

# Way of God and Passover

Fred R. Coulter—March 15, 2014

Welcome to Sabbath services, brethren, as we prepare for the Passover!

The Passover is the most important day for all of us and for the world. This is the day that God selected from the foundation of the world that Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, would die for the sin of the world. It's interesting. It says *the sin*, even though that includes all the sins of all human beings.

Why does it say *the sin of the world*? *John the Baptist said that twice in the first chapter of the Gospel of John!* All of us have inherited a sinful nature from Adam and Eve—that is called *the law of sin and death*. So, this day is a magnificent day, though it was the bloody baptism of Jesus through the crucifixion.

- God is fair!
- God is love!
- God is just!

Having judged Adam and Eve and all their descendants with a nature of good and evil, after Adam and Eve had sinned, the question becomes: Since God has this great plan, how is it going to be corrected? *God had it planned before the creation of Adam and Eve!*

God Himself would become a human being. He would take upon Himself the same judgment that He gave Adam and Eve, yet, *never sin*. His sacrifice, as God manifested in the flesh, would be able to cover all human beings, because God has created all human beings.

So, when we come to the Passover, this day—as Jesus said—*represents the life of the world!* But He had to die unto sin. As we read in Hebrews, He died unto sin *once for all time*.

In the book *The Day Jesus the Christ Died*, be sure and read the Appendix D concerning the Eucharist. Not only the Eucharist, but all of the different things that men have done *to change, to pervert, to go against God* by bringing their own ideas; or more importantly, Satan's ideas, into the worship of God. We've seen that with the Churches of God in the prophetic setting of them in Rev. 2 and 3.

## The WAY

John 14:4: “And where I am going you know, and **the way** you know.” How many times did He say He came from heaven? We'll just project forward to John 17; when you examine it very carefully, *the whole plan of God is laid out in that prayer*, which is really quite an amazing thing.

Verse 5: “Thomas said to Him... [the doubter] ...‘Lord, we do not know where You are going; how then can we know **the way**?’” Jesus explained it to them with three major things; ***I am the Way!*** That means *the path to walk on*. It's interesting that in the Greek the word is *exodus* is ‘ex hodos’—which means the way out:

- *the way* out of Egypt
- *the way* out of sin
- *the way* to the Truth

**The Way of God** is explained tremendously in everything.

1. it is *the Way of Life*
2. it is *the Way of Truth*
3. it is *the Way of God*

These are things that we need to understand and realize. We have to walk in the *way of God*. 2-Pet. 2 also ties in with point # 2. We're going to look at what happened here and we're going to look at something really important, a principle.

2-Peter 2:1: “But there were also false prophets among the people, as indeed there will be false teachers among you...” We still get all these false doctrines, false ideas. They come like waves, just coming in just like waves. Every once in a while waves come in with one bigger than the rest of them. We've seen that happen, too.

“...who will stealthily...” (v 1). They'll come in with a little ripple, come in with a little idea. Won't let themselves be known.

“...introduce destructive heresies, personally denying *the Lord* who bought them, and bringing swift destruction upon themselves” (v 1).

When you read 1-Cor. 15, Paul said, ‘How is it that some of you don't know there is a resurrection from the dead?’ *A sign of false teaching coming in!* What does every religion in the world believe? *We have immortal souls and when we die they go to heaven!* Every religion does, but the Bible doesn't teach that. We won't get into a discussion of the soul and the spirit; we'll save that for another time.

How did that come in? Think of this for a minute in connection with the world system of religion. The Apostle John had all the vision from his time clear up through to New Jerusalem. Came in stages that God gave it to him.

When it came to Rev. 17, and John saw the woman Babylon the Great riding the beast, he was astonished! How could it come from the Truth of

God—no leaven in it, no sin in it—to complete paganism over here? As we see in the world today, they believe and accept it as Truth. That’s a whole story in itself.

Let’s look at a big open door that all of those false teachers had when John finally died. And then Polycarp and Politiques died. First fight was over what? *Passover*, called the Quatodeciman controversy. They wanted to move it to Easter. In order to keep everybody deceived, what did they do? *They said that it’s the first full moon after the spring equinox!*

A little sidebar here: If you follow the spring equinox, you are following the world’s system, so that it would come very close to Passover. Dwight Blevins sent me an e-mail on this which is, I believe, correct; you can check it out with the Calculated Hebrew Calendar. The year that Gamaliel II released how to calculate the Passover there was a Friday night Passover, Sabbath was the Passover Day and Sunday was the First Day of Unleavened Bread.

In that year then, you had Good Friday, midnight Mass on Saturday, resurrection on Sunday. The persecution was so intense upon the Jews and Christians that he released the information on how to calculate it. A lot of people mistakenly said he invented it. No, you just don’t invent it. *God gave it!*

The thing they come after is Passover. What was the first major thing they came after in WCG? *The Passover!* Why? *Because if you can move people off of that, then you have the first incremental step in apostasy!* Did that happen? *Yes, indeed! Stealthily!*

Verse 2: “And many people will follow as *authoritative* their destructive ways... [because they like it that way] ...and because of them, the **way of the Truth**...” That’s *God’s way!* God cannot lie. It is impossible for Him to lie. Every word that is in the Bible in the original writings, when properly translated, are the Truth of God. That’s what we have endeavored to do in producing *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order*. The Truth was the main thing, because without the Truth, without *the way of God*, what do you have? *Ideas of men!*

“...the **way of the Truth** will be blasphemed” (v 2). ‘You don’t want to do that, that’s what the Jews do.’ Oh, really? Should we hate the Jews? Just because God punished them for rejecting Christ? *No, indeed!*

Verse 3: “Also, through insatiable greed they will with enticing messages exploit you for gain; for whom the judgment of old is in *full* force, and their destruction is *ever* watching.” So, the *way of God* is

- the *way of Truth*
- the *way of righteousness*

We will see this comparison, the way of the world—which is the way of Satan the devil in varying degrees of worshiping him. I’ve been noticing the increased number of those seeking ghosts, seeking spirits, revealing secret society ceremonies, etc. on television. It’s almost an automatic thing, so I’m sure that this is true: *The more people sin, the more demons are let loose in the land!* God can get rid of them for those who are seeking Him. It says there in Zech. 13 that God will get rid of the evil spirits out of the land. How did they get there? *Through worshiping Satan the devil!*

Proverbs 10:29: “The **way of the LORD** is strength to the upright... [the strength of God] ...but destruction *shall be* to the workers of iniquity.”

Psalms 25:8: “Good and upright is the LORD; therefore He will teach sinners in **the way**.” {note John 6:44-45; it is the Father Who draws us; we will all be taught of God.}

When we go to the Word of God to see what it says and rightly divide it, then God is teaching us. God has given us His Spirit, as I have written in recent letters and covered very deeply in John 14. ***In the way!***

Verse 9: “The meek He will guide in judgment; and the peck He will teach **His way**”—the *way of the Lord!*

Read and study the whole Psa. 119; Psalm 119:1: “Blessed are the undefiled in **the way**, who **walk in the Law of the LORD**.... [notice what happens then]: ...Blessed are they who keep His testimonies and who seek Him with the whole heart” (vs 1-2). This all comes together in revealing our relationship with God.

Verse 9: “With what shall a young man cleanse his way?...” What did Jesus say concerning the Passover? *He told the disciples, ‘You are clean through the words that I have spoken to you.’* What were those words? *The Passover!* 1-John 1 says that we are *cleansed from all unrighteousness*.

“...By taking heed according to Your Word”—which then means

- repentance
- forgiveness
- mercy

all of that together.

Verse 10: “With all my heart I have sought You; O let me not wander from Your commandments.” This is really a tremendous thing in helping us establish our relationship with God. There is strength in *the way of the Lord*, as we have read. Whenever we have God writing into our minds, which He does when we study, this gives us

strength. The strength of the Word of God. The strength of His Spirit, because *we are walking in His way*.

Verse 32: “I will run the way of Your commandments for You shall enlarge my heart. Teach me, O LORD, **the way of Your statutes...**” (vs 32-33). The *way of God* includes:

- His laws
- His commandments
- His statutes
- His testimonies
- His precepts

What was commendation because of what Abraham did? The promises were passed to Isaac because ‘Abraham obeyed My voice, kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws.’ We are the spiritual children of Abraham, so ‘the way’ is *God’s way*.

Let’s see about this way. Psalm 18:21: “For I have kept **the ways of the LORD**, and have not wickedly departed from My God.”

Verse 30: “As for God, His way is perfect; the Word of the LORD is tried. He is a shield to all those who take refuge in Him.”

Let’s see what Jesus said when He was giving the Sermon on the Mount. This ties in with Deut. 30. When you rightly divide the Word of God and put it together, what do you have? *You have the unity of Scripture*—Old Testament and New Testament.

Matthew 7:13: “Enter in through the narrow gate; for wide *is* the gate and broad *is* the way... [that’s the way of the world and Satan the devil] ...that leads to destruction...” It can be very exciting going there.

I just finished *The Love of God #7* (churchathome.org). I went through Deut. 30, ‘set before you life and death, blessing and cursing.’ Then I mentioned: think of all the famous in the world, especially the entertainers and singers, and how that’s the *broad way*—do anything that you want. What he did, he put together clips of about 12 famous singers and entertainers in the world. You watch that Church at Home. You will be astonished how many died at age 27. Amazing! Suicide, drugs; leads to destruction.

I imagine all those people that go to these rock concerts and are hyped up on their drugs and their adrenalin and the music and everything like this, their minds couldn’t have a thought about God. But everybody does it. It’s like with pot: ‘Let’s legalize it, so we can get the tax revenue.’ They are doing that in California now.

Dolores and I talk about that often and I said, ‘You wait and see. They are going to do that.’ And pot is not like tobacco. It stays in your system and can even be passed on with difficulties to your children. They just had to take a baby away from pot-smoking parents because the baby fell into a coma because of all of their pot smoke; second-hand pot smoke. Look at the laws they have against second-hand tobacco smoke, but they are going to legalize pot.

The way of man is destructive, just like it says here. He says, v 14: “For narrow is the gate and difficult *is* **the way that leads to life**, and few are those who find it.... [What is the next warning?]: ...Beware of false prophets...” (vs 14-15).

We’re going to see something important here and how quickly even in the presence of God... Isn’t it interesting, what a blessing it is to have the whole Bible and the words of God written down. What did God say? *We can check it out!* Think about those people who don’t have Bibles. Think about if you’ve seen *Israel of the Alps* {note video produced by the Seventh Day Adventists} think about those who were in the wilderness there in the Alps, who the most that they had was the Gospel of John. In that is the whole Gospel if you carefully examine it.

Exodus 31:13: “Speak also to the children of Israel, saying, ‘Truly... [that is in truth, in righteousness] ...you shall keep My Sabbaths... [plural] ...for **it**... [the keeping of the Sabbaths, the act of keeping the Sabbaths] ...is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations to know that I *am* the LORD Who sanctifies you.’”

{Note 1-John 2. How do we know the Lord? ‘Hereby we know that we know the Lord if we keep His commandments.’}

Then He singles out the weekly Sabbath. If you have the weekly Sabbath, then you must have the annual Sabbaths and the Passover. That’s like the right foot and the left foot. Good analogy: If you have the Sabbath, how well do you **walk in the way of the Lord? With a crutch, fairly decently!**

Verse 16: “Therefore, the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations *as* a perpetual covenant. It *is* a sign between Me and the children of Israel forever; for in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day He rested, and was refreshed” (vs 16-17).

Then God gave to Moses the two tablets of stone that He personally wrote on. God took those stones and wrote on them Himself. After they sinned and Moses went up to God again, God told Moses, ‘You get two tablets of stone and you bring them up. Then I’ll write on them.’ Exo. 32 ties right in with

the importance of the Sabbath and the Holy Days right here.

What happens? *Here's the broad way!* What did the people worship in Egypt? *All the idols, all the gods!* You read, there's a place, I think it's in Deut., where God said, 'I almost killed all the children of Israel in Egypt for their sins.' Here's a good lesson:

1. it's hard to come out of sin
2. never assume that you can think for God
3. never go along with a majority of the people

It doesn't matter who you are. Aaron was chosen to be the high priest. What should he have done in this case? *He should have said:* 'Listen:

- You all saw all the plagues and everything that God did!
- You all walked through the Red Sea on dry ground!
- You all saw the water that God gave to you!
- You all heard the voice of God from heaven!

So, don't worry about Moses. He will eventually come down.' That's what he should have said. But let's read what he did. This is the same tactic that comes along all the time.

The Sabbath, Holy Days—and that includes the Passover—the first thing! What is Babylon the Great with Christianity in the world locked in today? *Sunday-worship, holiday-worship, all satanic!* Everyone in those 'religions' believe that this is correct, even though *they know* which day the Bible says is the Sabbath. *They know* that the days they are keeping are pagan. Likewise with the children of Israel here.

So, they came to Aaron, Exodus 32:1: "...Up! Make us gods which shall go before us, for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him." Number one tactic of Satan the devil: *always speak against the messenger!* In politics it is: *kill the messenger; slander him!*

Notice what Aaron did, v 2: "And Aaron said to them, 'Break off the golden earrings which *are* in the ears of your wives, of your sons, and of your daughters, and bring *them* to me.' And all the people broke off the golden earrings, which were in their ears, and brought *them* to Aaron. And he took *them* from their hand, and fashioned it with an engraving tool, and made a molten calf..." (vs 2-4).

- Was Aaron directly involved in doing this? *Yes!*
- Does this tell us that he was idol maker in Egypt? *Don't know, but very likely!*

- How would he know how to do it if he weren't?

"...And they said, 'These *are* your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt'" (v 4). Complete lie! See how that ties in with 2-Pet. 2 and Matt. 7.

Verse 5: "And when Aaron saw *the calf*, he built an altar before it. And Aaron made a proclamation and said, 'Tomorrow is a feast to the LORD.'" *We're going to establish our own day.*

Verse 6: "And they rose up early on the next morning, and offering burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings. And the people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play." A grand rock concert! Rose up to play means it was probably orgiastic. Same thing they do today.

Verse 7: "And the LORD said to Moses, 'Go! Get you down, for your people...' You find this true all the way through. Whenever they do wrong, they belong to Moses. Whenever they do good, they belong to God.

"...whom you brought out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted *themselves*. They have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them..." (vs 7-8).

That's why Jesus says He is *the Way*. He also ended that sentence by saying, 'And *no one* can come to the Father except through Me.' It doesn't matter how brilliant you think your idea is. It doesn't matter how many people agree with you. It is a matter of the *way of God* and the *Truth of God*, and only that can lead to eternal life.

Verse 8: "They have made them a molten calf, and have worshiped it, and have sacrificed to it, and said, 'These *are* your gods, O Israel, who have brought you up out of the land of Egypt.'"

- forgot about all the miracles
- forgot about the pillar of the cloud during the day, the pillar of fire at night
- forgot about the manna that came six days

Then on the sixth day they could gather twice as much. If they try and snitch during the week, it turns into worms and stinks and rots. Forgot all about that, everything that God did.

What happened in modern day when they first sanctified from the pulpit eating unclean food, right there at the headquarters church, right there in the most expensive building that any Church of God has ever built any place, with gold leaf in the wallpaper on the ceiling? Once you take that first step, get rid of the Passover, get rid of other laws of God, tell people they can do it—why, they all got together and said, 'Let's go to the Red Lobster.' The

Red Lobster did a tremendous business on that Sabbath Day. And, oh, how they longed for it. They probably lusted every time they saw the ad for Red Lobster on television, dipping that white lovely meat into the butter sauce.

Likewise, when it came for Christmas. People said, 'I'm so happy we can put a Christmas tree in the house now. It smells so good.' They never asked the question: What does God think? What does God say? Doesn't matter what men think or say.

Notice what God was going to do here, v 9: "And the LORD said to Moses, 'I have seen this people, and behold, it *is* a stiff-necked people. And now leave Me alone, so that My wrath may burn hot against them and that I may consume them. And I will make of you a great nation'" (vs 9-10).

Notice the humility of Moses. Think of what would happen if Moses wasn't humble and converted. He'd probably say, 'Why yes, Lord, I know I'll make a grand father for this new nation.' *No!*

Verse 11: "And Moses prayed to the LORD his God, and said, 'LORD, why does Your wrath burn hot against Your people whom You have brought forth out of the land of Egypt with great power and with a mighty hand? Why should the Egyptians speak and say, "He brought them out with an evil intent, to kill them in the mountains and to consume them from the face of the earth"? Turn from Your fierce wrath, and repent of this evil against Your people. Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel. Your servants to whom You swore by Your own self, and said to them, "I will multiply your seed as the stars of the heavens, and all this land that I have spoken of will I give to your seed, and they shall inherit *it* forever'" (vs 11-13).

Does that not also show us how we can pray to God? *Yes, indeed!* Moses importuned God to please repent, and God changed His mind.

Verse 14: "And the LORD repented of the evil which He spoke of doing to His people." Then Moses came down, saw what was going on, smashed the tablets of stone, probably in anger saying, 'What good are these Ten Commandments if these stiff-necked people will not hear and listen?'

Then he said, 'Aaron, come here.' I imagine he came very sheepishly. 'I'm here, Moses.' *What is this you have done?* Aaron said, 'The people.' This is one of my favorite parts of the Bible: 'They collected all their gold and threw it into the fire and out leaped this calf.' Everybody has a good excuse, but the whole thing gets down to *the Truth of God, the way of God*. It centers and begins with Sabbath, Passover, and the Holy Days.

What is the first thing that you came to understand as God was calling you? *Sabbath, Passover, and the Holy Days!* Those define the *way of God!* Let's see the same thing so we can see that God never changes.

You know what happened after the kingdom was divided between Rehoboam and Jeroboam, and why was the kingdom divided? *Because Solomon went after other gods!* You would think if there would be anyone on the earth who would have remained faithful it was Solomon. God appeared to him twice, let him build the temple, set it all up, blessed him tremendously. You know there's a pattern that you find in the Old Testament. Not all the time, but too many times, when someone gets old, he does foolish things and turns his back on the Lord.

(go to the next track)

In 1-Kings 12 we find that when the kingdom was separated from Rehoboam and the ten northern tribes went to Jeroboam, God promised to Jeroboam *if* he would follow God and teach the commandments of God, that He would establish a dynasty for him like He did for David. But Jeroboam didn't want to do that

1-Kings 12:26: "And Jeroboam said in his heart, 'Now the kingdom may well return to the house of David!'" Of course, you have to protect your power base.

Verse 27: "If this people go up to do sacrifice in the house of the LORD at Jerusalem, then shall the heart of this people turn again to their lord, to Rehoboam king of Judah, and they shall kill me and return again to Rehoboam king of Judah." So, he took counsel. Primary lesson in counsel, the Proverbs says, 'In the multitude of counsel is wisdom.' I put a caveat on that: provided your counselors are wise.

Verse 28: "Then the king took counsel, and made **two** calves of gold and said to them..." I'm looking out for your welfare and look at this wonderful thing that I have done for you. You don't need to go up to Jerusalem every year. No! I have restored the worship of God.' *NO!*

"...It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem. Behold your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt!... [the same thing that Aaron did] ...And he set the one in Bethel... [which would be close] ...and he put the other in Dan" (vs 28-30)—for the furthest north part of the country, so they wouldn't have to travel.

Verse 30: "And this thing became a sin, for the people went to worship before the one, even to Dan.... [then he also made a feast, yes, change it] ...And he made houses of *worship* on the high

places and made priests of the lowest of the people, who were not the sons of Levi. And Jeroboam ordered a feast in the eighth month, on the fifteenth day of the month, like the feast that *is* in Judah. And he offered upon the altar..." (vs 30-32). He offered on the altar himself—king and priest. He devised this out of his own heart. This thing became sin for the children of Israel.

What happens whenever somebody does something wrong to go against God and all the people follow? God sends a warning.

1-Kings 13:1: "And behold, a man of God came out of Judah by the word of the LORD, to Bethel..." People do not like the prophets of God, because they tell you you're sinning, stop doing what you are doing, or God's judgment is going to come upon you.

When he got there where Rehoboam was in Bethel—"...And Jeroboam stood by the altar to burn incense. And he cried against the altar by the word of the LORD and said, 'O, altar, altar, thus says the LORD. "Behold, a son shall be born to the house of David, Josiah by name... [the last righteous king] ...and upon you he shall offer the priests of the high places who burn incense upon you, and men's bones shall be burned upon you.'" And he gave a sign the same day, saying, 'This *is* the sign which the LORD has spoken. "Behold, the altar shall be torn apart, and the ashes that *are* upon it shall be poured out.'" Then it came to pass when King Jeroboam heard the saying of the man of God who had cried against the altar in Bethel, he put forth his hand from the altar, saying, 'Lay hold on him!' And his hand, which he put forth against him withered so that he could not pull it in again to himself" (vs 1-4).

The altar split, the king said after that, the coward, v 6: "And the king answered and said to the man of God, 'Seek now the face of the LORD your God, and pray for me, that my hand may be restored to me again..." What does it take for some people to get the point? His arm came back whole and he immediately repented when he saw the miracle. **No!**

Verse 7: "And the king said to the man of God, 'Come home with me and refresh yourself, and I will give you a reward.'"

It's not how many times you do what God says for how long, when you finally come to the point you go against God, you're going to pay the price. This becomes really important for the Passover, the Sabbath, and the Holy Days. That's why we keep the Passover, *all* Scriptures, *exactly as Christ gave the instructions*. So, it doesn't matter what instructions God gives, we have to follow them, like here with the prophet.

Verse 8: "And the man of God said to the king, 'If you will give me half your house, I will not go in with you, nor will I eat bread nor drink water in this place, For so was it commanded me by the word of the LORD, saying, "Eat no bread nor drink water, nor return again by the same way that you came.'" Then he went another way and did not return by the way he came to Bethel" (vs 8-10).

Here's an old prophet and all prophets say, 'I'm a prophet of God.' So, that's what he said. 'And I had a message of God. Turn in with me and eat with me and drink with me, for I had a message from God,' which he didn't, he lied. What happened? *The man of God, the prophet of God, went in with him, ate and drank with him!* After he left, a lion met him in the way and killed him. Remember the key words: **Obey My voice!** Whatever God says, *we are to do. That is the way of the Lord!*

We have touched on this a little bit, but it comes in these three major points: ***I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life!*** Everything that God does is always based upon these three points

### **The TRUTH**

John 14:6: "Jesus said to him, 'I am **the Way**... [throughout the whole of the Bible] ...and **the Truth**..." We're not going to spend much time on this, because we have done that before, but God cannot lie, will not lie.

- the Word of God *is Truth*
- all of His commandments *are Truth*
- all of His precepts from the beginning *are Truth*

### **The LIFE**

"...and **the Life**..." (v 6). *Eternal life* only comes from God through the grace of God and through the Passover sacrifice of Christ, Sabbath and Holy Days. It doesn't come any other way. Why? *Because God is the same yesterday, today, and forever! You can't receive eternal life any other way than through Jesus Christ!*

Let's come to 1-John 5. There are many other places we can go, but to summarize this part of it concerning *eternal life*. ***It cannot come any other way!***

1-John 5:10: "The one who believes in the Son of God has the witness in himself... [the Spirit of God] ...the one who does not believe God has made Him a liar because he has not believed in the witness that God has witnessed concerning His Son."

Let's go back and see that witness. Stop and think about this a minute. Every time someone

comes along with a good-sounding idea and they all sound good—don't they? *Yes!* If it goes against what God has said, you're making God a liar. What is it that the Christianity of this world is following? *Satan the devil who is the father of lies!* They quote just enough Scripture so it sounds plausible. But they appeal to people and their desire to do things *their way*. That's why we need the circumcision of the heart so we do things *God's way*.

Here is the witness and here is the correct translation, v 6: "This is He Who came by water and blood—Jesus the Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that bears witness... [the Spirit convicts us] ...because the Spirit is the Truth" (vs 6-7). Isn't that what Jesus Christ said? *'I'm going to send you the Spirit of the Truth and it will reveal things to you that you cannot handle at this time.'*

Verse 8: "There are three that bear witness on the earth: the Spirit, and the water, and the blood; and these three *witness* unto the one *Truth*"—that Jesus is the Christ. The added verse that is in the *King James*, there are three witnesses in heaven. *Heaven needs no witness!* What witness does God need shown to Him? They injected that into the Greek text in the 1000<sub>S.A.D.</sub>.

Verse 11: "And this is the witness: that God has given us **eternal life, and this life is in His Son.**" *No other way*, because only His death paid for our sins. Only having that paid for our sins continually through repentance every day do we have life. This life is in His Son.

Verse 12: "The one who has the Son has **eternal life**... [it also says the one who has the Son also has the Father] ...the one who does not have the Son of God does not have *eternal* life. These things I have written o you who believe in the name of the Son of God in order that **you may know that you have eternal life...**" (vs 12-13). Think about all the undercurrents that were going on there as he wrote about the antichrist and the spirit of deception.

"...and that you may *continue to believe* in the name of the Son of God. And this is the confidence that we have toward Him: that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we may ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of Him" (vs 13-15). You may have to continue asking, but God always answers. Sometimes immediately, sometimes way down the road. From the time that you ask and you keep on asking, until it is fulfilled way down the road, you still walk in God's way and you still believe in Christ.

Verse 19: "We know that we are of God, and that the whole world lies in the power of the wicked one. And we know that the Son of God has come,

and has given us an understanding, so that we may know Him Who is true; and we are in Him Who is true, and in His Son, Jesus Christ. He is the true God, **and the eternal life**.... [tie this in with what we just covered in Exo. and 1-Kings] ...Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen" (vs 19-21).

Were they starting to bring in the cross? When God says, 'You shall not make unto yourselves any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, that's on the earth, or that's in the water under the earth...' Is that not inclusive? *Yes!* 'And you shall not bow yourself down to them.' All those continue all the time.

I won't go through any more of John 14, since I've written extensively on it in my letter in February. That's very important, because we all have that direct relationship and connection with God the Father and Jesus Christ; *no man between*.

This very interesting and we're going to learn some things of this, as well. Jesus said: John 15:1: "I am the true vine, and My Father is the husbandman." Some translations have it *farmer*, but husbandman is more correct, because the person working the land is in a sense married to the land to do it God's way to produce the things that need to be done to take care of the plants, take care of everything. Our thoughts can affect many plants, because of how we are made and how plants are made. How that works exactly, we don't know.

Dogs know when there is danger coming. Dogs know when there is a fire coming. Dogs can sniff out diseases in human beings.

They also know that they have certain cameras that if you take pictures of a person and then you remove the person from the image, that there is the whole magnetic field of that individual caught on this photograph. Have you ever seen that? You can put your hand on the desk, you can take a picture of it, and it can pick up whatever you left of your hand on the desk. Now that sounds real weird, doesn't it? But it is true. How did we get off on that?

They know that when people go out and talk to their plants, praise them for what they are doing, they really produce. How that works, I don't know, but it does. So, God is the Husbandman, Christ is the Vine, and God is working to do His work *within us*.

This will help answer the question: What happens with the Churches of God? *Because all Churches of God grow to a certain point and then they contract, because people leave!* How does that happen? *God is doing the pruning as well as the teaching, as well as Christ!*

Verse 2: "He [the Father] takes away every branch in Me *that does not bear fruit*..." We know

the fruits of the Spirit. We know building the character of God, the mind of Christ, and all of that.

“...but He cleanses each one that bears fruit...” (v 2). When those operations happen, those who remain, the few, we are to grow in grace and knowledge even more.

“...in order that it may bear more fruit. You are already clean through the word that I have spoken to you. Dwell in Me... [tremendous lesson here] ...and I in you. As a branch cannot bear fruit of itself, but only if it remains in the vine, neither *can you bear fruit* unless you are dwelling in Me” (vs 2-4).

When you come to John 17, it is the Father in Christ, Christ in the Father, and the Father in Christ *in us* that we all become one. That is a spiritual thing that is taking place.

Verse 5: “I am the vine, *and you are* the branches. The one who is dwelling in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; because apart from Me you can do nothing. If anyone does not dwell in Me, he is cast out as a branch, and is dried up; and men gather them and cast *them* into a fire, and they are burned” (vs 5-6).

Now let’s look at a couple of things here concerning the vineyard, and then we will see what Jesus told the scribes and the Pharisees. This is the account of Israel, likening it to a vineyard.

Isaiah 5:1: “Now, I will sing to my beloved a song of my Beloved concerning His vineyard. My Beloved has a vineyard in a very fruitful hill. And He dug it up, and cleared it of stones, and planted it *with* choice vines, and built a tower in its midst and hewed out a wine vat in it; and He looked *for it* to produce grapes. But it produced worthless fruits. And now, O people of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, I ask you to judge between Me and My vineyard. What more could have been done to My vineyard that I have not done in it? Who knows?... [didn’t get an answer] ...I looked *for it* to yield grapes, but it yielded wild grapes” (vs 1-4). Because the people didn’t do what God told them to do.

Verse 5: “And now I will tell you what I will do to My vineyard; **I will take away its hedge, and it shall be consumed; and break down its wall, and it shall be trampled down; and I will lay it waste;** it shall not be pruned nor dug; but briars and thorns shall come up. And I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it.’ For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah His pleasant plant; and He looked for justice, but behold, bloodshed; for righteousness, but behold, a cry of *distress!*” (vs 5-7).

I want you to notice how this came along in waves; did everything He could for them. First thing He does is “**...take away the hedge...**”; take away the protection. We’re there at that point right now—aren’t we? *Yes, indeed!* Take away the hedge

Then “**...break down its wall...**”; that’s your defenses. Are our defenses being taken down? *Yes, indeed!* “**...and it shall be trampled down...**” If you don’t think that will happen, look at the Ukraine. Look at Syria. Though they are not God’s vine, the same thing happens.

“**...and I will lay it waste...**” Did God do that to Jerusalem? *Yes, indeed, twice;* 586<sub>B.C.</sub> and 70<sub>A.D.</sub> Instead of justice, bloodshed, and so forth.

Since the scribes, Pharisees and priests knew the Bible, when He spoke this to them, they understood what He was saying.

Luke 20:9: “And He began to speak this parable to the people: ‘A certain man planted a vineyard... [God, actually the One Who became Jesus Christ] ...and leased it out to husbandmen...’ Put them in charge. That represents the leadership, the judges, the kings, the priests and the Levites.

“...and left the country for a long time. And in *the harvest* season he sent a servant to the husbandmen, so that they might give him *some* of the fruit from the vineyard; but the husbandmen beat him *and sent him away empty*” (vs 9-10). Those are the prophets of God. They come.

Verse 11: “And after that he sent another servant; but they also beat him and scorned *him* and sent *him* away empty. After that he sent a third *servant*; but they also wounded him *and cast him* out. Then the lord of the vineyard said, ‘What shall I do? I will send my beloved son; perhaps when they see him, they will respect *him*.’ But when they saw him, the husbandmen reasoned among themselves, saying, ‘This is the heir. Come, let us kill him, so that the inheritance may be ours.’ And they cast him outside the vineyard *and killed him...*” (vs 11-15). That’s where Christ was crucified, outside the camp.

“...Therefore, what will the lord of the vineyard do to them? He will come and destroy these husbandmen, and will give the vineyard to others.’ Now after hearing *this*, they said, ‘MAY IT NEVER BE!’ But He looked at them and said, ‘What then is this that is written: “*The Stone* that the builders rejected, this one has become the head of *the corner?* Everyone who falls on that Stone shall be broken... [in repentance] ...but on whomever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder”’ (vs 15-18). Did that happen to Jerusalem and the people?

They understood because of Isa. 5; v 19: “And the chief priests and the scribes sought to lay hands on Him in that hour, because they knew that



He had spoken this parable against them; but they feared the people. And they kept Him under surveillance..." (vs 19-20). Spies even then.

Let's see what else He said in this account here, because it is true. The reason that we have what are called 'Synoptic Gospels' is because in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall be established.

Matthew 21:41: "They said to Him, 'Evil men!.... [they are talking about themselves] ...He will utterly destroy them, and he will lease his vineyard to other husbandmen, who will render to him the fruits in their seasons.' Jesus said to them, 'Have you never read in the Scriptures, "The Stone that the builders rejected, this has become the Head of the corner. This was from the Lord, and it is wonderful in our eyes"? Because of this, I say to you, the Kingdom of God...' " (vs 41-43). Their kingdom was the Kingdom of God on earth.

"...shall be taken from you, and it shall be given to a nation *that* produces the fruits of it" (v 43). God took it; He has given it to the Church as a promise and at the resurrection will give it to them directly.

Let's see how Peter brings this out, 1-Peter 2: 1: "Therefore, having put away all wickedness, and all deceit, and hypocrisies and jealousies, and all slanders." That's what the Feast of Unleavened Bread pictures, getting rid of all of the leaven of the mind and the heart and our attitudes that are not right.

Verse 2: "As newborn babes..." This doesn't mean they're born again, but this is the attitude that you need to have.

"...yearn after the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow, if you yourselves have indeed tasted that the Lord is gracious. To Whom coming, *as to* a living Stone... [remember He talked about the Stone they rejected] ...rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God, *and* precious, you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house—a Holy priesthood—to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For this reason it says in the Scripture, 'Behold, I place in Zion *the* Cornerstone, chosen *and* precious; and the one who believes in Him shall never be put to shame.' The preciousness *is* to you, therefore, who believe; but to those who disobey, *the* Stone that the builders rejected has become *the* Head of *the* corner, and a Stone of Stumbling and a Rock of offense; *especially* to those who stumble at the Word, being disobedient, unto which *unbelief* they also were appointed. But you *are* a chosen stock, a royal priesthood, a Holy nation..." (vs 2-9).

We are the nation and Kingdom of God at the resurrection that God is going to give the Kingdom to. Just like He said there in those parables.

"...a people for a possession of *God*, that you might proclaim His *excellent* virtues, Who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; Who once *were* not a people, but now *are the* people of God; who had not received mercy, but now have received mercy" (vs 9-10).

It's interesting how all of that ties together. We could actually do a study going through John 14, 15, 16 and 17, which are the words of the covenant, and you can tie so many things from the Word of God into these four chapters.

John 15:4: "Dwell in Me... [that's what it has to be] ...and I in you.... [that's through the power of God's Spirit] ...As a branch cannot bear fruit of itself, but only if it remains in the vine, neither *can* you *bear fruit* unless you are dwelling in Me. I am the vine *and* you *are* the branches. The one who is dwelling in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; because apart from Me you can do nothing. **If** anyone does not dwell in Me... [that means the way that He has said] ...he is cast out as a branch, and is dried up..." (vs 4-6). **If** they repent, they can be grafted back. But **if** not and they dry up, then man gather them and cast *them* into a fire and they are burned.

Verse 7, tells us how we dwell in Christ. "**If**... [conditional] ...you dwell in Me, and My words dwell in you... [being written in your heart and mind] ...you shall ask whatever you desire, and it shall come to pass for you"—because we will ask according to the will of God.

Verse 8: "In this is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit; so shall you be My disciples.... [then He tells us how to do it]: ...As the Father has loved Me, I also have loved you; live in My love" (vs 8-9).

We'll have things come along from time to time—because of human nature, and things like that—where we have to come back to this and understand that growing in grace and knowledge and the love of God takes work. We have a human nature that is pulling against us and that it's not going to be overcome all at once. That's why we have the Passover and Unleavened Bread every year. That's why we are given the opportunity to repent every day.

Verse 10: "**If** you keep My commandments you shall live in My love; just as I have kept My Father's commandments and live in His love." These are the words that He spoke on the Passover night. These are the important things that we need to have when we come to the Passover.

I don't know how many times I have read John 17. I don't know how many times I have heard it. All sacred-namers: ears up, open mind, listen carefully.

John 17:5: "And now, Father, glorify Me with Your own self, with the glory that I had with You before the world existed.... [quite a profound verse] ...I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given Me out of the world. They were Yours... [God called them] ...and You have given them to Me [Jesus] and they have kept Your Word" (vs 5-6).

Notice the first part of v 6: "I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given Me..." What is the name of the Father? *Father!* No other name is revealed. *None!* Yet, some people insist on coming to the New Testament and putting in Yahweh and all of those things, and *they neglect the family relationship* that is here. We're under grace with God's Spirit in a family relationship. The only name we know of the Father is *the Father*.

Verse 14: "I have given them Your words, and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. I do not pray that You would take them out of the world, but that You would keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. **Sanctify them** in Your Truth; Your Word is the Truth" (vs 14-17). Sanctified means *to be made Holy*.

Verse 18: "Even as You did send Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, so that they also may be sanctified in *Your* Truth. I do not pray for these only, but also for those who shall believe in Me through their word... [that's Jesus' personal prayer for us] ...**that they all may be one**..." (vs 18-21). Here is the whole goal and purpose of everything and it starts with the Passover.

"...even as You, Father *are* in Me, and I in Your; that they also may be one in Us, in order that the world may believe that You did send Me" (vs 21). It's going to believe in perfection until Christ returns. Then add onto that the second resurrection and the Millennium all combined together.

Verse 22: "And I have given them the glory that You gave *to* Me..." What is that glory? *The Holy Spirit and the knowledge of the Word of God!*

"...in order... [the whole purpose of that] ...that they may be one, in the same way *that* We are one" (v 22). Think of that! Think of that goal! Think of how the Church has been desecrated by evil men coming in with their own ideas and their own

thoughts to try and improve upon God. No one can improve upon God. Think how great this is.

Verse 23: "I in them, and You in Me, that they may be perfected into one... [the process] ...and that the world may know that You did send Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me. Father, I desire that those whom You have given Me may also be with Me where I am, so that they may behold My glory, which You have given Me; because You did love Me before *the* foundation of *the* world" (vs 23-24).

Think about what we have talked about, that speck of being that all of us were when we were conceived. You have to have really good eyes to see, it is so small. Everything in there contained you and me and we were born into the world. Now then, we have grown up. I think we could compare all the things that we have become as adults, were all there at the initial impregnation. Can we draw a parallel?

Are we before God, though as full adult human beings, in comparison to God, like that itty-bitty speck of life we were when we were first conceived, when compared now to the coming resurrection and the glory that shall be revealed? *Think of that!*

Verse 25: "Righteous Father, the world has not known You; but I have known You, and these have known that You did send Me. And I have made known Your name to them... [the Father] ...and will make *it* known; so that the love with which You have loved Me may be in them, and I in them" (vs 25-26).

***This is what the Passover is all about! The fantastic promise of eternal life and living under the grace of God so that can be accomplished!***

#### Scriptural References:

- 1) John 14:4-5
- 2) 2-Peter 2:1-3
- 3) Proverbs 10:29
- 4) Psalm 25:8-9
- 5) Psalm 119:1-2, 9-10, 32-33
- 6) Psalm 18:21, 30
- 7) Matthew 7:13-15
- 8) Exodus 31:13, 16-17
- 9) Exodus 32:1-14
- 10) 1-Kings 12:26-32
- 11) 1-Kings 13:1-10
- 12) John 14:6
- 13) 1-John 5:10, 6-8, 11-15, 19-21
- 14) John 15:1-6
- 15) Isaiah 5:1-7
- 16) Luke 20:9-20
- 17) Matthew 21:41-43
- 18) 1-Peter 2:1-10

- 19) John 15:4-10
- 20) John 17:5-6, 14-26

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Revelation 2; 3
- 1-Corinthians 15
- Revelation 17
- Zechariah 13
- John 6:44-45
- 1-John 1
- Deuteronomy 30
- 1-John 2

Also referenced:

- Book: *The Day Jesus the Christ Died* by Fred R. Coulter
- Sermon: *Love of God #7* ([churchathome.org](http://churchathome.org))
- Video: *Israel of the Alps* (Produced by the Seventh Day Adventist Church)

FRC:lp

Transcribed: 3-24-14

Formatted: bo—3-24-14

Copyright 2014—All rights reserved. Except for brief excerpts for review purposes, no part of this publication may be reproduced or used in any form or by any means without the written permission of the copyright owner. This includes electronic and mechanical photocopying or recording, as well as the use of information storage and retrieval systems.