

Do You Really Believe God?

Fred Coulter—May 14, 2011

Greetings, everyone! Welcome to Sabbath services. Today is the 14th of May. Next week is the 21st of May and according to Harold Camping^[transcriber's correction], Protestant pastor, the 'rapture' is going to take place. Since it's getting a little closer and closer and not too much has happened, he's going to have to change his story. If nothing happens, it's going to prove the Bible true.

Come here to Matthew 24. You all know this one—don't you? *Perfect example of someone who is a well-known minister, who has preached for years!* Also Franklin Graham, if you hear him speak, he's always asked this on every television show he goes on: 'When will the Lord return? *Well, He may come tonight and it may be way out in the future.* Why did he say that? *Because they believe in a 'rapture,'* so the 'rapture' may be tonight. Can you imagine getting to heaven in your pajamas?

There will be no 'rapture,' and they don't know the day. So, for Harold Camping^[transcriber's correction] to say that he can set the date, it's going to be interesting to understand what his excuse is going to be. Someone said, 'Well, he'll probably say the first trumpet was blown.' That means if the first trumpet is blown then there has to be a starting of a mass movement to bring all the religions of the world together. No, you can't have the trumpets blown until you have the seals opened.

Let's see what Jesus said. Matthew 24:34: "Truly I say to you, this generation... [that's the end-time generation] ...shall in no wise pass away until all these things have taken place. The heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall never pass away. But concerning that day, and the hour, no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only" (vs 34-36).

That pretty well settles the issue. But that demonstrates the problem that people don't know how to read their Bibles, and they don't know how to study their Bibles. That's why the very first appendices we have in *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order* is The Fourteen Rules of Bible Study (Appendix A, page 1,246). One of the rules is *don't read your opinion into it*, because it may be wrong.

Let's come to 1-Thessalonians 4; let's see something here concerning what they call the 'rapture.' The 'rapture' goes clear back to 1780. Here's a good example of one error leads to another error: They all believe we have an immortal soul and they believe that when we die our soul goes to heaven. Ezek. 18, God says, 'All souls are Mine. The soul that sins it shall die.' And the soul that does

not sin is going to die his normal death and will not know anything. That's what the Bible says.

Here's what they do, they turn here, 1-Thessalonians 4:14: "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again... [Yes, we all believe that.] ...in exactly the same way also, those who have fallen asleep in Jesus will God bring with Him." He's going to bring them with Him. That means since Jesus is coming from heaven, they've got to be in heaven, because He's going to bring them with Him. They never ask the question: When do they get there? *and* What is the time frame of them getting there?

Verse 15: "For this we say to you by *the* Word of *the* Lord, that we who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall in no wise precede those who have fallen asleep Because the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout of command, with the voice of an archangel and with *the* trumpet of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first" (vs 15-16). How are you going to have people raised from the dead if they're already in heaven? That's like saying, 'Come home to eat,' and you shout from the living room, 'Get off the phone, I'm here.' Doesn't make sense.

"Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in *the* clouds for *the* meeting with the Lord in *the* air; and so shall we always be with *the* Lord" (v 17). They're not going to be with Him until when? *After the resurrection!* How about that!

Let's come to Revelation 11:15; here's when the resurrection takes place: "Then the seventh angel sounded *his* trumpet; and *there* were great voices in heaven, saying, 'The kingdoms of this world have become *the* kingdoms of our Lord and His Christ, and He shall reign into the ages of eternity.' And the twenty-four elders, who sit before God on their thrones, fell on their faces and worshiped God. Saying, 'We give You thanks, O Lord God Almighty, Who is, and Who was, and Who *is* to come; for You have taken *to Yourself* Your great power, and have reigned. For the nations were angry, and Your wrath has come... [which then will be the seven last plagues] ...and the time for the dead to be judged, and to give reward to Your servants the prophets, and to the saints, and to *all* those who fear Your name, the small and the great; and to destroy those who destroy the earth'" (vs 15-18).

There's the resurrection. When they're raised up in the air, we find this. Hold your place in Revelation, because we're coming back. When the

trumpet blows, how are we going to get from here to there?

Matthew 24:29: “But immediately after the tribulation of those days, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken. And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven; and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming upon the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And He shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet... [that agrees with both 1-Thess. 4 and Rev. 11, the seventh trumpet] ...and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds... [reach down the whole earth] ...from one end of heaven to *the other*” (vs 29-31). They’re just going to be brought up to meet Christ. Where are they going to meet Him?

Let’s see the harvest, Revelation 14:14: “And I looked, and behold, a white cloud... [Where did it say that Jesus was going to be? *On the clouds*—right?] ...and *one* like *the* Son of man sitting on the cloud, having a golden crown on His head; and in His hand *was* a sharp sickle. And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to Him Who was sitting on the cloud, ‘Thrust in your sickle and reap, because the time has come for You to reap; for the harvest on the earth is ripe.’ And He Who was sitting on the cloud thrust forth His sickle upon the earth, and the earth was reaped” (vs 14-16).

We’re coming up to Pentecost, so we’ll cover more of that on Pentecost. Where do they go? There’s a second harvest a little later, which is the harvest of the wicked.

Revelation 15:1: “Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and awesome: seven angels having the seven last plagues, for in them the wrath of God is filled up. And I saw a sea of glass mingled with fire, and those who had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, *and* over the number of his name, standing on the Sea of Glass, having *the* lyres of God.... [those are similar to harps, but they’re different] ...And they were singing the song of Moses, *the* servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, ‘Great and awesome *are* Your works, Lord God Almighty; righteous and true *are* Your ways, King of the saints” (vs 1-3). So all who are resurrected are going to go where? *On a Sea of Glass!* God’s throne is going to come down to that point.

Let’s see something else and let’s see what it says concerning the Sea of Glass here, Revelation 4:1: “After these things I looked, and behold, a door opened in heaven; and the first voice that I heard was as if a trumpet were speaking with me, saying,

‘Come up here, and I will show you *the* things that must take place after these things.’ And immediately I was in *the* Spirit... [this was a vision] ...and behold, a throne was set in heaven, and *one* was sitting on the throne. And He Who *was* sitting was in appearance like a jasper stone and a sardius stone; and a rainbow *was* around the throne, like an emerald in its appearance. And around the throne *were* twenty-four thrones; and on the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white garments; and they had on their heads golden crowns. And proceeding from the throne were lightnings and thunders and voices; and seven lamps of fire, which are the seven Spirits of God, *were* burning before the throne. And before the throne *was* a sea of glass, like crystal. And around the throne and over the throne *were* four living creatures, full of eyes before and behind” (vs 1-6). *Sea of Glass!*

It’s empty there, but over in Rev. 14 the resurrected ones are on the Sea of Glass. Let’s see in the Old Testament that was even with the children of Israel and Moses. Exodus 24 is very interesting. This is after Moses received all the instructions (Exo. 21-23). This is when the covenant with Israel was ratified after receiving the Ten Commandments on the Day of Pentecost.

Let’s read what God says, Exodus 24:1: “And He said to Moses, ‘Come up to the LORD, you and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu... [Very interesting. God always establishes things with witnesses—right? *Everything will be established with two or three witnesses!* Notice what we have: Moses and the Lord and then Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron.] ...and seventy of the elders of Israel, and worship afar off. And Moses alone shall come near the LORD, but they shall not come near. Neither shall the people go up with him.’... [Here was a delegation that was going to go up and verify that, yes, this was God Who gave all these instructions.] ...And Moses came and told the people all the words of the LORD, and all the judgments. And all the people answered with one voice and said, ‘All the words which the LORD has said, we will do” (vs 1-3). If you say you’re going to do something that God says, He’s going to hold you accountable.

Verse 4: “And Moses wrote all the words of the LORD, and rose up early in the morning, and built an altar at the base of the mountain and twelve pillars according to the twelve tribes of Israel. And he sent young men of the children of Israel who offered burnt offerings, and sacrificed peace offerings of bullocks to the LORD. And Moses took half of the blood, and put *it* in basins, and half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar.... [Remember, *a covenant is never in force until there is a sacrifice.* Always important to remember.] ...And he took the

book of the covenant, and read in the ears of the people....” (vs 4-7). God wants everyone to know what He requires.

- That’s why we have the Bible.
- That’s why we have the New Testament.
- That’s why we take the Passover to renew the New Covenant.
- That’s why we read the words of the covenant

—because these are the words of the New Covenant there in John 14-17.

So, just like Moses read all the words of the covenant in the ears of the people, so likewise we do on Passover.] ...And they said, ‘All that the LORD has said we will do, and be obedient’” (vs 6-7). If you tell God that, you better do it. That’s why in the New Covenant there is baptism, because you die in that watery grave and come out to walk in newness of life, because you’re going to walk in God’s way.

Let’s see what happened here, v 8: “And Moses took the blood and sprinkled *it* on the people, and said, ‘Behold the blood of the covenant... [They knew what that meant.] ...which the LORD has made with you concerning all these words.’”—everything that He had there. He can add more words to it as He goes along based upon the original words that He gave.

Verse 9: “And Moses went up, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel. And they saw the God of Israel. And *there* was under His feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the heavens in clearness” (vs 9-10). They saw that it was God. *They all knew! No excuse!*

Nothing like Harold Camping_[transcriber’s correction]: ‘Well, I’m going to have to figure out what to say after May 21.’ It’s going to be interesting, because we’ll be here for Sabbath on the 21st, so we’ll see what happens. No, God wants you to *know* what you’re doing. He wants you to *understand* the words that He has said.

“And upon the nobles of the children of Israel He did not lay his hands. Also they saw God, and ate and drank. And the LORD said to Moses, ‘Come up to Me in the mountain, and be there. And I will give you tablets of stone, and the law, and commandments which I have written, so that you may teach them’” (vs 11-12). This is really something!

Verse 13: “And Moses rose up, and his attendant Joshua. And Moses went up into the mountain of God. And he said to the elders, ‘You wait here for us until we come again to you. And behold, Aaron and Hur *are* with you. If any man has a cause, let him come to them.’ And Moses went up

into the mountain, and a cloud covered the mountain. And the glory of the LORD abode upon Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days. And the seventh day He called to Moses out of the midst of the cloud. And the sight of the glory of the LORD was like a consuming fire on the top of the mountain to the eyes of the children of Israel.... [on the ground as they looked up] ...And Moses went into the midst of the cloud, and went up into the mountain. And Moses was in the mountain forty days and forty nights” (vs 13-18).

God always tells us what He’s going to do. So He said, ‘I want you to build Me a sanctuary, take up an offering.’ Exodus 25:8: “And let them make Me a sanctuary, so that I may dwell among them.” Wouldn’t you think that the people would be happy that God was going to do this for them and God be with them?

Remember, all the plagues and things that He did to get them out of Egypt, bringing them to Mount Sinai and giving them the Ten Commandments. It was so awesome and so frightful and fearful, they said, ‘Oh, Moses! Whoa, Moses, you go and we’ll do all the words that you tell us.’ Now you see, it doesn’t matter if you’re in God’s presence. If you say to God you’re going to do what He says to do, He’s going to hold you accountable.

And I’ve mentioned that concerning this nation. We are a nation that said, ‘Oh, we want God on our side.’ What does our Constitution tell us? Tells about we’re *endowed from our Creator with inalienable rights*—correct? *Rights do not come from men, they come from God!*

Here was a tremendous proposition. Here was something that was going to be fantastic. God was going to dwell among His people. Problem is, they wanted to have their way. Let’s see how the story turned out. Let’s see what took place. Let’s see the last thing that Moses was told by God, and then we will see what the people did and we will see who was involved.

Exodus 31:12: “And the LORD spoke to Moses saying, ‘Speak also to the children of Israel, saying, “Truly you shall keep My Sabbaths... [All of God’s Holy Days are Sabbaths, so this is the weekly Sabbath every week, the Holy Days during the year.] ...for it... [referring to the keeping of the Sabbaths] ...it *is* a sign between Me and you throughout your generations to know that I *am* the LORD Who sanctifies you.... [It’s still a sign between the people of God and God to this very day.] ...You shall keep the Sabbath therefore, for it is Holy to you. Everyone that defiles it shall surely be put to death...”’” (vs 12-14).

This is why we have in Appendix N in the Bible, *Rome’s Challenge to the Protestants* from the

Baltimore Mirror, which was the Catholic newspaper in 1893. Challenging the Protestants and telling them, 'You are such absolute hypocritical fools because you say you go by the Bible. If you go by the Bible, God says the Sabbaths are His and you ought to keep them. And furthermore we want you to know that Sunday is a Catholic institution, not found anywhere in the Bible.' So if you want to keep Sunday, stop your hypocrisy and go with the Bible 100%, 'solo scriptura,' or come onto Catholic ground 100%. What you're doing is a death-dealing thing in your life, because it says 'anyone who does not keep the Sabbath shall surely be put to death.' 'Your stance,' Cardinal Gibbon wrote in that article to the Protestants, 'is suicidal. Your keeping of Sunday is a death wish.' *But he didn't think it was a death wish for the Catholics, though.*

So remember, whenever you take God into anything—and we did a survey of all of the state constitutions, all 50 of the states appeal to God in the preamble of their state constitutions. And most of them refer to the Almighty God. That is a very interesting reference, because that's how God appeared to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as the Almighty God, El Shaddai. He appeared to the children of Israel as YHVH or Jehovah.

Since we're here, the question came up: What happened to the Sea of Glass? We're moving beyond the Sea of Glass to see what happened. In other words, the moral of the story is this: Aaron, who was the high priest-to-be, his two sons Nadab and Abihu and 70 of the elders of the children of Israel went up to this level of the mountain, looked up and saw the Sea of Glass. They saw that it was God. They said, 'All that God has said we will do.' So God now is going to give instructions on how to make the tabernacle and what to do.

He gets done giving all of that and He's finalizing right here what He said to Moses in vs 13-18. The point is going to be this: If you see something spectacular happen, is it going to make enough of an impression upon you that you'll be obedient? That's the question, because they all said, 'We're going to be obedient. We're going to do what you said.'

Even after seeing all of that, let's see what they did, v 13: "'...for it... [keeping of the Sabbath] ...is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations to know that I *am* the LORD Who sanctifies you'" (v 13). This is a very important point that if you don't keep the Sabbath, you are not sanctified.

Today the same thing applies, but it applies with the Holy Spirit. If you do not have the Holy Spirit you are not sanctified. And as we've seen with the *Washing of the Water by the Word* (sermon

series), that's how Christ keeps sanctifying the church. Forgive our sins, cleanse us of our sins, etc. So this is an important thing. If they don't keep the commandments of God, if they don't keep the Sabbath of God and the Holy Days, they don't realize who the true God is. The true God is not in Christmas and Easter and New Years and Sunday and Halloween and all of that. He's not there.

Now He gets to the regular Sabbath, v 14: "You shall keep the Sabbath therefore, for it *is* Holy to you. Everyone that defiles it shall surely be put to death, for whoever does *any* work on it, that soul shall be cut off from among his people." Isn't that what happened?

What happens in society today? Friday night comes and what happens? BANG! *It's party-time, everybody!* Are they cut off from God? *Of course, they don't know God!* Do horrible things happen? *Yes!* Most of the young people and teenagers have the majority of their problems happen on Friday and Saturday night. Saturday night is not Holy, but from Friday night to sunset on Saturday is Holy. So, Satan has them out there diverted, doing their own thing, partying. Isn't that when most illicit sex takes place? Isn't that when introduction of drugs takes place, in many cases?

And look at all of these rock concerts that they have. Those things are set up. They now know that there are certain frequencies that can reduce your resistance mentally to moral obedience. I haven't gone to a concert, but we went to a movie one time years ago and I forget what the movie was, but they had the music just on so loud and explosions and everything, you sit there and it's almost like an 80-mph wind coming through you. I thought, 'No wonder people have to go out and have experiences.' They're all cranked up on emotions and experiences and Satan is right there on the Sabbath to do it.

After they get over their hangover on Saturday morning, what do they do? *Well, they go to a football game and they go to a basketball game and all of that sort of thing!* Defile the Sabbath. Are they cut off from among the people, the people of God? *Yes!*

Verse 15: "'Six days may work be done, but on the seventh day *is* the Sabbath of rest, Holy to the LORD..." Only God can make things Holy. And when He puts His presence in it, it is Holy. Just like what happened when Moses saw the burning bush and he saw it up there on the side of the mountain burning and it wasn't consumed. So he went up there to see what it was. He got up there and the first thing he was told, 'Take off your shoes, this is Holy ground.' Wherever God is, it's Holy. So the Sabbath

is Holy because God puts His presence in it spiritually.

“...Whoever does *any* work on the Sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death” (v 15).

Dolores and I were looking at ranges, because our range is 13-years-old and it's getting caput. We are looking at it and we're reading the specs that they have for different stoves. They don't have the stove you want there, so you've got to look on a computer and you've got to read what the specs are. And electric stoves now have 'Sabbath mode.' I didn't know what that was. I should have known, but I didn't. Dolores said, 'That's for the Jews.' They have it so even the Jews can't cheat on the Sabbath.

Verse 16: “Therefore, the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations *as* a perpetual covenant.” What we have here is a separate covenant alongside the covenant that He was making with them. Perpetual—that means continuously through all time.

“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.’ And He gave to Moses, when He had made an end of speaking with him upon Mount Sinai, two tablets of the testimony, tablets of stone, written by the finger of God” (vs 17-18).

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A comment was made from someone who had been recently in the past few years attending various Protestant churches, including the Seventh-Day Adventist. When they would have open Bible study or when it came time to read some Scripture, they were told, ‘You cannot read this, you cannot read that, you cannot read the other thing because it's not approved by the hierarchy.’ So they censure you going right in.

There is no place in the Bible that's forbidden to be read. That's why God gave the Bible. Now there may be areas in there that we don't understand, but that doesn't mean we don't read them. We read them and pray for understanding so we will know what it means. That's astounding, because God has given the Bible and this last generation before the return of Christ, we've got the whole Bible. We are without excuse of any people on the face of the earth. And yet, Satan is there making it sound good.

Let's go to Ezekiel 22, this tells us exactly what they are doing and they know what they are doing. Just exactly like Cardinal Gibbon knew when he wrote that article, *Rome's Challenge to the Protestants* there in *Baltimore Mirror*. And actually

it was very interesting. 1893, but every one of these were published for the Saturday newspaper. Isn't that interesting?

Ezekiel 22:25: “‘There is a conspiracy of her prophets in her midst, like a roaring lion tearing the prey. They have devoured souls; they have taken the treasure and precious things; they made many widows in her midst. Her priests have done violence to My law and have profaned My Holy things.... [Think of that!] ...They have put no difference between the Holy and the profane, and have not taught the difference between the unclean and the clean, and they have hidden their eyes from My Sabbaths and I am profaned among them” (vs 25-26).

If you don't keep the Sabbaths of God, you don't know God, you don't have a clue. You may have an idea; you may have certain doctrines; but when you get into a denomination and they say, ‘Oh, well, our church doesn't agree with this doctrine, so we don't read this part of the Bible.’ They are cut off! We don't read it because we've “...hidden our eyes from My Sabbaths and I am profaned among them” (v 26).

Notice, the politicians go right along with it. As a matter of fact the politicians tell the preachers what to preach. ‘Listen here, sonny, if you don't preach what we want you to preach, you ain't getting any money from us, is that clear? Do you understand that? We run this town and we control the people. If you want to get along with us, you do as we say.’ What is he going to do?

Verse 27: “Her rulers in her midst are like wolves tearing the prey... [same as the priests here] ...to shed blood and to destroy souls, to get unjust gain. And her prophets have covered themselves with whitewash... [interesting.] ...seeing false visions and divining lies unto them, saying, “Thus says the Lord GOD;” when the LORD has not spoken.... [If you want to know what God says, then you've got to read His Word.] (What happens then?): ...The people of the land have used oppression and committed robbery, and they have troubled the poor and needy. Yea, *they* have oppressed the stranger wrongfully.... [God doesn't like that.] ...And I sought for man among them...” (vs 27-30). God always searches out for a man.

- Is there going to be anyone stand up for God?
- Is there going to be anyone who's going to preach God's Word?
- Is there going to anyone to justify God?
- And say God is always right, under all circumstances everywhere?

“And I sought for a man among them who should build up a wall for the land, and stand in the breach

before Me, so that I should not destroy it. But I did not find one” (v 30).

Today they’re getting ready for the election for 2012. Is anybody going to stand up for God? Is anybody going to mention God? ‘Oh, we have principles and values, aren’t we scrupulous?’ God says, ‘You’ve got to love Me and keep My laws and you’ve got to teach the people, both the priest and the prophets and the rulers.’ And it gets down to another very important principle that we all know: ***You cannot solve spiritual problems with political solutions!*** No, you can’t.

After all of this, let’s come here to Isaiah 29, because after hearing one of the brethren tell me about these other churches there that they won’t even let you read it. You know, that helps explain something. Just dawned on me just now. I’ve been invited to be on radio on different programs, I think two or three of them. I would just preach the Word of God straight out, tell them what it was. Well, after two invitations, not a peep! And also the truth is, if you get on conventional television and you get on conventional TV and you get on regular radio, they have a code of ethics that all of the preachers adhere to and you cannot say certain things. That’s why the Internet is the only way to go.

Isaiah 29:9: “Be stunned and amazed! Blind your eyes and be blind!.... [That’s what they do—don’t they? ‘Don’t read this, it’s not in our doctrine.’] ...They are drunk, but not with wine... [They’re drunk on what? *False doctrine!* The wine of Babylon the great of Rev. 17; all nations have drunk of her wine.] ...they stagger, but not *with* strong drink, For the LORD has poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, and has closed your eyes; He has covered the prophets and your rulers, *and the seers*” (vs 9-10). Isn’t that amazing?

Go on Fox News, you watch Fox News and say, ‘Oh, we’re going to get more truth on Fox News.’ Really? You ever watch them at Christmas time? ‘Oh, we want the truth.’ *No! People only want their version of the truth, what they agree with!*

So here’s what happens, v 11: “And the vision of all has become to you like the words of a book that is sealed, which they give to one who is learned saying, ‘Please read this,’ and he says, ‘I cannot, for it is sealed.’.... [‘I don’t understand this.’] ...And the book is delivered to him who is not learned, saying, ‘Please read this,’ and he says, ‘I am not learned.’.... [‘How do you expect me to know this? All you experts are supposed to know and you don’t know.’] ...And the LORD said, ‘Because this people draw near *Me* with their mouth... [‘Oh, we believe in God,’ 92% of the people.] ...and with their lips honor Me, but their worship of Me is made up of the traditions of men learned by rote, and their

fear toward Me is *taught* by the commandments of men” (vs 11-13)—rather than the Word of God. ‘Oh, in our church we can’t read this, because we don’t teach this doctrine, so we don’t want any waves.’

Verse 14: “Therefore, behold, I will proceed to do again a marvelous work among this people, *even* a marvelous work and a wonder, for the wisdom of their wise ones shall perish... [Isn’t that what’s happening? Happens in every generation. Every cycle you go through this.] ...and the wisdom of their intelligent ones shall vanish.’.... [What kind of society do we live in today?] ...Woe *to* those who go deep to hide *their* purpose from the LORD! And their works are in the dark, and they say, ‘Who sees us? And who knows us?’ Surely, you have turned things upside down!....” (vs 14-16).

That’s exactly what they’ve done. I wonder what kind of riot you would start if you went into a big Sunday-keeping church and stood up there and said, ‘Well, I’m here and I’m going to read out of the Bible to you today. People think they’re going to church to get the Truth. They don’t get the Truth. You see, it’s like this. You can take the Bible, cut out certain parts you don’t like, leave those out, and then you can misquote the Scriptures, misinterpret the Scriptures, misapply the Scriptures, and *you’ve created a lie while you’re reading the Truth.* Amazing—isn’t it?

Verse 16: “Surely, you have turned things upside down!.... [Is everything in the world upside down and backwards and wrong? *Yes, indeed.*] ...Shall the potter be regarded as the potter’s clay... [What do they say? *We’ve evolved from slime and mud.*] ...for shall the work say of him who made it, ‘He did not make me?.... [All you atheists listen. I tell you what, when the signs in the heavens appear, those atheists are going to be really in trouble. It’s like the atheist in the foxhole, doesn’t believe in God until half his buddies are killed and he says, ‘Oh, God, spare me.’] ...Or shall the thing formed say to him who formed it, ‘He had no understanding?’”

Let’s come back here to Exodus 32. We’re going to see the same attitude. How long were the people of Israel genuine in what they said? ‘All that the Lord has said, we will do.’ Did they hear all the words? *Yes!* Did they hear the Ten Commandments? *Yes!*

First commandment was: ‘I am the Lord your God which brought you out of the land of Egypt. You shall have no other gods before Me.’ Did they all hear that? *Yes!* Did they all hear the next one: ‘You shall not make to yourself any graven image of any likeness of anything that’s in heaven above, that’s on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. And you shall not bow

yourself down to worship them. For I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God visiting upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of those that hate Me.'

So if you break the first two commandments, you hate God. 'But showing mercy to thousands of those who love Me and keep My commandments.' And that sounds just like 1-John—right? *Love God, keep His commandments! Yes!* Now, with that in mind, let's see what happened here in Exodus 32. We don't know exactly what timeframe within the forty-day period this occurred.

Exodus 32:1: "And when the people saw that Moses delayed to come down from the mountain... [Now remember what happened. Nadab, Abihu and Aaron and the seventy of the elders of Israel went back down below with the people.] ...then the people gathered themselves... ['Oh, let's have a committee.] ...to Aaron... [Who was Aaron? *The brother of Moses, the one to be the high priest.*] ...and they said to him, '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.'"

'You know, the mountain's on fire up there. Maybe he fell into a volcanic hole and he's burned up and he doesn't exist anymore. What are we going to do, Aaron?'

Notice what Aaron says, 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" (vs 2-3). Confiscation of gold, that's been known to happen by evil men.

"And he took *them* from their hand, and fashioned it with an engraving tool... [What does this tell us? Makes you wonder: was Aaron an idol maker in Egypt? How did he know how to do this?] ...and made a molten calf... [The golden calf! In between the two horns of the golden calf, what do you always have? *A sun-disk, sun worship!* And the day of the sun god is Sunday, and always been, just like the seventh day is the Sabbath of God and has always been.] ...And they said, 'These *are* your gods, O Israel who brought you up out of the land of Egypt.' 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'" (vs 4-5). Now think on that for a minute. How many of these ministers and preachers and prophets and popes and cardinals and bishops and priests, have taken pagan things and said, 'We will make this to the Lord.' They still do it today.

I was watching a documentary of this priest who had to go, I don't know if he was a pedophile or not, but they exiled him clear back into the Amazonian jungles of Peru right up against the Andes Mountains. Here were these primitive Indians, ex-cannibals, ex-headshrinkers. And he set up his little Catholic thing and what he did, he took their days of worship, their dances, everything, and changed a few names and this was now in worship to Mary and Jesus. And they had certain feast days 'unto the Lord.' That's what every Sunday-keeping preacher does.

Someone's surely going to say, 'Fred Coulter, you're sure hard on those Sunday-keeping preachers.' I am, but those Sunday-keeping preachers are sure hard on the Word of God and don't let people read it and close their eyes to the Sabbaths and cast it behind them. So if they're hard on the Word of God, I'm going to be hard on them. Hopefully some will repent.

Notice what happened, v 6: "And they rose up early on the next morning, and offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings. And the people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play." Just like a rock concert. *Yes!* 'Oh, we've been out in this wilderness for so long. Boy, oh, boy, oh, we need some relief.'

The comment was made that I'm not hard on the Sunday-keepers, I read the Word of God and God's hard on them. How dare they, the audacity—remind you of someone—that they have called, they are so deceitful that they take and call Sunday the Lord's day when God says, 'The Sabbath is Mine.' That's His day. Jesus says He's Lord of the Sabbath and He created it. Let's analyze what he did:

1. He listened to the people instead of following God

—and saying, 'Look, we know God is up there, we saw Him. And all the seventy of the elders saw Him in addition to my two sons. So you can ask them did you see God? *God is God* and we know Moses is in good hands, so everybody cool it! Don't get all excited, God is not going to leave you alone. Nothing has happened to Moses, he's fine. We just don't know how long he's going to be up there, but he will come down.' He didn't do that.

2. Then he had them bring the gold
3. Then he built the molten calf

And said these are your gods who brought you up out of the land of Egypt. Was an absolute lie!

4. Then he built an altar
5. Then he proclaimed a feast

So look at all the things that he did and here was the one who was to be the high priest for the children of

Israel. And he only was allowed to live because of Moses' intervention. That's all. But what this does, this tells us that from the very day that the priesthood was formed, it was doomed because of things like this.

Verse 7: "And the LORD said to Moses, 'Go! Get you down, for **your people**... [From here on we have sort of a play on words between God and Moses. Whenever the children of Israel did bad, they were Moses' people. Whenever they did good, they were God's people.] ...for your people, 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. 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'" (vs 7-8).

Now, that's something to consider there. Amazing! The comment was made some more about Aaron, which is this: He was Moses' spokesman at first—wasn't he? He saw all the plagues and all the miracles that God did! What does it take to convert a person? *Amazing!*

Verse 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.' 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 9-13).

That's a pretty powerful prayer. Can you reason with God? *Yes, properly!*

Verse 14: "And the LORD repented of the evil which He spoke of doing to His people... [And then you know the rest of the story.] ...And Moses turned, and went down from the mountain, and the two tablets of the testimony *were* in his hand: the tablets were written on both their sides; on the one side and on the other. And the tablets *were* the work of God, and the writing *was* the writing of God. It *was* engraved upon the tablets" (vs 14-16).

What did he do? *Soon as he saw it, he smashed them!* Then you know what happened. All those who started this thing, God opened up the earth, took care of them. People have never, *never*, *never* learned the lesson that you can go from security and prosperity to oblivion in seconds. I think we've seen enough of those things happen around here to know how exactly how quickly that it can happen. Look what has happened just this past year. So that's something!

Then you go through all the history of the children of Israel. The only time they were reasonably faithful was when Joshua was in charge. When the elders of Israel were still being faithful, the people did what was right. It's kind of like this. If you have a society all set up where they automatically keep the Sabbath, everybody gets used to it. That's the power to be. That's what it was during the days of Joshua. Then the successors of Joshua carried on, but let's read what happened.

Judges 2:10, after he was buried: "And also all that generation were gathered to their fathers. And there arose another generation after them who did not know the LORD, nor even the works which He had done for Israel. And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD, and served Baalim.... [The sun-god again; various forms of the sun-god Baalim.] ...And they forsook the LORD God of their fathers, Who brought them out of the land of Egypt. And they followed other gods, even the gods of the people who were around them, and bowed themselves to them, and provoked the LORD to anger. And they forsook the LORD and served Baal and Ashtaroth" (vs 10-13). After all that God had done.

Mind you, a lot of people, even in the Church of God, when things got tough, false doctrines came in, false prophets came in and said, 'Oh, look, we need to keep Sunday like everybody else.' They said, 'Oh, yes, let's do that.' I'll give you an example. When the leader of the church died, gradually everything went downhill. Then when there was a change in pastor general and personnel, one Sabbath a sermon was given saying that it's all right to eat unclean food.

There were 1200 people that met in this big auditorium. As soon as the services were over, they all got together in little groups and they charged out—I think in the Pasadena area there are a couple of Red Lobster restaurants—and went there and gorged themselves on unclean fish food, just because someone from the pulpit says it's okay to eat! Now listen, *the pulpit is not God!* The Word of God is what God says it should be. And they did this over and over and over again and again and again!

Let's come to Ezekiel 20:8, again; here Ezekiel talks about how the children of Israel went against God. "But they rebelled against Me and would not hearken to Me. They did not each man throw away the abominations of their eyes, nor did they forsake the idols of Egypt. And I said, 'I will pour out My fury against them to fulfill My anger against them in the midst of the land of Egypt.'"

He was going to kill them in the midst of the land of Egypt. Maybe that tells us that, yes, Aaron was an idol-maker. But He didn't do it. He gave them the statutes, the ordinances, Sabbaths, and everything, and said, 'Keep them.' But they didn't keep them.

Verse 18: "But I said to their children in the wilderness, 'Do not walk in the statutes of your fathers, nor observe their judgments, nor defile themselves with their idols. I *am* the LORD your God. Walk in My statutes, and keep My ordinances, and do them. And keep My Sabbaths holy; and they shall be a sign between Me and you, that you may know that I *am* the LORD your God'" (vs 18-20). Again, talking to the people, telling them what they should do.

Verse 21: "But the children rebelled against Me. They did not walk in My statutes, nor keep My ordinances to do them—the ordinances which, *if* a man do, he shall even live in them. And they polluted My Sabbaths, and I said, I would pour out My fury on them, to fulfill My anger against them in the wilderness." Nevertheless, He didn't do it, because God is merciful.

Verse 24: "Because they had not done My ordinances, but had despised My statutes and had polluted My Sabbaths, and their eyes were after their fathers' idols.... [Here's what God does. The *King James* does not translate this correctly.] ...Wherefore I also gave them over to *their own* statutes that were not good, and *their own* ordinances which they could not live. And I defiled them in their own gifts, in that they caused all that opened the womb to pass through *the fire*, that I *might* make them desolate, to the end that they might know that I *am* the LORD" (vs 24-26).

So there you go! That's how the children of Israel did. Absolutely an amazing thing! And it's happened in the Churches of God. It's amazing how quickly people apostatize. Look at the age we're living in today. We have so many things all convenient: you have your computers, you have your smart phones. I use 'dumb' phone; it's a land line. Jonathan gave me a cell phone, but I have not had occasion to use it yet. I appreciate you giving it to me, but I still have my chisel for my granite, because I'm Fred Flintstone. Got to have a little fun with it.

But just think, brethren. What does it really, *really*, *really* take? What kind of conviction do we really have and how long will be faithful in that conviction? Come back to John 14:6; we know this is on the Passover night and we know this is part of the Passover ceremony. Thomas wanted to know where He was going, because He said he couldn't go at that time.

John 14:6: "Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life... [We need to ask ourselves: Do we really, *really* believe it? With every fiber of our being?] ...no one comes to the Father except through Me.... [No one is going to do anything to get to God, except God's way.] ...If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also. But from this time forward, you know Him and have seen Him.' Philip said to Him, 'Lord, shows us the Father, and that will be sufficient for us.' Jesus said to him, 'Have I been with you so long a time, and you have not known Me, Philip?... [He was with him three and a half years, teaching him, training him.] ...The one who has seen Me has seen the Father; why then do you say, "Show us the Father"?''" (vs 6-9).

Then He asked them, v 10: "'Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me?... [Look at all the miracles that they saw, just like the children of Israel when they were in Egypt and all the miracles they saw to have them released.] ...The words that I speak to you, I do not speak from My own self... [Boy, all of those censors of the Bible in those churches better read that, because they're reading the Bible of what they want to read, rather than what God wants you to read.] ...but the Father Himself, Who dwells in Me, does the works.'"

And we have to have God dwelling in us to do the works, everything that we have. Now this last week we had a funeral for Evelyn Gardner. She lived to be 97 or 98, because there was a dispute over her birth certificate. But she was faithful right unto the end. But it's amazing, from the instant we are born until our last breath God gives us: breath, air, food, clothing, shelter. We have to work, we have to do things, God made it that way, everything that we have literally. Every breath of air we breathe comes from God. And look at how He made the world so that could happen, so that we could have oxygen.

And He's given all of this technology now so we can preach the Gospel. But what's happening to the Churches of God? They're all out there fighting among themselves, like a bunch of carnal chickens—pecking and fighting and beating and accusing. Do you think God likes that? *Judgment's coming! You can be sure it's coming!*

So He said, v 11: "Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me; but if not, believe

Me because of the works themselves.... [He demonstrated by miracles.] ...Truly, truly I say to you, the one who believes in Me shall also do the works that I do; and greater works than these shall he do because I am going to the Father. And whatever you ask in My name, this will I do that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do *it*” (vs 11-14). We’ve got to claim those promises, brethren. We’ve got to understand. This is what Jesus has given. God is good to His Word. Are we faithful to the Word of God?

- This is what should have happened to the children of Israel.
- This is what should happen to the Churches of God.
- This is what should happen in every one of our lives.

Verse 15: **“If you love Me, keep the commandments—namely, My commandments”** [Which includes everything in the Bible.] ...And I will ask the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that it may be with you throughout the age, *even* the Spirit of the Truth...” (vs 15-17).

That is what convicts us of sin within, so we can repent.

- God is true!
- Christ is true!
- He’s the Way, the Truth, and the Life!
- The Spirit of Truth is to lead us!

Why can’t we yield to God so it can lead us all in the same direction? “...which the world cannot receive because it perceives it not, not knows it; but you know it because it dwells with you, and shall be within you” (v 17).

Christ and God the Father are *in* us. Don’t you count that as a precious gift? Don’t you count that as something that we need to use and activate and be faithful to God and pray and study everyday and love each other? *All those things!*

Verse 23: “Jesus answered and said to him, ‘If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him. The one who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word that you hear is not Mine, but the Father’s, Who sent Me’” (vs 23-24).

- Do we treat the Word of God like the Israelites did?
- As ministers and preachers and teachers, do we hide our eyes from certain things?
- Do we let God be profane by our activities?
- What is it?

Well, there it is right there. That’s what we need to do.

So it’s quite amazing, quite an amazing story that’s in the Bible— isn’t it? And it’s all true!

Scriptural References:

- 1) Matthew 24:34-36
- 2) 1-Thessalonians 4:14-17
- 3) Revelation 11:15-18
- 4) Matthew 24:29-31
- 5) Revelation 14:14-16
- 6) Revelation 15:1-3
- 7) Revelation 4:1-6
- 8) Exodus 24:1-18
- 9) Exodus 25:8
- 10) Exodus 31:12-18
- 11) Ezekiel 22:25-30
- 12) Isaiah 29:9-16
- 13) Exodus 32:1-16
- 14) Judges 2:10-13
- 15) Ezekiel 20:8, 18-21, 24-26
- 16) John 14:6-17, 23-24

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Ezekiel 18
- Exodus 21-23
- Revelation 17

Also referenced:

Sermon Series: *The Washing of the Water by the Word*

Commentaries:

- Appendix A—The Fourteen Rules of Bible Study (*The Holy Bible in Its Original Order*)
- Appendix N—Rome’s Challenge to the Protestants (*The Holy Bible in Its Original Order*)