” consisting of evil spirits in the atmosphere. But as the *New American Standard Version* clearly conveys, Paul is speaking, not of evil spirits in the atmosphere, but of strongholds of false beliefs that exist in people’s minds. *Speculations* are what Paul was destroying, not wicked spirits in high places.

This becomes even clearer as we read contextually. Paul said, “We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against *the knowledge of God*, and we are taking every *thought* captive to the obedience of Christ” (emphasis added). The battle of which Paul symbolically writes is a battle against thoughts, or ideas that are contrary to the true knowledge of God.

Using military metaphors, Paul explains that we are in a battle, a battle for the minds of people who have believed the lies of Satan. Our primary weapon in this battle is the truth, which is why we’ve been commanded to go into the entire world and preach the gospel, invading enemy territory with a message that can set captives free. The fortresses we are destroying have been built with building blocks of lies, joined by the mortar of deception.

If you will take the time to read all of the tenth chapter of Paul's second letter to the Corinthians, you will see that he makes no mention there of wicked spiritual powers, even though we know (and he knew) that wicked spirits are involved in spreading lies. Therefore, in this particular passage, evil spirits were not the "strongholds" of which He was thinking when he wrote. To say that Paul's words in 2 Corinthians 10:3-6 prove that we can and should practice pulling down evil spirits in the atmosphere is an obvious misrepresentation of what Paul actually meant.

If Paul did mean that we should pull down evil spirits in the atmosphere, we would have to wonder why he himself never practiced what he preached, as there is no mention of him ever doing it in the history of his ministry as recorded in the book of Acts.

The Whole Armor of God

Another passage in Paul's writings that is often misinterpreted is found in his Ephesian letter:

Finally, be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of His might. Put on the full armor of God, that you may be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore, take up the full armor of God, that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. Stand firm therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming missiles of the evil one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God (Eph. 6:10-17).

May I initially point out that although this passage is definitely about the Christian's struggle with the devil and evil spirits, there is no mention of pulling down evil spirits over cities. As we study the passage closely, it becomes clear that Paul is primarily writing about each individual's responsibility to resist Satan's schemes *in his personal life* by applying the truth of God's Word.

Notice also the evident metaphorical language of the entire passage. Paul obviously was not speaking of a literal, material armor that Christians should put

on their bodies. Rather, the armor of which he speaks is figurative. Those pieces of armor represent the various scriptural truths that Christians should use for protection against the devil and evil spirits. By knowing, believing, and acting upon God's Word, Christians are, figuratively speaking, clothed in God's protective armor.

Let's examine this passage in Ephesians verse by verse, while asking ourselves, *What was Paul really trying to convey to us?*

The Source of Our Spiritual Strength

First, we are told to "be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of His might" (Eph. 6:10). The emphasis is on the fact that we should *not* derive our strength from ourselves but God. This is further brought out in Paul's next statement: "Put on the full armor of God" (Eph. 6:11a). This is God's armor, not ours. Paul is not saying that God Himself wears armor, but that we need the armor that God has supplied for us.

Why do we need this armor that God has supplied? The answer is, "that you may be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil" (Eph. 6:11b). That is the reason. This armor is primarily for *defensive*, not offensive use. It is not so we can go out and pull down evil spirits over cities; it is so we can *stand firm against* Satan's schemes.

We learn that the devil has evil plans to attack us, and unless we are wearing the armor that God supplies, we are vulnerable. Notice also that it is *our* responsibility to put on the armor, not God's.

Let's continue:

For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places (Eph. 6:12).

Here it becomes crystal clear that Paul is not talking about a physical, material battle, but a spiritual one. We are struggling against the schemes of various ranks of evil spirits whom Paul lists. Most Bible students assume that Paul listed those evil spirits as they are ranked from bottom to top, "rulers" being the lowest class and "spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places" being the highest class.

How can we struggle against spiritual beings? That question can be answered by asking, *How can spiritual beings attack us?* They attack us primarily with temptations, thoughts, suggestions, and ideas that contradict God's Word and will. Therefore,

our defense is knowing, believing, and obeying God's Word.

"Therefore, take up the full armor of God, that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm" (Eph. 6:13).

Notice, once again, that Paul's purpose is to equip us to *stand* against Satan's attacks. His purpose is not to equip us to go out and attack Satan and pull down evil spirits from the atmosphere. Three times in this passage Paul tells us to *stand firm*. Our position is one of defense, not offense.

This is not to say that we never take an offensive stand, but that this passage is primarily speaking of maintaining a strong defense. When we proclaim the gospel, for example, we are definitely "invading enemy territory" in an offensive measure.

Also, notice that it is our responsibility to take up the armor and to stand firm. *God will not do it for us.*

Truth—Our Primary Defense

Stand firm therefore, having girded your loins with truth...(Eph. 6:14a).

Here is what keeps our armor in place—the truth. What is the truth? Jesus said to His Father, "Thy word is truth" (John 17:17). We cannot successfully stand firm against Satan unless we know the truth with which we can counter his lies. Jesus beautifully demonstrated this during His temptation in the wilderness as He responded to Satan's every suggestion with, "It is written..."

Paul continued:

"...and having put on the breastplate of righteousness...(Eph. 6:14b).

As Christians, we should be familiar with two kinds of righteousness. First, we have been given, as a gift, the righteousness of Christ (see 2 Cor. 5:21). His righteous standing has been imputed to those who believe in Jesus, who bore their sins on the cross. That righteous standing has delivered us from Satan's dominion.

Second, we should be living righteously, obeying Jesus' commands, and that is probably what Paul had in mind regarding the breastplate of righteousness. By obedience to Christ, we give no place to the devil (see Eph. 4:26-27).

Firm Footing in Gospel Shoes

"...and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace..." (Eph. 6:15)

Knowing, believing and acting upon the truth of *the gospel* gives us firm footing to stand against Satan's attacks. The shoes that Roman soldiers wore had spikes on the bottom that gave them a firm grip on the battlefield. When we know that Jesus has died for our sins and been raised from the dead for our justification, Satan's lies are unable to knock us off our feet.

Paul specifically refers here to "the gospel of peace." We now have "peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 5:1). We are no longer enemies with God.

"...in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming missiles of the evil one (Eph. 6:16).

Notice again Paul's emphasis here on our defensive posture. He is not talking about our pulling down demons over cities. He is talking about our using faith in God's Word to resist the devil's lies. When we believe and act upon what God has said, it is like having a shield that protects us from Satan's lies, represented figuratively as the "flaming missiles of the evil one."

Our Spiritual Sword—God's Word

"And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God" (Eph. 6:17).

Salvation, as the Bible describes it, includes our deliverance from Satan's captivity. God has "delivered us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son" (Col. 1:13). Knowing this is like having a helmet that guards our minds from believing Satan's lie that we are still under his dominion. Satan is no longer our master—Jesus is.

Additionally, we are to take "the sword of the Spirit" which, as Paul explains, is figurative for the Word of God. As I already mentioned, Jesus was the perfect example of a spiritual warrior who skillfully wielded His spiritual sword. During His temptation in the wilderness He responded to Satan each time by quoting directly from God's Word. So too, if we are to defeat the devil in spiritual combat, we must know and believe what God has said, lest we fall for his lies.

Also notice that Jesus used "the sword of the Spirit" *defensively*. Some like to point out, to those of us who maintain that the armor of which Paul wrote is primarily defensive, that a sword is definitely an offensive weapon. Thus, with a very weak argument, they try to justify their theory that this passage in

Ephesians 6:10-12 is applicable to our supposed responsibility to offensively “pull down strongholds” of evil spirits in the heavenly places.

Obviously, from reading Paul’s own reason why Christians should put on God’s armor (that they may “stand firm against the schemes of the devil”), we know that he is speaking primarily of a defensive use of the armor. Additionally, although a sword can be thought of as an offensive weapon, it can also be thought of as defensive, as it blocks and protects from the thrusts of the opponent’s sword.

Moreover, we must be careful that we don’t strain the entire metaphor, as we attempt to wrench from the various pieces of armor significance that really doesn’t exist. When we begin to argue about the defensive and offensive nature of a sword, we are very likely “pushing the parable too far” as we carve into pieces a simple metaphor that was never meant to be so dissected.

Most importantly, notice that every piece of the armor which Paul described relates somehow to the truth of the Word of God. Knowing, believing, and acting upon God’s Word are the ways we overcome Satan’s schemes against us.

Didn’t Jesus Instruct Us to “Bind the Strong Man”?

Three times in the Gospels we find Jesus making mention of “binding the strong man.” In none of those three cases, however, did He tell His followers that “binding the strong man” was something they should practice. Let’s examine exactly what Jesus did say, and let’s read what He said contextually:

And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem were saying, “He is possessed by Beelzebul,” and “He casts out the demons by the ruler of the demons.” And He called them to Himself and began speaking to them in parables, “How can Satan cast out Satan? And if a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. And if a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand. And if Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand, but he is finished! *But no one can enter the strong man’s house and plunder his property unless he first binds the strong man, and then he will plunder his house.* Truly I say to you, all sins shall be forgiven the sons of men, and whatever blasphemies they utter; but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin”—because they were saying, “He has an unclean spirit” (Mark 3:23-30, emphasis added).

Notice that Jesus was not teaching His followers to bind any strong men. Rather, He was responding to the criticism of the Jerusalem scribes with unassailable logic and a clear metaphor.

They accused Him of casting out demons by using demonic power. He responded by saying that Satan would be insane to work against himself. No one can intelligently argue with that.

If it wasn’t Satan’s power that Jesus used to cast out demons, then whose power was He using? It had to be a power stronger than Satan’s. It had to be God’s power, the power of the Holy Spirit. Thus Jesus spoke metaphorically of Satan, comparing him to a strong man guarding his possessions. The only one able to take the strong man’s possessions would be someone even stronger, namely, Himself. This was the true explanation as to how He cast out demons.

Satan is the “strong man,” and Jesus is the one who overpowered him to plunder his house. Isn’t that exactly what Jesus did through His sacrificial death? He broke Satan’s power over all those who would believe in Jesus. His casting out of demons was a foreshadowing of an even greater deliverance that He would accomplish for Satan’s captives.

Jesus concluded by warning those scribes of the great danger they were in by attributing to Satan the work of the Holy Spirit.

This passage that mentions the strong man, as well as the similar ones found in Matthew and Luke, cannot be used to justify our “binding strong men” over cities. Additionally, when we examine the rest of the New Testament, we do not find any examples of anyone “binding strong men” over cities, or any instruction for anyone to do so. We can thus safely conclude that it is unscriptural for any Christian to attempt to bind and render powerless some supposed “strong man-evil spirit” over a city or geographic area.

What About “Binding on Earth and in Heaven”?

Only twice in the gospels do we find Jesus’ words, “Whatever you shall bind on earth shall be [or ‘have been’] bound in heaven, and whatever you shall loose on earth shall be [or ‘have been’] loosed in heaven.” Both instances are recorded in Matthew’s gospel.

Was Jesus teaching us that we can and should “bind” demonic spirits in the atmosphere?

First, let’s consider His words, *binding* and *loosing*. Jesus’ use of those words is *obviously* metaphorical, as He certainly did not mean that His followers would be taking physical ropes or cords and literally

binding anything or literally loosing anything that was bound with physical ropes or cords. Jesus must have used the words *binding* and *loosing* figuratively. What did He mean?

For the answer, we should look at His use of the words *binding* and *loosing* within the context of whatever He was speaking of at the time. Was He talking on the subject of evil spirits? If so, we could conclude that His words about binding have application to the binding of evil spirits.

Let's examine the first passage where Jesus mentioned binding and loosing:

He [Jesus] said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" And Simon Peter answered and said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." And Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades shall not overpower it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and *whatever you shall bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven, and whatever you shall loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven.*" (Matt. 16:15-19, emphasis added).

No doubt the reason this passage has been interpreted in so many ways is that it contains at least five metaphorical expressions: (1) "flesh and blood," (2) "rock," (3) "gates of Hades," (4) "keys of the kingdom of heaven," and (5) "binding/loosing." All of these expressions are figurative, speaking of something else.

Hades' Gates

Regardless of the precise meaning of the metaphors, you can see that, in this passage, Jesus did not mention evil spirits. The closest He came was His mention of the "gates of Hades," which are, of course, symbolic, as there is no way that the literal gates of Hades could do anything to hinder the church.

What do the "gates of Hades" represent? Perhaps they are symbolic of Satan's power, and Jesus meant that Satan's power would not stop His church from being built. The Bible, however, really doesn't associate Satan's power with Hades (or hell) as we often do. Satan is not presently living in Hades or ruling in hell as He often is portrayed in cartoons. The Scripture teaches that his domain is primarily the realm of the earth. Satan will *one day* be cast into the lake of fire, but it won't be so that he can rule

there, but so that he can be tormented there day and night (see Rev. 20:10). Shortly after Satan is cast into the lake of fire, Hades itself will be cast there as well (see Rev. 20:14). So, again, the "gates of Hades" are not a likely symbolism for Satan's power or authority.

More likely, what Jesus meant by His statement is that the church He would build would save people from the eternal fate of being imprisoned behind Hades' gates. Those terrible gates, which forever hold captive people who died without Christ, will have fewer to constrain because of Christ's saving work on the cross and because of His church being built.

Notice that Jesus actually makes reference to two sets of gates: the gates of Hades, and the gates to heaven, implied by His giving Peter the "keys to heaven." This contrast further supports that idea that Jesus' statement about Hades' gates is representative of the church's role in saving people from going to Hades. Keep in mind that it was not Satan who constructed gates into Hades, it was God.

Nevertheless, even if Jesus did mean that "all the power of Satan would not stop His church," we cannot jump to the conclusion that His comments about binding and loosing are instructions as to what we should be doing with evil spirits over cities, for the simple reason that we can find no examples in the gospels or Acts of anyone binding evil spirits over cities, nor can we find any instructions in the epistles for doing such a thing. However we interpret Christ's words about binding and loosing, our interpretation must be supported *contextually within the rest of the New Testament*. In light of the absence of *any* scriptural example, it is amazing how often we say such things as, "I bind the devil in Jesus name," or "I loose the angels over that person," or "I loose God's mercy in that situation" and so on. You don't find anyone saying such things anywhere in the New Testament. The emphasis in Acts and the epistles is not on speaking to the devil or binding and loosing evil spirits, but on preaching the gospel and praying to God. For example, when Paul was being continually buffeted by a messenger (literally, "angel") of Satan, he didn't try to "bind" it. He prayed to God about it (see 2 Cor. 12:7-10).

The Keys to Heaven

Let's look further at the immediate context of Jesus' words about binding and loosing. Note that directly before He mentioned binding and loosing, Jesus said that He would give Peter the "keys to the

kingdom of heaven.” Peter was never given any literal keys to heaven’s gates, and so Jesus’ words must be taken as metaphorical. What do “keys” represent? Keys represent *the means of access to something that is locked*. One who has the keys has means that others do not have to open certain doors.

As we consider Peter’s ministry as reported in the book of Acts, what is it that we find him doing that could be considered comparable to opening doors that are locked to others?

Primarily, we find him proclaiming the gospel, the gospel which opens heaven’s doors for all who will believe (and the gospel which shuts the gates of Hades). In that sense, all of us who are Christ’s followers possess the “keys to the kingdom of heaven,” as we all can and should share the good news that can open the door of heaven to anyone. *The keys to the kingdom of heaven can only be the gospel of Jesus Christ*. It wasn’t until after Jesus was resurrected that Peter understood that Jesus had died for the sins of the world on the cross, and only then did he have a gospel to proclaim that could open heaven’s doors.

And Now, Binding and Loosing

Finally, after promising to give Peter the keys to the kingdom of heaven, Jesus made His statement about binding and loosing, His fifth metaphorical expression in the passage under consideration.

Within the context of the statements we have already examined, what did Jesus mean? How does Peter’s binding and loosing have application to Jesus building His church, to the saving of people from Hades, and to proclaiming the gospel?

I can think of only two possibilities as to what the expression, *binding and loosing* represents, one being a more strict interpretation and the other being less strict.

First the more strict: Perhaps Jesus meant that if Peter didn’t use the keys to the kingdom by proclaiming the gospel, people would remain bound by Satan. But, if Peter did proclaim the gospel, people would be loosed from Satan’s grasp.

Jesus wanted to impress upon Peter (and us) that we have been given a great responsibility. No one can be saved unless *we* preach the gospel (see Rom. 10:14). *We* hold the keys to the kingdom of heaven. It is our responsibility to spread the gospel—the *only* message that can open heaven’s doors (and close Hades’ gates). God won’t open (or shut) those doors without us. *We have the keys*.

In keeping with this same theme, Jesus said to Peter that whatever *he* would bind would be bound in heaven, and whatever *he* would loose would be loosed in heaven. The responsibility of binding and loosing falls upon us, not upon God in heaven. Heaven will back us up, but we are God’s *only* messengers of a gospel that can set people free.

This interpretation of Jesus’ words fits well with the context of the rest of Scripture. We don’t find anyone binding demons over cities or over anything else in the book of Acts, but we do find Christ’s followers taking very seriously their responsibility to proclaim a gospel that sets people free from Satan.

If we don’t share the gospel, leaving people bound by Satan, God will leave them bound. If, however, we do share the gospel, a gospel that, if believed, looses people from sin and Satan, God in heaven will loose them.

But if that is what Jesus meant, why didn’t He just say it that way? I don’t know! But the fact is, Jesus often used powerful figures of speech to provoke us to think and to make His points unforgettable. In order to convey to us how much we should love God, He once told us to hate our fathers, mothers, and children (see Luke 14:26).

A Similar Statement

In a declaration that is similar to His statement about binding and loosing, we once find Jesus saying to His disciples, “If you forgive the sins of any, their sins have been forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they have been retained” (John 20:23).

Obviously, Jesus did not mean that His disciples had the authority to forgive or not forgive anyone’s sins. Only God has that authority, and we don’t find the apostles forgiving or retaining anyone’s sins in the book of Acts.

We do find them, however, proclaiming a message that offers people the forgiveness of their sins. We have the God-given right to tell anyone who believes the gospel that his sins are forgiven. And we have the God-given right to tell anyone who rejects the gospel that his sins are not forgiven.

That must be what Jesus meant, but *notice how He said it*. We are not forgiving people of their sins, but are proclaiming a message that can bring them God’s forgiveness. We are not binding or loosing anyone, but we are proclaiming a message that will either loose people from sin and Satan or leave them bound.

A Less Strict Interpretation

The other, less strict interpretation finds less significance in the metaphorical words, *binding* and *loosing*. Perhaps all that Jesus meant was, “I’m authorizing you as heaven’s representative. Fulfill your responsibility on earth, and heaven will back you up.”

If an employer said to his salesman, “Whatever you do in Omaha will be done in the home office,” how would that salesman interpret his boss’s words? He would take them to mean that he was authorized to represent his company in Omaha. Perhaps all that Jesus meant was that we who are His on earth are authorized to represent Him who is in heaven.

This less strict interpretation of Jesus’ words harmonizes well with His second use of the same expression, found two chapters after the first passage in Matthew’s gospel:

“And if your brother sins, go and reprove him in private; if he listens to you, you have won your brother. But if he does not listen to you, take one or two more with you, so that by the mouth of two or three witnesses every fact may be confirmed. And if he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax-gatherer. Truly I say to you, *whatever you shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.* Again I say to you, that if two of you agree on earth about anything that they may ask, it shall be done for them by My Father who is in heaven. For where two or three have gathered together in My name, there I am in their midst” (Matt. 18:15-20, emphasis added).

In this second passage that mentions binding and loosing, there is absolutely *nothing* within the text that would lead us to believe that Jesus was speaking of binding evil spirits. Here Christ spoke of binding and loosing directly after speaking on the subject of church discipline.

This would seem to indicate that in reference to binding and loosing in this passage, Jesus meant something like, “I’m giving you responsibility to determine who should be in the church and who should not. It is your job. As you fulfill your responsibilities, heaven will back you up.”

In a broader application, Jesus was saying, “You are authorized on earth as heaven’s representatives. You have responsibilities, and as you fulfill your responsibilities on earth, heaven will always support you.”

Binding and Loosing in Context

This interpretation fits well within the immediate context as well as the wider context of the rest of the New Testament.

In regard to the immediate context, we note that directly after His statement about binding and loosing, Jesus said: “Again I say to you, that if two of you agree *on earth* about anything that they may ask, it shall be done for them by My Father who is *in heaven*” (Matt. 18:19; italics).

There again is the theme of “what you do on earth will be supported in heaven.” We on earth are authorized and responsible to pray. When we do, heaven will respond. Jesus’ words, “*Again* I say...” seem to indicate He is expanding upon His prior statement about binding and loosing.

Jesus’ final statement in this passage, “For where two or three have gathered together in My name, there I am in their midst,” also supports the “heaven will back you up as you act” theme. First believers must gather; then Jesus will be in their midst.

The Church Has Responsibilities

The general idea conveyed in the passage is that the church has responsibility. The church has a responsibility to determine who should, and who should not be accepted as a member. It has the responsibility to pray. It has responsibility to gather together. The church should never have an attitude of “whatever will be, will be,” or think that God’s will is automatically done regardless of what we do. No, we have God-given responsibility. When we do what God has told us to do, He will support us.

As we consider the wider context of all the New Testament, we find this interpretation abundantly supported. We find the church fulfilling certain responsibilities and heaven backing her up. We find the Christians gathering, and then Jesus being in their midst by His Holy Spirit. We find them not accepting everything that happens as God’s will, agreeing in prayer together, and God answering their prayer. We find them disciplining those within the church, not waiting for God to do what He has told them to do. In fact, Paul once wrote concerning the discipline of a church member in Corinth,

I wrote you in my letter not to associate with immoral people; I did not at all mean with the immoral people of this world, or with the covetous and swindlers, or with idolaters; for then you would have to go out of the world. But actually, I wrote to you not to associate with any so-called brother if he should be an

immoral person, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or a swindler—not even to eat with such a one. For what have I to do with judging outsiders? *Do you not judge those who are within the church? But those who are outside, God judges. Remove the wicked man from among yourselves* (1 Cor. 5:9-13, emphasis added).

Notice Paul indicated it was the church's responsibility to excommunicate a false brother, not God's.

As we consider both of the passages that mention binding and loosing, and if we assume that in both, the meaning of the binding and loosing expression is the same, then it seems the best interpretation for what Jesus meant is the less strict one: "You are My ambassadors, My authorized representatives. Do your job, and heaven will support you."

Even if you totally disagree with my interpretation of the passages in consideration, you are going to be hard pressed to present a sound, scriptural argument that Jesus was speaking about binding evil spirits over cities!¹

God's Divine Plan Includes Satan

Satan and his angels are a rebel army, but not an army that is beyond God's control. This rebel army was *created by God*, (although they were not rebellious when first created). Paul wrote:

For by Him [Christ] all things were created, both *in the heavens* and on earth, visible and *invisible*, whether *thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities*—all things have been created by Him and for Him (Col. 1:16, emphasis added).

Jesus created every angelic spirit of every rank, including Satan. Did He know that some would rebel? Of course He did. God is all-knowing. Then why did He create them? Because He would use those rebel spirits to help fulfill His plan. If He had no purpose for them, He would simply have incarcerated them, as we are told He has already done with some rebellious angels (see 2 Pet. 2:4) and as He will one day do with Satan (see Rev. 20:2).

My point is that God has reasons for allowing Satan and every evil spirit to operate upon the earth. If He didn't, they would be completely out of

commission. What are God's reasons for allowing Satan to operate upon the earth? I don't think anyone understands every reason, yet God has revealed some of the reasons in His Word.

First, God allows Satan to operate limitedly on the earth to fulfill His plan to test humans. Satan serves as the alternate choice for humanity's allegiance. Whether they realize it or not, people are in subjection either to God or Satan. God permitted Satan to tempt Adam and Eve, two people who possessed God-given free wills, in order to test them. All those with free wills must be tested to reveal what is in their hearts, either obedience or disobedience.²

Second, God allows Satan to operate limitedly on the earth as an agent of His wrath upon evildoers. I have already proven this in a previous chapter by several specific cases in Scripture when God brought judgment upon deserving people through evil spirits. Just the fact that God has allowed Satan to rule over the unsaved people of the world is an indication of His wrath upon them. God judges groups of evil people by allowing wicked humans to rule over them, and also by allowing wicked spiritual beings to rule over them, making their lives all the more miserable.

Third, God allows Satan to operate limitedly on the earth to glorify Himself. "The Son of God appeared for this purpose, that He might destroy the works of the devil" (1 John 3:8). Every time God destroys one of Satan's works, it glorifies His power and wisdom.

Presently, it is God's will that Satan and evil spirits operate upon the earth. This is not to say that God wants anyone to remain under Satan's dominion or be oppressed by evil spirits. He wants them all to be saved and be free. But as long as there are people who are in rebellion against Him, God will continue to use Satan and evil spirits to fulfill His plans. For this reason, it is foolish to think that we can bind territorial spirits from operating on the earth.

Jesus is the Head Over Principalities and Powers

As Christians, our scriptural responsibility to deal with Satan and evil spirits is two-fold: to resist them in our own lives (Jas. 4:7), and to cast them out of others who want to be delivered (Mark 16:17). Any Christian who has experience in casting demons out

¹ One final question that could be asked about that particular interpretation is this: *If Jesus meant that we are to bind evil spirits, did He also mean that sometimes we should loose evil spirits?* If not, then what are we supposed to loose? Some might claim we should loose God's power, or loose His angels, or loose His protection, and so on, as some Christians often attempt to do. But where in the New Testament can we find anyone doing such things?

² This concept is discussed much more thoroughly in my book, *God's Tests*.

of other people knows that, as a general rule, unless the demonized person wants to be delivered, he will be unable to cast the demon out.³ God honors every person's free will, and if a person wants to yield to evil spirits, God won't stop him.

This is yet another reason why we can't pull down territorial spirits over geographic areas. Those evil spirits are there holding people in bondage because that is what those people have chosen. Through proclaiming the gospel to them, we offer them a choice. If they make the right choice, it will result in their freedom from Satan and evil spirits. But if they make the wrong choice, choosing not to repent, God will allow Satan to hold them captive.

Jesus is spoken of in Scripture as being "the head over all rule and authority" (Col. 2:10). Although the Greek words for *rule* (*arche*) and *authority* (*exousia*) are sometimes used in describing human political leaders, they are also used in the New Testament as titles for demonic spiritual rulers. The classic passage about the Christians struggle against rulers (*arche*) and powers (*exousia*) in Ephesians 6:12 is one example.

When we read contextually what Paul wrote about Jesus being the head over all rule and authority in Colossians 2:10, it seems clear that he is speaking of spiritual powers. For example, in the same passage just four verses later, Paul writes of Jesus, "When He had disarmed the *rulers* and *authorities*, He made a public display of them, having triumphed over them through Him" (Col. 2:15).

If Jesus is the head of the spiritual rulers and authorities, then He is sovereign over them. This is a wonderful revelation to Christians living in pagan, animistic cultures, who spent their former lives worshipping idols in fear of the evil spirits whom they knew ruled over them. To those of us living in "enlightened" cultures, where it is thought that evil spirits do not actually exist, the revelation of Christ's headship over spiritual rulers and authorities is not so exciting. But it should be, once we discover that we, just like those in more primitive societies, were living in captivity to evil spirits.

The Only Way of Escape

The only way to escape the captivity of evil spirits is to repent and believe the gospel. That is the

³ The exception to this rule would be in cases of people who are so controlled by demons that they have no way of communicating their desire for freedom. In those cases, special gifts of the Spirit would be necessary to bring deliverance, and gifts of the Spirit operate as the Spirit wills.

escape God has provided. No one can bind the demonic forces over a city and set you free or set you partially free. Until a person repents and believes the gospel, He is abiding in God's wrath (see John 3:36), which includes being held by demonic powers.

That is why there are no measurable changes in the cities where the big spiritual warfare conferences and sessions have taken place, because nothing has happened that has really affected the demonic hierarchies that rule in those areas. Christians can scream at principalities and powers all day and night; they can attempt to torment the devil by so-called "warring tongues"; they can say "I bind you evil spirits over this city" a million times; they can even do all these things up in airplanes and on the top floors of skyscrapers (as some actually do); and the only way the evil spirits will be affected is that they will get a good laugh at the foolish Christians.

This is a good place to conclude this chapter and prepare to launch into examining the next myth, the myth that we can open the door for effective evangelism by doing spiritual warfare against territorial spirits.

Myth #5: "We can pull down demonic strongholds in the atmosphere through spiritual warfare."

No, we can't. God created them and allows them to remain there, and they will be there until it no longer suits His divine purposes. God could do away with all of them right now if He desired. There is no example of anyone pulling down any territorial spirits in the New Testament; neither are there any instructions found there for Christians to do so.

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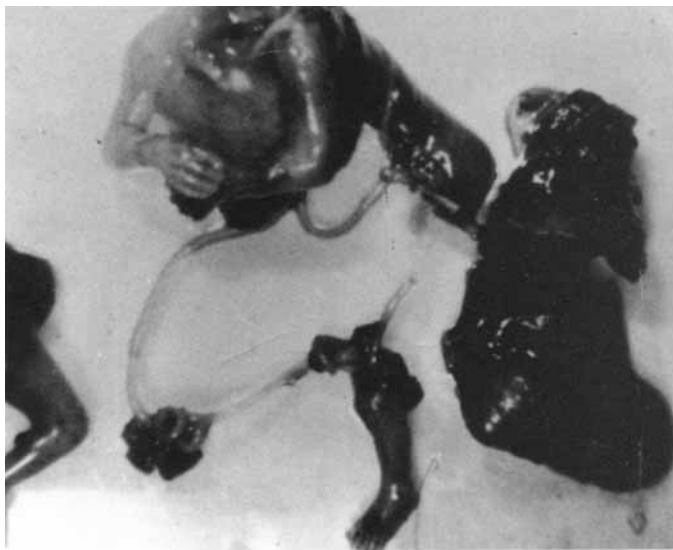
“History doesn’t repeat itself, it rhymes” Mark Twain

AMERICAN HOLOCAUST

And it happened, when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, that the **babe leaped in her womb**; and Elizabeth was Filled with the Holy Spirit. Luke 1:41



Human Life at Eight Weeks (2 Months)



D & C Abortion at 12 Weeks

“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life,...”

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, because although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man—and birds and four-footed beasts and creeping things. Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves, who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.

For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due. And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting; being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; they are whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful; who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them. Romans 1:18-32

“The instant I speak concerning a nation and concerning a kingdom, to “pluck up, to pull down, and to destroy *it*, if that nation against whom I have spoken turns from its evil, I will relent of the disaster that I thought to bring upon it. And the instant I speak concerning a nation and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant *it*, if it does evil in My sight so that it does not obey My voice, then I will relent concerning the good with which I said I would benefit it. **Jeremiah 18:7-10**



While campaigning for President, Barack Obama publicly said, “I do NOT support Gay marriage.”



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ONLY CHANGE THAT GOD BELIEVES IN CAN SAVE AMERICA!

(SEE, ROMANS 15:4, I CORINTHIANS CH. 10, I TIMOTHY 5:8, II THESSALONIANS 3:10)

'Here this now, O foolish people, without understanding, who have eyes and see not, and who have ears and hear not: Do you not fear Me?' says the Lord. 'Will you not tremble at My presence, who have placed the sand as the bound of the sea, by a perpetual decree, that it cannot pass beyond it? And though its waves toss to and fro, yet they cannot prevail; though they roar, yet they cannot pass over it. But this people has a defiant and rebellious heart; they have revolted and departed. They do not say in their heart, "Let us now fear the Lord our God, who gives rain, both the former and the latter, in its season. He reserves for us the appointed weeks of the harvest." Your iniquities have turned these *things* away, and your sins have withheld good *things* from you.

'For among My people are found wicked men; they lie in wait as one who sets snares; they set a trap; they catch *men*. As a cage is full of birds so their houses *are* full of deceit. Therefore they have become great and grown rich. They have grown fat, they are sleek; yes, they surpass the deeds of the wicked; they do not plead the cause, the cause of the fatherless; yet they prosper, and the right of the needy they do not defend. Shall I not punish *them* for these *things*?' says the Lord.

'Shall I not avenge Myself on such a nation as this?'

"An astonishing and horrible thing has been committed in the land: The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests rule by their *own* power; and My people love *to have it* so. But what will you do in the end?"

Jeremiah 5:21-31 (NKJV)