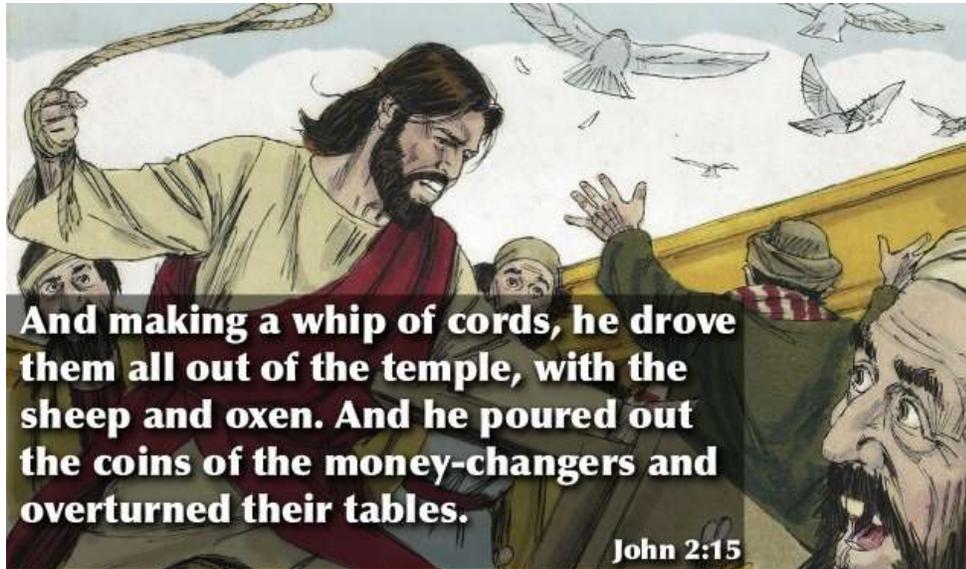


“Den of Thieves” from Jesus and Jeremiah A Whip of Rushes

By Jerry Vaughan McMichael for SunGrist



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All Scripture Christian Life and Living series of Books:

1. Friends of Jesus in this Bible and Computer Age.
2. One Commentary on Ephesians, Peace of Ultimate Integration.
3. Some Sounds of Sound Faith.
4. Snatching, Stumbling, and the Falling Away.
5. What the Churches Don't Want You to Hear.
6. "Den of Thieves" from Jeremiah and Jesus.
7. Hideout for Bad Habits.
8. Technical Applications of Computers.
9. American Thought for Christians.

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Chapter 1: God's Called People versus God's Chosen People.

Besides the intolerance toward sound doctrine (II Timothy 4:3,4) which naturally comes with and perhaps leads the Falling Away, along with the rising tide of the mystery of lawlessness, we must account for the large amount of unsound doctrine in Christianity today. The prime reason is increased lack of respect for the Bible as the Word of God. Perhaps there is more superficial respect for the Bible today; but rather as a book, or an inspired book like Shakespeare or Milton, not as the book through which God can and does speak to us every day. It can also be considered as an academic book without proper regard for this "every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God". Even as the can account for the Falling Away from the aspects of II Timothy 4:4,5 with "intolerance toward sound doctrine", with preferences for wants over needs and commands, with "itching ears" Bible teachers that are heaped up all over the world on TV and in churches faster than the Bible as the Word of God can keep up; so the vast multiplication of unsound doctrine and unsound living **{almost the same}** have the same foundations. It just plain does not matter that much about the Bible as the Word of God to most religious leaders and church members. History can be substituted, their own wisdom, denominational documents given priority over the original, indifference, and attempts at interpretation from the natural and other than spiritually discerned. As wisdom has grown in the United States, it has become harder and harder for the academically inclined to admit the source and preservation of the Bible, in fact to even admit the supernatural. And since most Americans don't want to admit that God cares and intervenes that much in world affairs, much less in their lives, it is very difficult for them to comprehend that God spent over one thousand years working through and with a diversity of over 40 authors, prophets and apostles, to formulate a book with which He could adequately communicate to the Creatures which He made. That job is complete; the words that God has spoken, every word out of His own mouth, is once for all delivered as a God-given basis for "the faith once for all delivered to the saints" (Jude 3). There is no need for

special revelation from the charismatics; in fact, their revelations divert us from sound doctrine and sound Christian living! We just cannot get it in our head that after we are in the Falling Away, and that is now, popularity is a bad sign.

Yet in all intellectual honesty **{to use a phrase coined by Elton Trueblood, the American philosopher of religion}** this does not adequately describe Mr. Average Church Member. You need to look carefully at II Timothy 3:16,17 in its 3 parts--(1) "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God", (2) "and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness", and (3) "that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly furnished unto all good works"--and then with this foundation of (1) this single and most basic of foundational and doctrinal statements about the Bible as the Word of God: close the (2) close the church administration gap of inadequate teaching and preaching **{that is half doctrine, with no reproof, little correction, and very incomplete instruction in righteousness by example and methodology}**; and (3) also close the gap on Christian living so that from the doctrine and church administration flows sound Christian living. I never understood it completely but I think these two gaps between (1) the Bible and (2) church administration and (3) sound Christian living is what Henry Steele Commager **{for you not into American Studies, Commager, former professor of American History at Amherst, made a great contribution to the History of American Thought in his book THE AMERICAN MIND}** referred to as the "paranoid" nature of American fundamentalism. But this takes a lot of Scripture and analysis to describe this problem, with solutions, in American churches where it is begged that you see 'Den of Thieves' and "Hideout for Bad Habits **{the real meaning of Jeremiah 7:11 as you will come to see}** as a Scriptural generalization of what American churches are like in this time of the Falling Away. Before a complete description, and possible solution, is offered in the last chapter, "God's 'Called' People versus God's 'Chosen' People", you must come to appreciate the failures in churches and denominations on II Timothy 3:16,17 that have caused the historical transition in American churches from the "perilous times" and bad habits {"follies"} of II Timothy 3:1-8 to the Falling Away of II Timothy 4:45, "the time will come" which has come!

If the "last days" started with the Coming of the Holy Spirit in great power and glory on the first day of Pentecost after the Ascension of Christ, and it did according to the Apostle Peter and the Prophet Joel in Acts 2:16-21--Peter first said (2:16) that what you are seeing today is the beginning of the fulfillment of Joel 2:28-32 and then the Joel quote started with "it shall come to pass in the last days" (2:17); if the end of the last days is also given in Joel 2:32 and Acts 2:21 with signs in the heavens above and the earth beneath--which are certainly evident all over the world today in tornadoes, hurricanes, fires, floods, global warming, and other acts of God **{"blood and fire and vapor of smoke}**, and who can deny these things are happening; and if immediately after these signs in the heavens above and the earth beneath it is the "coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD" as Christ comes again with legions of angels to gather and separate, and certainly the Second Coming is the great and notable One Day of the LORD and Lord that Jesus called

“the last day” (John 6:54), then we should right now be up to our necks in: (1) The Falling Away of II Thessalonians, and we are with increased intolerance toward sound doctrine (II Timothy 4:3,4), with a waxing cold of church members for Christ, a Luke warmness that God cannot stand (Revelation 3:14-22), and a vast heaping up on TV, in churches, and in other meetings of “itching ears” Bible teachers; (2) the rising tide of the mystery of sin and lawlessness (II Thessalonians), and we are since America and our churches cannot escape this world wide movement. It is a tribute to Satan, indifference and ignorance toward Bible, and to fundamentalism that many church members look for the Second Coming as if it could happen before the Falling Away. More often the fundamentalists have so cluttered up the eschatology of the Falling Away, the withdrawal of the Holy Spirit from earth, and the new heavens and the new earth with special revelations based on the Scofield Bible Notes, that American church members hardly know what to think. There is a certain advantage of fiction based on fiction as in many of the recent and popular books on eschatology where confusion can dominate over the clarity of the Scriptures like in II Thessalonians. As surely as II Thessalonians is a book of the Bible, one of the 66 books of the Word of God, and as surely profitable as the “ALL **{other}** SCRIPTURE of II Timothy 3:16,17, so knowing about the Falling Away approximately 40-80 years before the Second Coming is a profitable--for “doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness” as are convictions and knowledge of the Second Coming itself. {Who knows you may be up to your armpits in the Falling Away already along with the deacons, pastors, and other members of your church. In fact, the probability is that you are already, based on the daily news and stories about bad habits of church members that are common knowledge in the community and your church.} And this does not even include the cover ups that churches and church leaders, just like the government, do in order to maintain an appearance that is much shinier and cleaner than the spiritual realities.

This book works on the assumption that the problems of the Falling Away and unsound doctrine are somewhat alleviated in their impact on churches and individual Christians when they are faced up to, even as a physician like Jesus said cannot heal until the nature of the disease is comprehended. All is well in Zion, and all things continue as they were from the beginning of Creation and the beginning of the United States, is not a bad habit, practice, and perspective of sceptics and scoffers alone (II Peter 3:3), it is more efficiently and effectively practiced by church members who have selectively learned to stick their heads in the sand on certain realities such as the Falling Away. Even as other schools have problems but “not mine”, and other countries have problems but “not mine”, so also there is a certain weakness of human nature that sees problems in other countries and even other denominations without a recognition of the same or similar problems in their own church.

It takes a lot of courage, and perhaps some foolhardiness, to call any House of God a “Den of Thieves”, but Jesus did and Jeremiah before Him; however what you will find is a meaning much deeper than on the surface where some wealthy of companies like Enron

and World Com have stolen from their own employees while hiding as respected members in their local churches. True Jesus criticized those of the House of God during His time that would buy and sell there, using the status of the House of God as a vehicle for profit much like mega-churches are doing today as well as these operating officers of large corporations are doing. But what Jeremiah referred to in 7:11, and Jesus used that as a basis to cleanse the Temple; was how the people of God treated the House of God as a hideout even as a Gang would that stole, murdered, etc. and then ran right back to the Den as a place of security and safety. In other words, at heart of what Jesus and Jeremiah meant was that the people of God were living as they wanted to all week contrary to the will and covenant of God, then coming on the Sabbath like church members today to say "We are Safe" because we are in the House and Temple of God! We are a member of the elite of God, and in the Temple that God Himself has chosen for His own people. This new book Project for 2008 entitled DEN OF THIEVES, REPORTS FOR CHURCHED AND UNCHURCHED UNBELIEVERS, having faced up to the well-known spiritual realities of religion today in American Society like the Falling Away, like the tares in the local churches and denominations, and keeping in mind that Jesus taught to make no effort to separate the tares from the wheat for fear of getting the wheat by mistake; still what must we do about the tares in the church: and further how about those on the way to becoming like Hebrews 3:12, "Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God." These are the unbelievers in the church with certain common issues as unbelievers outside the church. What you will find attached to this newsletter is the second chapter of "Den of Thieves" on "Bible Reports for Unbelievers", and with an introduction of what should be done about it since there should be no effort to shift the tares from the wheat in the kingdom or in the local church. All would admit that among our goals for 2008 should be efforts to make reports to unbelievers. Most generally we do not think about some of those unbelievers as in the local churches and denominations, yet we dare not neglect the tremendous influence which these "tares" have on the churches and the kingdom. Is it not possible to make efforts to neutralize the influences of these tare leaders without trying to separate them from their local church or kingdom; after all, the most influential of those tare-leaders are the false prophets and itching ears Bible teachers, the wolves in the sheep clothing of the local church that have the goals of personal profit and status by making disciples to themselves. Yes, Jesus, Paul, and the other Apostles warned us about these and about their influences; and the fact that we have so much trouble finding one of them today is not because there are none in the United States, it is because they are hidden in local churches and denominations too close to us to see or detect! As you read the attached chapter and as preparation continues on "Den of Thieves", all your comments are appreciated. Simply email them to [SunGrist Bible@netscape.com](mailto:SunGristBible@netscape.com) or biblecombibleman@yahoo.com.

Whereas in the past, we have had such warnings as from Gambrell who said "we Baptists are many but not much"; and books like "In His Steps" by Charles Sheldon, also seminarians like the church administrator who said "you can fill a church with empty people", and the more recent books like "Where Are the Converts", it is hoped that "Den

of Thieves” will find a comparable place in the understanding of current church history. While the “Den of Thieves” book with its two offshoots of “Hideout for Bad Habits” and “Reports for Believing” will be generally somewhat limited by being available in only the computer software format of Adobe Reader PDF, you can see how these efforts will simultaneously make some Green effort to what is perhaps the second most crisis of this planet earth compared to the first of the Falling Away! You can with SunGrist_Bible books like “Den of Thieves”, “Hideouts for Bad Habits”, and “Reports for Believing” then LIVE GREEN, THINK GREEN, AND READ GREEN. If you are not presenting reading this copy, then you or friends and relatives can download them from the two websites of SunGrist_Bible, www.biblecombibleman.com or www.SunGristBible.com.

Sincerely,

Jerry V. McMichael
Piney Woods
Lincoln National Forest
April 2008

By the way, it was not always comfortable writing the words of this book. Like with Jeremiah it was both bitter and sweet. I despise where we are as churches and church members--I especially hate the loss of the historical heritage of Baptist history and the history and traditions of Southern Baptists--but these are historical facts, with the inevitability of the Falling Away, that we must face up to. Like in II Timothy 2:17,18, the faith of more around us will be overthrown and we neglect the nature and solutions of these two final and great world wise movements: (1) the rising tide of the mystery of sin and lawlessness; and (2) the Falling Away with (a) the abounding of sin that causes a cold waxing toward Christ and God and the Bible and with (b) the intolerance and popularity toward unsound doctrine. Regretfully this is where we are in history now, just not too long before a revelation of the man of Sin and the Second Coming of Christ; and it cannot be denied, only fought! Oh yes, there is also the hope of the final House of God, where God finally agrees to dwell among men with Christ, themselves becoming the Temple of the New Jerusalem on the new earth. Do not let the fundamentalists with their eschatological fictions based on fiction, rob the magnitude of this hope from you, and clutter the future. Also pardon this long Preface and the introduction to follow after the Table of Contents!

NOTE: You are going to have to get more serious about this matter of Christian faith, or the IN CHRIST of faith in what He did on the cross for forgiveness of sins as well as in the Resurrection of the dead to share eternal life, and for the faith once for all delivered to the saints in the Bible which is Word of God. MTD will absolutely no do it, as that belief system is very close to no faith in God, Christ, and the Bible at all. As preachers like Peter Marshall prophesied (preached) in the 50's, "If you stand for

nothing, you will fall for anything", but not heeded by church members or American society during since the falling away from real God, real Christ, and real Bible; and now fulfilled from the parents and teachers in the lives of the millenniums--a belief system in almost nothing except the American Democratic faith. As American citizens of equality under the law, we can be grateful for that; however, for Christian life and living according to the ALL Scripture method and movement it is vastly inadequate. Any Christian that strives to live life with only that faith in a Civic Religion is like an automobile firing on only one cylinder. And to assist as a guide sort of like Philip the evangelist was a guide into Isaiah and the Bible for the Ethiopian, recommended here are the All Scripture Christian Life and Living series of books, All Scripture method and movement because the church with the falling away has isolated itself to only a few favorites.

All Scripture Christian Life and Living Books:

1. Friends of Jesus in this Bible and Computer Age.
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Chapter 2 Introduction to “Den of Thieves”

The most obvious thieves in churches are hardly dealt with in this book, unless in the list of the bad habits or follies of II Timothy 3:1-8: the dens of big business CEOs and board members that have robbed their employees and others of a retirement with 401k's, the priests who would steal innocence from helpless children **{which is worse, hard to say, priests or leaders of the FLDS that steal and abuse}**, and the churches who would steal salvation from the unknowing by stepping between them and Christ **{let us never forget that priests and others would steal the prerogative from God Himself to forgive sins, now that is sacri-religious and blasphemy!}**. Bible exegesis of “Den of Thieves” from Jeremiah, from the cleansing of the Temple by Jesus in John, and from a similar cleansing of the Temple in Matthew provide a real definition of the “Thieves” in church dens in terms of their bad habits or follies. Of course the primary bad habit is hypocrisy in worship where God is given split loyalty with the “Queen of Heaven” from Jeremiah; and while literally many church members today who unlike God’s people of Jeremiah do not worship all week a goddess like the Queen of Heaven, one who God’s people of that generation caused them to prosper and be in health, they thought, many substitute idols for the real God of the Universe presently exist among church members that take prime loyalty over God, or at least split loyalty. God will not take split loyalty as indicated by the message to the church of the first century, and thus to us also, that God with a preference for “hot” would prefer “cold” over lukewarm.

Of course, some space must be given to counter those who would steal Peter as a Pope or those who would steal “the church” for themselves alone exclusion all other Christians from it and salvation. We are reminded that when Christ ascended to heaven to give gifts to men there was no Pope in the list, only “Apostles and Prophets, pastors and teachers, and evangelists.” In reality after the local church at Rome approximately 100 A.D. decided that their church should have the top bishop--“bishop” was already a good New Testament word, the same as “pastor”--then they out of their own wisdom, with no Scriptural justification--chose Pope as the title for the head bishop; and then

posthumously ordained Peter as the first Pope. Peter knew nothing of it, nor Christ, nor the other of the 12 Apostles; and certainly, Paul as he was crucified with Peter in Rome knew nothing of this top billing on the part of Peter. Of course, the Bible does teach that the 12 Apostles will rule under God and Christ in the New Jerusalem. Others often more so than the Roman Catholics try to steal "the church" for themselves, like the Mormons and Church of Christ. Would it not be nice if we could re-write history to make ourselves in the line of history that provides for automation as a Christian, or if we could put up a sign out in front of our church that made it automatically synonymous with the "church of the firstborn written in heaven." Now Baptists, Methodists, Lutherans, and etc. down the line of denominations like the Roman Catholics, are not innocent of this exclusive attitude in that often they use "THE" in front of their denominations and after the denominations add "church" instead of churches. But we will let exegesis of the Bible take care of them on the 120 times the word church is used in the Bible with at least 3 distinct meanings; and exegesis of "Den of Thieves" in Jeremiah, John, and Matthew, with help from other Scriptures to keep it in the total context of the Bible. After all, the Scripture as the Word of God is our source of faith and practice! Where do these churches and denominations and church members stack up today against the Bible as it is written and as it was written originally. While few churches or church members would disagree on the wording of the Bible as it exists in most hands and churches, it is the many throughout history who have placed themselves above scripture, or who have attempted to replace Scripture with a superiority of other documents or even special revelation, that have lead us into the present Falling Away where "they will not endure sound doctrine". (II Timothy 4:3,4).

Even as there was a period in the History of American Thought when historians themselves tried to rewrite history with a certain bias, before the scientific method became popular, and then even later as there was a certain bias shown in the re-writing of American History like in Turner's Frontier Thesis; so there have been at least four major efforts of churches and denominations to rewrite first century Christianity to magnify themselves as the other church or Christians: (1) Of course the most famous is that of the Roman Catholics as (a) they rewrote the life of Peter to make him the first Pope, a thing that the fisherman would never have permitted, (b) they have rewritten the gifts that the Ascended Christ left to men--apostles and prophets, pastors and teachers, and evangelists--to include a Pope **{sometime after 100 A.D. and the passing away of all the 12 Apostles, the church at Rome decided that their "bishop", bishop being another word for pastor in the New Testament and thus authorized by Christ but not Pope, should be the head bishop and after Christ and after the complete writing of the New Testament--with a complete record of "the faith once for all delivered to the saints" (Jude 3)--decided that this head Bishop in the church at Rome should be called a Pope}**, and (c) they have also out of their more than august wisdom, decided that the head of the Roman Vatican, a State within itself in the city of Rome, should be successor to this fictitious position of Pope which Peter never had. **{Yes, we know about the distortions of Peter's profession of faith and the statements by Jesus that upon the rock of faith,**

He would build "My Church"; and we briefly discuss it in later chapters, but this perversion of the sound doctrine of the Bible, for personal profit and interest and the personal gain of Rome and the early church at Rome, is one of the first intolerances toward sound doctrine of history (II Timothy 4:3,4)}, with certainly the church at Rome leading with the fulfillments of the heresies of the "latter times" as they forbade to marry and commanded to abstain from healthy meats, things ordained and blessed by the God they came to oppose, which the Word of God says comes from "doctrines of devils" and "seducing spirits" (I Timothy 4:1-5). Goodness, do we ignore these obvious references to the Roman Catholic Church and the Pope in Scriptures, much less to the Dark Ages of Church History where the Vatican was more a contribution and hindrance to human rights than the State. Is the Pope's recent visit to the United States, with all his pomp and circumstances, going to achieve the intended purpose of making Roman Catholic church attendance more popular, make the sexual abuses more acceptable, and recruit more Americans for the priesthood?

In many of his speeches and sermons **{by the way which have set back in many ways the American tenets and especially Baptist Distinctive of "Separation of Church and State" as a Head of a Vatican State and representative of one religious establishment was allowed to preach his propaganda for hours on CNN and the other news channels-where is equal time for the Baptists or other Protestants, and later we will discuss how by the State taking priests to courts over child abuse the State has understandably lost some distinction between Church and State and that Roman Catholics have taken advantage of that loss}**...in many of his speeches and sermons, the Pope out of a long history of continuity that goes all the way back to the early centuries **{certainly not to Peter, Christ, the Apostles, and church doctrine of the first century}**, put Americans in place as newcomers and seekers after American Independence, something Emerson and other writers of the American Romantic Period thought they did with respect to Italy and the rest of Europe many years ago. **{Remember the American Scholar from Emerson, also remember, and others of the Romantic Era who demanded an intellectual independence of Europe like the political one of the American Revolution; and I think in spite of this recently exhibited superiority of history from the German Pope, it has been obtained both intellectually and religiously. Certainly, it is prayed do we have a definite Separation of Church and State lest we slide back into the Dark Ages at the same time as the Falling Away.}**

This is not pope-bashing day, although with the audacity of using politics and national news to increase in America their popularity perhaps the Vatican has earned, if not bashing, at least the intellectually honest toward the fraud they have perpetrated on the American people. It was a fraud when the pastor of the early church at Rome claimed to be the head pastor, alias the pope, and it is still a fraud now. Can you imagine Peter, the fisherman, wearing such ridiculous looking dunce caps which look more like the KKK than a group of original disciples of Christ; and those costumes? Can you help but think of where Jesus criticized the religious leaders among the Jews for seeking "honor from men, more than honor from God" (John 5:44)? Obviously with all this pomp and

circumstances, with these dunce caps and costumes, honor from men has become far more important to the Vatican than honor from God Himself. Do you really think that God, sitting up there on the great white throne in great majesty and power, is impressed by these costumes of authority? The whole visit to America reminds one of the temporal and superficial triumphant entry of Christ where later the same multitudes crucified Christ, now where is the crucifixion; and is it left for the humble like us! **{However, I must say that I wish Associational Missionaries of the Southern Baptist Convention, even if they are not going to protest on the Baptist Distinctive of the Separation of Church and State, would with other professional denominational workers wear those little red beanies.}**

Is all this sacri-religious with disrespect for the holy? It palls in comparison to the major thesis of this book that: MOST CHURCHES IN AMERICA HAVE BECOME A HIDEOUT FOR BAD HABITS , another way to say “Den of Thieves”; and all these things about the pope, and other rewrites of history such as that of the blood tracing of Landmark Baptists, the futile efforts of the members of Christ of Church churches to trace their history back to Jerusalem in 1 A.D, and the fictions of the Mormons in the Book of Mormon where Jesus made a visit to North America during the three days in the grave. Oh, if the revisionists historians of American Intellectual Thought had studied and dealt with in a truly scientific manner these perversions of church history and of the sound doctrines of the Bible. Everybody including the Jews want to be the elect of God, God’s people, and there are many creative ways in which men have sought to identify themselves historically and otherwise with the Christ.

One thing that needs to be said and up front right now, as the pope also quoted from John 1:12, that blood and history and the will and status of men in the final analysis have little or nothing to do with salvation: “But as many as received him **{Christ}**, to them **{believers of any age and any group}** gave He power to become the Sons of God; which were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of men, but of God.” (John 1:12) The thing that needs to be said is that where there is a real group of believers, it is because there has been a real work of the Holy Spirit in individual hearts; and all this promotion of the inherent unity that the pope and Warren ride, is not the P.R. work of any organization, religious or otherwise, but the personal work and provision of the Holy Spirit of God. It is not only the Pope but also Warren and Osteen that would steal the work with honor for themselves of what only the Spirit has done and can do. What it comes down to in the final analysis, that if a few natives in the darkest recesses of Africa or Latin America were to stumble across a Bible through which the Spirit could talk to them **{and some things similar have happened}**, right there the Spirit could create Christians and a local church, yes one also written in heaven in the church of the firstborn, without any history and religious authority from men!

Actually, what you will find is more bashing of Baptists, especially Southern Baptists and the fundamentalists wing of the SBC, in this “Den of Thieves” book more so than

Catholics, Church of Christ, Mormons, and the “THE denominations”. While I love Baptists historical doctrine and history, especially the history of the SBC up until the fundamentalists took over approximately 30 years ago **{which by the way is curiously close to the same time you could easily mark beginning of the final great Apostasy called the Falling Away}**, Baptists church members and churches just like all churches and denominations of the world have fallen deeply under the influence of the world movement--“as sin abounds the love of many will wax cold”--called in the Bible the Falling Away. (II Thessalonians) And where warnings have been given in previous books from SunGrist Bible and on websites about popularity during the time of the Falling Away--that is, it is a curse rather than a blessing as the “many” fall away--primarily among Baptists and interdenominational churches like the New Life Movement and the National Evangelical Association established and headed by Ted Haggard--we cannot ignore, especially at this juncture in history as the Vatican seeks more popularity in America, the Roman Catholics.

The main point here is that the Vatican **{alias the Roman Catholic “church”-denominations}** is a State with a flag, property within the city of Rome and all over the world, an army and security guards, a hierarchal organization with ambassadors and all those things. That the Pope and the Vatican have intruded into American and international politics can hardly be denied; and unless CNN, Fox, MSNBC, etc. give to some Protestant leaders equal and free time on national TV for religious propaganda **{truth like the Pope tried to say with his distortions of John 14 on the “way, the truth, and the life, much like he has distorted Peter’s Profession of Faith with Jesus’ statement about the “My Church” for personal gain, much like the gifts given by the Ascended Christ; and my goodness, if Christ had really chosen a Pope to rule over all other bishops in the first century, why would he have chosen the church at Rome, famous for the place both the Apostles Peter and Paul were crucified and where Paul identified that they even sought to enhance the persecution of the Apostles (Philippians 1:15,16) with words like “add to our afflictions”}.**

“Den of Thieves” is more about hiding than stealing. After men and women and children, like in Jeremiah, have committed misdemeanors **{follies and bad habits as in II Timothy 3:1-8}** and felonies **{substitute loyalties for God generally called in Jeremiah and other Prophets, “fornication” against God or “adultery” against God}** against God all week, they need a place to hide on Sunday **{the Sabbath in Jeremiah}**, so they often chose the church **{the Temple in Jeremiah and the time of Jesus}**. Of course, it is obvious that on the surface in the Temple cleansing twice by Jesus, that some “merchandising” for profit was condemned (John 2) as Jesus showed His zeal or enthusiasm for the House of God in the driving out of the money changers and other profiteers from religious acts of worship; but more than the obvious appearance, is a righteous judgment on the deeper meaning of the text (Jeremiah 7:11) and the larger context of the Prophet Jeremiah’s Temple Message that Jesus quoted from in the cleansing of the Temple the second time. (Matthew 21:12-17)

Where in Jeremiah does God really get angry **{yes, even as contrary to popular opinion Christ did get angry enough to drive the money changers out of the Temple, so the God of love and justice is also a God that can get angry, and you can count on it that God is angry when He will no longer listen to prayer}**, it was after He told Jeremiah that He saw the diversion of loyalty of His own people, perhaps trying to make Him jealous but really embarrassing themselves, as women, their husbands, and their children participated in the worship and loyalty to the “Queen of Heaven”. **{There are a lot of Queens of Heaven today: heavenly idols of the two footed kind, false distortions of Mary as a person to whom one can pray and receive forgiveness of sins and other help, our “Mother in Heaven” as some Mormons believe and practice, and etc.}** God knows us, and God knows that there are other “gods”, either in our minds or in the priority and loyalty of our lives made effectively “gods” because of the place in the lives of church members.

“For the LORD your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who shows no partiality nor takes a bride.” (Deuteronomy 10:17)

“God stands in the congregation of the mighty; He judges among the gods.” (Psalm 82:1)

“I said, ‘You are gods’ [in Hebrew Elohim, that is mighty ones or the judges], and all of you are children of the Most High. But you shall die like men...” (Psalm 82:6)

“Professing to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man--and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things.” (Romans 1:22,23)

Does it not make sense that if Satan has worked thousands of years to cultivate churches under his control that he will also control false prophets to protect and preserve that control? The problem is: how do we identify those churches and those denominations to the extent that the church control has extended to a large enough group to be called a denomination, or should we even try; and as mere mortals, albeit Christians that are destined to judge the world, are we entitled to label any church as a “Den of Thieves”?

God also knows, like He told God’s people through Jeremiah, that these idols of gods, and the gods themselves, are “cisterns that cannot hold water.” (Jeremiah 2:13) There is only one God, the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ and the God of the Christian Bible, with power and position and love and concern for individuals, and righteousness **{Who is also without human prejudice and will not take brides}** to take care of His own people and also manage the world to the extent that He desires. **{Like Pastor James said at the Great Jerusalem Conference, “Known unto God are all His works from the beginning.” (Acts 15:18)}** So what happens when you give loyalty to a “god” that does not really exist? Well, either (1) to give loyalty to the only other real supernatural being, that of Satan and

his fallen angels, or (2) to do what you want to in the first place with the religious devotion only be a cloak for personal desires.

A prime doctrinal sub-thesis of this book is that Sound Living comes from Sound Doctrine. You cannot have a sound Christian and sound church member without the sound doctrine that comes from the faithful preaching and study of the "ALL SCRIPTURES" of II Timothy 3:16,17. Even as the proof text method of the pope and other fundamentalists, like in the SBC, will not satisfy the "ALL" in "ALL SCRIPTURE", so the failures to follow up brief mentions of Scripture without the profitability of "doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness" of that same portion of the Word of God. Catholic priests in America, and do not exclude the rest of the world, are the same corrupt men among "God's People" that the pope and catholic teachings have made them. And also, the people! Have we forgotten the old classical saying of the Old Testament that "like the priests like the people, and like the people like the priests"? It would be amazing indeed if the priests of the Roman Catholic churches, and the child abusers each day that we hear more about in the news of Protestant and Mormon churches, could remain holy and distinct and separated from the world-wide movement as the Falling Away rides on the rising tide of the mystery of lawlessness and sin of II Thessalonians. Even as religious leaders like the pope seek an integration in American communities and States, they cannot ignore the world wide and inevitable movements of the Falling Away where: (1) the rising tide of sin and lawlessness floods over all communities and churches; and (2) the intolerance toward sound doctrine of II Timothy 4:3,4 replaces "want-TOs" and itching ears Bible teachers of all denominations where sound Bible doctrine and profitability belongs.

Fundamentalists--whether the Roman Catholics, the cult of the Mormons like in El Dorado, Texas recently, or the fundamentalists that took control of the SBC about the same time that the Falling Away got well under way in the United States--like to substitute their own history and traditions for the Bible of the Word of God. What you really have in the fundamentalist's Mormon cult compound of El Dorado, as Texas authorities are beginning to find and make public, is tragedies of: child abuse, child sexual abuse, and abuse of State benefits for personal gain where say one husband gets the welfare money for up to 22 wives, and the abuse of the freedoms of individual rights. You talk about stealing with a "Den of Thieves" those such Mormons and even illegal aliens who take advantage of other Americans, most often encouraged by the Roman Catholics, that steal these benefits away from Americans can be considered also a "Den of Thieves". Where the fundamentalists of the SBC have placed their traditions over the Word of God is in a preference for the eschatology of Scofield Notes over the Bible Itself, especially as they have taught and defended a false doctrine of a thousand years on earth when Christ comes Again, separate from the new earth of eternity. Yes, it is this one thousand year, believed and taught by the fundamentalists that really split the Convention! Add to that a "bad spirit", which many church members failed to test like the Apostle John recommended, of these Bible Baptist fundamentalists **{they left the SBC**

approximately 1920 but out of the “spirit within them that lusted to envy” (James 4:5), they lusted after the prosperity of SBC churches] that fought and caused warfare and fighting; and based on a previous, condemned by Paul practice, in the church at Corinth where they, like the fundamentalists today, took a superior and bad attitude that “the Word of God came to them only” or “that the Word of God came out of them” (I Corinthians 14:36). This same haughty attitude you see today among Pentecostals and other charismatics, by the way a movement that has cut across with the Falling Away all denominations, who claim for themselves and their people special revelations.

I tell you this problem of the Falling Away is big enough to require some discussion and safeguards against. It cannot be ignored! It is sort of like a friend in the Navy who on a training flight accidentally popped the chute of his chest pack, and the more he stuffed on it, so the chief petty officer would not see, the larger it grew!

There is no hope of getting out of this Falling Away. There is only the individual hope for a few individuals and perhaps a few isolated churches to avoid the onslaught in itching ears doctrine and living. You cannot escape after a study of the gigantic falling away of God’s People in the wilderness, from which only a few were saved, how especially in Hebrews and from Christ in Matthew 24, that this is an example of what will happen to all churches and all church members, alias Christians, during the Falling Away. You cannot escape also the simple fact that the leaders in the Falling Away are and will be the churches, the church leaders, and the church members, since they alone of all the world are the only ones, like God’s people in the wilderness, who have seen the works of God for over 40 years. There are certain things that can be done to resist this tide in your church; and there are certain things that can be done to individually as a Christ, like certain church members in the failing 7 churches of Asia Minor, avoid the Falling Away, and those are emphasized, even encouraged in these chapters. (Revelation 2 and 3) However the solution is not to ignore the inevitability of the Falling Away problem! That only exasperates the problem and covers it up. Goodness knows, church leaders including the Pope, have become creative and efficient at the covering up of Bad Habits of Church Members, especially of covering up when their only House of God has become a “Hideout for the Bad Habits” of II Timothy 3:1-8.

Unfortunately Satan has a lot working for him such as sin, love of self among church members **{don’t forget the large list of “follies” of II Timothy 3:1-9 among church members includes many bad attitudes such as love of self and lovers of pleasure}**, false prophets identified by Paul long ago to the Ephesian elders that will come from within the church and from without the local church, say on the denominational level, and the itching ears Bible teachers as the time has come when they **{church members}** will no longer endure sound doctrine that are being “heaped up” in and out of churches, in Bible schools, colleges, and seminaries, on TV and in novel best-selling books; and then above all the history of the Falling Away is now on the side of Satan--albeit, known unto God are all the works of world history that He permits even as He controls per Pastor James,

“known unto God are all His works from the beginning”. To see how the current history of the Falling Away, which can easily be called now “Church History” or the “History of Denominations” {later we will deal with how in reality, so-called community churches of the non-denominational and interdenominational garden variety are for all practical purposes also denominations} contributes to the control of churches like Satan already controls the world {Jesus Himself stated that Satan is the prince of this world, and by the way also said that “he has nothing in Me” which unfortunately can no longer during this Falling Away be said of the churches}. You need only read once again II Thessalonians to develop strong convictions that the rising tide of the flood of sin and lawlessness of the Falling Away is a universal world-wide flood that comes into the churches and their man-made extensions in denominations as well as in the greater body of unbelievers of the world, that this period of history is synonymous with the increased control of Satan over the world and the churches as he cultivates a “Man of Sin” to lead in the great world movement of the Falling Away and the final war, and as the Holy Spirit is withdrawn from earth {surely this will affect most churches except perhaps the Charismatics that will never know the difference} which in turn releases Satan to dominant the rest of the world and churches. {Notice churches are used instead of the church, since Satan will never dominate the church of the firstborn, written in heaven. He no longer ever has access to heaven, and we must quickly come to the primary theme or gist of this book which is that WHEREAS GOD ORDAINED AND BLESSED A CHURCH AS A “HOUSE OF PRAYER” AND WORSHIP, MAN HAS CREATED CHURCHES AND DENOMINATIONS WHICH JESUS HIMSELF, JEREMIAH, AND ISAIAH, LIKE THE TEMPLES OF OLD WOULD CALL A “DEN OF THIEVES”. }

Don't worry from this primary gist if you did not get all the subtleties of the wording and language the first time around! Development of this gist is what the book is all about based primarily on the “Den of Thieves” quote from Jesus {which by the way we have almost completely misunderstood, and to understand it you must go back to the famous Temple Message of Jeremiah}, based on the proper interpretation of “Den of Thieves” from the context of Jeremiah and the Temple Message, and based on the contrast with a “House of Prayer” from Jesus and Isaiah. However in this day when the buzz words are “purpose driven”, it should also be stated with regard to the purpose of this book and of the above stated gist that not only is the book an attempt to write the current history of churches and denominations centered around the historical fact of the Falling Away, if indeed we find in the pages of the book that we are legitimately {ethically, morally, and doctrinally} entitled to place the label “Den of Thieves” any local church or collection of local churches in a denomination. Goodness, as you study the current history of denominations from the phone book, the signs in front of the church, or the internet you will find no shortage of manmade labels such as “Friendliest Church”, “the church of Christ”, or “church of Christ”, or “the church”. However our goal is to base any conclusion about “Den of Thieves” label and entitlement on “All Scripture” since it is the Bible in the total context that can profit us, whether that profit comes by way of

“doctrine, correction, or instruction in righteousness”, practices no longer even popular in most church pulpits and on television which within itself gives us a clue how deep we are into the Falling Away and of how the churches themselves must become leaders in the Falling Away since they alone among the total world population are the only ones who have seen the works of God for over 40 years. **{As you read and study the first great Falling Away of the children of Israel in the wilderness as presented in Deuteronomy and explained further in the book of Hebrews, you will see that the Falling Away is not from the congregation or churches but a departure from the living God. If you do not understand this, please read volume 4 of the LEARN CHRIST commentaries, “Christ, Paul, and the Falling Away”, or the book also from SunGrist_Bible entitled “Snatching, Stumbling, or the Falling Away”, or if you desire a more positive approach of what to do during this Great Apostasy please read also from SunGrist_Bible and available on the website www.biblecombibleman.com the book “Friends of Jesus in this Age of the Bible and the Computer”.**}

Wait a minute! There was such an effort to give some of the Biblical basis and the current history basis for the primary gist that we skipped over the secondary purpose driven basis. Well, they’re really several! First, with the premise that the similarities between unbelievers in the world and unbelievers in the church, increasingly the famous “tares” identified by Jesus--increasingly due to the Falling Away--we can present REPORTS FOR UNBELIEVERS equally addressed to the church and unchurched as we have done for the website www.biblecombibleman.com under the title of “The John Quinn Reports for Unbelievers”.

This is to say that while we may by the end of this book be able to legitimately label a church or denomination as a “Den of Thieves”, or perhaps on further examination most churches and denominations, still we will not give up on the potential for salvation and faith on the part of these unbelievers. Paul and the Word of God did not give up on them and the future church members who would also have the same problem, writing to those “brethren” of churches to “beware” and not to develop “an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God.”

“Beware brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God.” (Hebrews 3:12)

Even in this straightforward verse, you see the cisterns that cannot hold water, broken cisterns of idols and “gods”, as the Bible acknowledges that there can be a departure from the living God in favor of a dead god, like the “Queen of Heaven”. Unfortunately, it takes a lot of Bible, or fortunately as it promotes from of the Word of God, to realize the several convictions of this one single verse in order to appreciate the full impact on contemporary history and the great Apostasy called the Falling Away.

(1). The Falling Away is largely a movement among church members where they depart from the living God, since only church members--herein addressed as "brethren"--are the ones who have witnessed the works of God for 40 years.

(2). Young people, under 21 years of age, are safe from the Falling Away, and the Falling Away can in no way be categorized as an attack on the younger generation. It is rather an identification of an inevitable movement of history, the last great movement before the Second Coming.

(3). It takes a lot of Bible understanding, even of the 10 commandments and the processes for the making of an image of God called an idol, especially as explained by such Bible believers and preachers as Charles Allen in his book "God's Way of Thinking", of how God can be departed from by church members as slowly over a period of 40 years they replace the God of the Bible and of the Universe with other gods or mental images of God. After all a wrong mental image of God is just as wrong as a carved physical image of a god, and the misleading results are far more disastrous as we think some wrong god than if we just call a piece of wood or other image "God".

(4). While we have not come far as Christians in an adequate Bible-based concept of "evil", being often more influence by contemporary and the history of American Thought and politics, we certainly have not an adequate concept of "an evil heart of unbelief." We just do not appreciate how in the sight of God, unbelief is more an evil than murder or adultery or lying. We certainly do not appreciate the consequences in the lake of fire and brimstone after the falling away and the Second Coming, and after the separation of the tares and the wheat in the churches, how this lake is populated with not only adulterers and murderers, but also unbelievers. It is evil in the sight of God to allow an "evil heart of unbelief" to be cultivated in your heart"; and by the way, this applies to unchurched as well as churched unbelievers. It might be considered among the first of many reports for unbelievers' period!

(5). Deeply ingrained in the mind and heart of Paul as he wrote under the inspiration of God the words of Hebrews 3:12 was the thoughts of Jesus from the parable of the seed and the sower that more than false mental or physical idols can divert unbelievers from the living God. Study carefully the parable of the seed and the sower, and you will see it some of these pages also; and you will find that other diversions from the living God can come from "cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and other things" in spite of one of our Major and popular False Prophets who writes today and preaches, heaped up by a vast congregation of itching ears church members, about a good Christian life purpose driven by "things". **{At some point we must also develop based on the Bible how all that is called "God" is not really the God of the Bible, the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ, the LORD of Creation, and the only Living God of the Universe.}**

Since there is only one Living God, this Father of the Lord Jesus Christ, this God of the Bible, what happens to a person who prays to any other "living God", is that with only

one other supernatural being who can hear prayers being that of Satan, then those prayers--and beliefs--go to Satan. In fact, when you come right down to the nitty-gritty of the process or how man takes a church so blessed by God and ordained by God, then makes of it a "Den of Thieves", you will have to consider that at some point this man and collectively these men have somehow made an image of God which is not the God of the Bible. Therefore, you will constantly in these pages find a contrast between the (1) God-blessed and God-ordained "House of Prayer" and (2) the man ordained and man-created "Den of Thieves". Of course, you must understand the concept of "Den of Thieves" from our Master and Lord, the Lord Jesus Christ; and as background which Jesus knew as He quoted it, and the first disciples knew as students of the Bible, and even all Israel was painfully aware as the cause of the loss of the first great Temple, indeed of the destruction of Jerusalem, Judea, and Israel, and of Captivity under Assyria and Babylon. All need only look at the remnant of the Temple of God today in Israel to know what a "Den of Thieves" or many such DENS in a nation can do to that nation! And as you might expect the next chapters are on respectively (1) The "Den of Thieves" from Jesus; (2) The "Den of Thieves" from Jeremiah; and (3) the "House of Prayer" from Isaiah. You will be amazed how much of the teachings of Jesus, the book of Jeremiah, and the book of Isaiah that we must consider in order to appreciate this "Den of Thieves" concept in the total context of the Bible. I will warn you now, especially in Isaiah and later as explained in the book of Revelation that it comes all the way to God's statements about how can "man make a House for Him", and the new earth under the new heavens with a New Jerusalem where there is no need for a Temple House of God because in the New Jerusalem God Himself, and His Son, dwell with man. They can be seen by all the new inhabitants of believers "face to face". **{That is the kind of warning that you can enjoy, much better than the warning to beware of the possibility of departure from the living God!}** We will leave this chapter now; for this is much food for thought; however come back in the next chapter and next chapters for solid foundations in the Word of God, and realizing that "all scripture is given by inspiration of God", that all part of the Scripture, even that you have perhaps neglected or ignored is profitable, and also realizing though not nearly as comforting as the message you hear each Sunday in church or on TV, also that "doctrine, correction, and instruction in righteousness", like comfort and security, are also the methods of Scripture as valid as "all Scripture", and going hand in hand with the ALL.

Chapter 3 Bible Reports for Unbelievers.

While the Bible subject of “Reports” and “Reports for Unbelievers” comes from Romans 10:16 **{based on a quote from Isaiah 53:1}**, the plea of which must be to the unchurched as well as to God’s people of His congregations since the Prophet Isaiah complains to God for all the Prophets and Apostles “Who Has Believed Our Report?”, and is a chapter of Romans listed the most fundamental of Bible reports that must be passed on to unbelievers of both the church and unchurched variety **{by the way I want you to consider the possibility that exactly where the Jews as the once chosen people of God were during the time of Christ and before that the Prophets like Jeremiah and Isaiah is where the church and unbelievers, especially in America, are today}**; however first we will start our journey of Bible reports in this chapter, and as a basis for the rest of the book on “Den of Thieves” with an effort to distinguish according to the Bible between the two kinds of unbelievers, those in the churches who like the majority of the congregation of Israel in the wilderness “departed from the living God”--those same people who become the victims of the Falling Away, and then those outside the churches who are also unbelievers.

3-1: Judgment on Church and Unchurch.

Church and Unbelievers in Judgment are Punished more severely than Unbelievers outside the church. While of course the word “unbelievers” is not to be ignored in the Bible, it is by no means a predominate word in the Bible. Look in a complete concordance, and you will find that “unbelievers” is strictly a New Testament word found 10 times and the supporting word of “unbelief” 16 times with two fine shades of distinction in meaning__unbelief as disobedience in the Greek word “apeitheia” and unbelief as distrust in the Greek word “apistia”. **{Of course, this gives us clues that the equivalent concept and practice of those who reject God can be found in the Old Testament Hebrew words for “disobedience” and “distrust”--a lack of trust in God-- of which we know there was plenty in Israel and in the persons of the Old Testament starting all**

the way back to Adam and Eve when they disobeyed God's command not to eat of one of the one tree, and trust the lying Satan more than they trusted in God their Creator.}

Just one verse, that of Revelation 21:8 where "unbelievers" are found in the eternal lake of fire because of their unbelief, right there in the middle of the eternal fires with those of sexual immorality habits, murders, and adulterers, alone, reminds us that we dare not overlook these 26 references to "unbelievers" and "unbelief" that we have. Then when you compound that with sort of the theme background of Bible for this book in Hebrews 3:12 where brethren of the churches are told that there is the possibility for them to have "an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God", we dare not neglect such scriptures as we are also heeding the admonition of "how can we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?". Yes, the reports for unbelievers at the fundamental level, perhaps more for those unchurched than the churchd, are about the salvation that a loving and patient God has provided by the sacrifice of His own Son on the cross for the sins of the world **[redemption and the atonement]**; and further what this God of the Bible and the LORD God of Creation aspects all human beings to do about the atonement, namely repent, believe, and confess our sins with the mouth for salvation.

Of the 26 Bible references to unbelief and unbelievers, it no doubt is the parable Jesus told on "The Faithful Servant and the Evil Servant" of Luke 12:35-59 where we read the startling words from Jesus Himself where eternal punishment for "unbelievers" (12:46) is portioned out among all the churchd and unchurched unbelievers; and where the two categories of unbelievers are clearly identified as: (1) "the servant {like a church member} who knew his master's will, and did not prepare himself or do according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes" (Luke 12:47); and (2) then the less knowledgeable servant--"he who did not know" (12:48)--received only a few stripes. Of course, the less knowledgeable servant, designated also by Jesus as an unbeliever, would have to correlate with the unchurched unbeliever that has already been mentioned several times in this book. The kinds of persons, agnostic, atheists, non-hearers of the details of the Gospel for whom the REPORTS would go out of the possibility of faith and salvation, these most critical of all reports for them! Of course, we at basis are trying to discover the similarities and differences between the churchd and the unchurched unbelievers; because for one thing as we work with the Holy Spirit--Whose job it is anyway to "convict the world of sin, or righteousness, and of judgment"--to reach, teach, win, and develop these people both in and out of churches, it surely will make some difference in the approach we are led by the Bible and the Holy Spirit to make toward them! **{I think a church member was recently horrified when I suggested "Evangelism in the Church" just as many are still horrified that there was need for evangelism in the Israel of God's people, the congregation that stood before God and Moses, in the wilderness.}** As we get further into the Falling Away, and I hardly see how we can go much further in the intolerance toward sound doctrine (II Timothy 4:3,4), much further in the heaping up in pulpits and on TV of "itching ears" Bible teachers, and much further in the rising tide of the flood of sin and lawlessness in the world with "Dens of Thieves" in the churches; however, with more progression the possibility exists--if you buy the prime theme of this

book from Jesus, Jeremiah, Isaiah, and the rest of the Bible, that the greater need will exist for Bible evangelism **{especially in the rescue of sound doctrine}** in the churches than for in the rest of the world. Of course, for churches and individuals, there is always a time limit of “today”, that today being different for each individual and church and known only by God: (1) the 7 churches of Asia Minor had only so long a time to straighten out the doctrine and behavior of their churches; (2) the perilous times of follies among church members of II Timothy 3:1-9 and where those follies were revealed lasted only up to the time the bad attitudes and bad behavior of church members like “love of self”, etc. turned into the fables of II Timothy 4:3,4; and (3) this time limit of “today” is also one of the basic reports for unbelievers that we wish to present with warnings for the church like “brethren, beware”.

{Bottom Line: If I was among the vast number of unbelievers, in the church or otherwise, and if concerned about eternity at all which I think it a fundamental concern of all humanity, then I would want to know that my eternal punishment in the lake of fire and brimstone would be less than some others who knew more. You see even here we must make a distinction between the unbelievers in the church, who have become that way over a period of 40 years or more because of “an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God” who knew more of the Master’s requirements and those who knew less perhaps because their pastors were not as faithful in preaching ALL SCRIPTURE and with ALL methods.}

3-2: Evangelism of Unbelievers in the Church?

I know it is startling to talk about Evangelism in the churches: it is almost as bad as calling an assembly of God’s people a “Den of Thieves” like Jesus did, and Jeremiah before Him at the direction of God. And perhaps it would be wiser to call it something else, for church members are supposed to be the examples for Christ and God to all others in the world; the leaders in morality and ethics and examples for the community; and the best of Christians, if you would. In fact, in general we do not think of Christians apart from church membership.

What can we do then if not EVANGELISM; for it is apparent both that unbelievers are in the kingdom and churches since Jesus told about the “tares”, and it is also apparent that the Apostle Paul often made efforts at something akin to evangelism among the “brethren” of churches when he gave warnings like “Beware brethren” of the possibility that a church member can develop, even over a period of 40 years, “an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God.” (Hebrews 3:12) What would you call this: a warning of the possibility that the best can stumble and fall like we know from recent news happened to Reverend Ted Haggard--head of the National Evangelical Association, pastor and the New Life Community Church in Colorado Springs, and organizer and leader in the large church growth of that assembly. You remember when it was made public by a fellow gay that Haggard was both gay and used drugs over a habitual period of time, Haggard was forced to resign; however, for sake of reference for the gist of this

book, you notice how for weeks by the lies of denials he tried to hold up an APPEARANCE of innocence of both charges. And further you will notice how recently with the new pastor there has been efforts to make all feel good about what happened for the sake of Haggard and primarily for the sake of all those he won to the church membership of the New Life church. While later, in the name of thoroughness on the "Den of Thieves", we will want to look at how "righteous" and "believing"--even full of new life--members can be when their source of spiritual leadership was full of habitual sin, perhaps the worst of all the extreme efforts to promote and maintain an APPEARANCE.

Just a minute, let us get a little God perspective as given in the Bible on these matters of the sin of homosexuality and drug usage before proceeding to the Bible admonitions not to judge according to APPEARANCE, but "to judge righteous judgment". For one thing "homosexuality" is clearly identified in I Corinthians 6:9 as a companion of thieves, drunkards, the covetous, idolaters, fornicators, adulterers, sodomites, revilers, and extortioners, and specially stated that such will not inherit the kingdom of God, also as unrighteous which bottom line as we will see in a few moments is the same as saying "unbeliever". The unrighteous by habit is the unbeliever by habit primarily because "the just **and justified** shall live by faith" and righteousness comes both legally and by inward re-creation by the grace of God when a person believes. **{More about this in the next section as we look at Romans 10 and the fundamentals of belief as well as the fundamentals of the opposite, unbelief.}** Right now, we are dealing with the trouble that both Ted Haggard and the rest of the New Life Community church are in; and how that assembly of church members might very legitimately be suspected as a "Den of Thieves". You know how they say, and we all find some validity in it, that a person is known by the company they keep. Can most of these remaining approximately 10,000 church members of the New Life assembly be known in character, morality, and spiritual maturity by the "integrity" of the leader that taught them both how to become a Christian and how to live as a Christian. **{The alternative is to think that the example of such a pastor or leader of a congregation has nothing to do with the spiritual maturity of those he has won and trained.}**

Now, right now, we must distinguish between sin as a few time exceptions to the rule; and sin as a continuous habit in the category of the "sinneth" of the King James and of I John. The Apostle John distinguishes between the two types of (1) once-in-a-while sin and (2) habitual sin with the two separate words for "sin" and sinneth, first stating in I John 1:8 that if any person says they do not sin they are a liar and the truth is not in them, then stating about the second category of sin in I John 3:1-9 and other places in I John that the one born of God cannot "sinneth", that is cannot live in habitual sin.

Perhaps what the new pastor, the rescuers of the National Evangelical Association, and the justifiers of the New Life Movement, as well as the protectors of the purpose driven churches should be doing is to take a stand consistent with the Apostle John, also to

preach what is really in the Bible on sin and sinneth. Surely the new pastor, unless he is closely akin in integrity to Haggard, should be concerned about EVANGELISM in his church lest there be others among the thousands who heeded the example of Haggard as well as what he said, who were overcome by APPEARANCE more than "righteous judgment". What is being said is that while we all are aware of the power of the words "judge not lest you be judged", while we are strongly influenced by the American Conscience of toleration, while our first inclination is to never cast the first stone or any stones at all, this can very well be a weakness, inspired and used by Satan and the worldly and unbelieving, to promote and protect the tares and the Falling Away. First of all, we must understand judgment in the context of what is being taught, and secondly, we know that Satan does quote Scripture out of the total context of the Bible as he did against Jesus in the temptations in the wilderness.

What we are going to find as we look at the biblical origin of "Den of Thieves" in a later chapter is that most of the Temple worshipers were living contrary to the commands and will of God all week, then coming to the Temple to justify their way of living, claiming that since they were in the House of God, they were safe from any real judgment of that sin. In other words, they expected even God--and especially their own princes and other leaders--to accept them as believers and righteous because of their APPEARANCE in the temple, and that somehow that one day attendance would wipe out, or justify, what was practiced all week and what they knew they would practice the next week. Why the ladies of the home missionary society would go home to make cakes for the worship of idols, leading their children and husbands to assist them in the heathen-like practices by tending the fire and gathering fire wood; and the mere fact that you can isolate such practices from what diverts believers today from "the living God"--that is, the making of idols and substitutes for the real and living God in our own minds--is a big sign that we have not fully comprehended the total meaning of the first commandments: (1) You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind, and soul; and (2) You shall not make any graven image to God. To make a graven image to God, like J. B. Phillips had in mind years ago in the book *YOUR GOD IS TOO SMALL*, is often today the process of creating in your own brain a god that does not really exist. Certainly not the God of the Bible and the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ.

3-3: Judgment and Appearance in the Bible.

What is needed is a broader perspective based on more Bible, and in total context about Judgment and Appearance from the Bible. Of course, preachers have always been sensitive to accusations and opinions that they are judging others: you no doubt have heard the common sayings from the pulpit, perhaps less from the popular preachers and less today than in former times, like: "If the shoe fits, wear it"; or, "I am just being a fruit inspector", and "you shall know the tree by its fruit". However, in the total context of the Bible, including the most famous quote of "judge not lest you be judged", we can do better than this on the proper exercise of judgment.

Along with the shock of finding “homosexuals” and “thieves” as prohibited from the kingdom of God of I Corinthians 6, we find some more startling news about “judge” and “judgement”. In fact, the very prime subject of I Corinthians 6 is to promote proper judging and judgment among church members as contrasted to bad habit of taking a Christian brother to court before unbelievers.

“Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unrighteous, and not before the saints?” (I Corinthians 6:1)

And the context continues to teach that:

1. The saints--real Christians and real believers--will judge “the world”. (6:2a) Try this, the next time somebody trained by Warren waves a finger in your face because you criticized a church or another church member, “I am practicing for eternity where I will judge angels and the world.”

2. If church members are going to judge the world in the future world of the new earth under the new heavens, how can they be unworthy to judge these small matters in the local church (6:2b). In other words that even as Christians are appointed to be judges of things and people, even angels we will see, in the future world, so is the least of the church members appointed to judge people and matters in the local church. **{You know in reality in the recesses of our own mind, we do this anyway; why not dispense with the APPEARANCE of such worldly toleration.}** By the way, this is one of the many bad things about the Christian philosophy of Rich Warren as he would promote the protection of the church and the church covenant at all cost, thus preventing criticism and other church member judgment **{if they disagree, the method of P.R. is to kick them out--later in this book will be discussed Warren’s fallacious concept of inherent unity based on control by church leaders, not the unity which the Spirit gives as in Ephesians}** and justifying the local church as it is in APPEARANCE.

3. If we are going to judge angels in the eternal life, we had better get used to judging things in this life (6:3).

4. Of course, judgment should be exercised primarily by those most esteemed in the church such as pastors and other leaders. Churches should appoint some of their esteemed members to exercise judgment over other church members. (6:4)

5. Sometimes we act in churches like there is not “one wise man among us” who can exercise judgement, and act as a judge (6:5a). Why not listen to the Christian and Bible based wisdom of someone who might compare your church to one of the bad churches of Revelation or to a “Den of Thieves”. Do we not have the gifts of wisdom and wise men in our churches, in the kingdom, and among Christians; or have we come to accept only the worldly wise of American Society as the leaders of wisdom. **{You might say that we have an inclination to accept as wise only those esteemed in society, not in the church,**

as wise: say like Opry, and Uncle Phil, and intellectual leaders in the psychology of toleration and the American Conscience, or just plain goody-goodies.}

6. You know we just do not have the perspective of Paul and the Word of God, the perspective of God Himself, on how horrible it is for a Christian brother to go to law against another Christian; and for that matter, to take the side of the worldly against another brother (6:6).

7. Paul under the inspiration of God calls it “an utter failure” of Christian judging and judgment to go to law between Christians. You see still so much of our trouble is that we do not recognize the world as separate from Christians, and we do not appreciate that even in the United States that the world outside the kingdom of Christ is controlled by Satan, the prince of this world. Also, that the “Friend of this world” is the enemy of God. (6:7a)

8. You should be cheated or allow yourself to be wronged {in the category of turning the other cheek}, before you fail to find a judge in the local church that can exercise judgment between two brothers. (6:7b)

9. You that wave your finger in the face of a brother who exercises a judgment on the people in a particular church, “you, yourselves do wrong and cheat” if you prohibit proper judgment. (6:8)

10. Perhaps you have not understood the fundamentals that “unbelievers” of the world and of the law courts are the same as the “unrighteous”; and that these people of the world--yes also the world system of the U.S.--will “not inherit the kingdom of God”. (6:9a)

11. Perhaps you have been deceived into the American Democratic Faith of toleration with a failure to recognize that absent from the kingdom of God will be: fornicators **{don't forget the spiritual fornicators of the Prophets who substitute other gods which are not Gods}**, idolaters **{don't forget mental and false idols of the living God}**, adulterers **{once again remember the habitual sin versus the occasional and temporal as in “sin” and “sinneth”}**, homosexuals, sodomites, thieves **{will we be able after extensive study to consider members of a “Den of Thieves” of a local church as excluded from the kingdom}**, covetous **{yes, according to Pastor James where wars come from is from “the spirit within us that lusteth, or covets, to envy}**, drunkards **{and I wonder how different drug addiction is to drinking in the sight of God especially as we later consider how the body of a Christian becomes a temple of God to be respected}**, revilers **{your garden variety troublemakers in the local church}**, and extortioners. (6:9,10) Well, that pretty well identifies the good old boys of the world for us!

3-4: Appearance Versus Righteous Judgment.

One reason church members are so defensive against human judgment is that through the year's churches like other organizations of society have learned to play the impression and APPEARANCE game where things are considered to be just as you see them without historical and thorough knowledge just as long as evidence is not brought up that makes the impression otherwise. In other words, if you do not talk about it, it does not exist. We have seen military leaders more so in recent years come to emphasize impression as even more important than the reality itself, and politicians have long played with impression over appearance. Even a political as previously beloved as John F. Kennedy in his book PROFILES IN COURAGE wrote that a key to politics is "seeming to say something without really saying it." **{Of course, he was talking about what other Senators and politicians of the past had done, not himself; however, we know better for while many of us were supporting him we knew nothing of the oft extra-marital relationships--once again the difference between an often and habitual habit as compared to one who might stumble once or twice on this sin.}**

Jesus dealt with this problem of appearance and judgment as recorded in John 7, and He Himself gave us the words "Do not judge according to appearance but judge righteous judgment." (John 7:24) So what we see is that judgement is good when it is "righteous judgement", bad when it is done according to appearance only. We would think back to the previous section where church members must judge in this life as they will judge in eternity, and we start looking around on how to judge correctly thus come to Jesus and John 7:24 to realize that as we act as judges among church members that we must judge righteously, which we might briefly describe as according to the will of God, the teachings of Christ, and the words of the Bible. This is what righteous judgment would be: what God has identified through Christ and the Bible as being righteous; and of course, as we will discuss quite extensive later the Holy Spirit helps us with this righteous judgment since His job on earth is "to convict the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment" (John 16:8-11).

1. The Appearance of Learning Credentials versus Learning from God. Remember the incident of John 16 where Jesus taught in the Temple, the Jews marveled that He knew so much about the Old Testament and spiritual matters, and they were concerned that He did not have the appearance of academic status and learning, Jesus before and after having told them often that what He knew and taught had been given to Him of God the Father; therefore to judge righteous judgment about His qualifications to teach would be to consider His true and righteous words of the Father as the source of the teachings, perhaps even the pre-earth eternal time Jesus had spent with the Father. Even before that, and at the beginning of John 7, there was the controversy with his own brothers where the appearance to them was that Jesus was doing secretive work--"If You do these things, show Yourself to the world" **{at this point in his life His own brothers like James did not believe in Him}**--when in right and righteous truth Jesus did not walk openly in Judea **{the province of Jerusalem and the religious leaders}** because the religious leaders of the Jews were trying to kill Him.

2. The Appearance of Hiding versus Safety. Jesus told His brothers two judgements of righteous judgment or decision or evaluation which they also could not yet believe or accept, their minds being cluttered by the obvious appearance and opinion of the world: (1) While the time of the brothers was now, the time for Jesus to by works and word to build up opposition enough for crucifixion was yet a couple of years away; and (2) The world around them did not hate the brothers of Jesus, but they did hate Jesus because by deed and words Jesus testified that the works of the world are evil. **{This is a problem today as many church members would, like the brothers, be friends of the world as with everybody, and when the testimony of a faithful witness to Jesus stirs up the guilt of the worldly, they will often turn to solace in both character slander of the faithful witness and consolation from their friend/church member. This is another contemporary case of appearance over righteous judgment.}**

3. The Appearance of Unsound Doctrine versus the Doctrine of God. Jesus responded to the Jews **{word is used in context of Jewish leaders since the Apostle John as the other Apostles and Jesus were also Jewish}** criticism of His lack of learning credentials with righteous judgment about the Doctrine that comes from God. It did not belong to Him, Jesus said, but to the God who sent Him; as a matter of what if anyone will do the will of God as Jesus was doing the will of God that person would KNOW about the soundness of doctrine, whether it was from God or whether Jesus originated it on His own, or as another matter of fact as somebody else today might generate it.

4. The Appearance of Flattering words about The Speaker, from the Speaker versus the righteous judgment of Seeking the Glory of God. With a word of caution about so many preachers especially on TV today with their many self-promotions and special revelations from God, Jesus teaches us also in this chapter how the person who speaks for Himself seeks His own glory as contrasted to how Jesus sought the glory of the God the Father who sent Him to planet earth! This made Jesus “true”, He said, which is still another way of saying “righteous” as in righteous opinions of judgment; and further the God Who sent Him is true without any unrighteousness in Him. **{A clue as to how we can get away with labeling a church today as a “Den of Thieves”, in fact perhaps most churches since it is during the Falling Away that the love of “many that will wax cold” –obviously the majority IS: (1) when we seek the glory of God; and (2) when we speak righteous judgments consistent with the doctrine and teachings of the Bible as the Word of God.}**

5. Those Who Appear to Keep the Law versus those who break the law. Jesus reminded them of what Moses gave them the law of the 10 commandments even as we have been given those same commandments today, and in fact have them explained quite extensively; and yet they were going about to scheme and find an opportunity to kill Him, which they immediately and vehemently denied because the appearance in their fine robes and positions and status was otherwise. **{In other words, they could lie and get away with it at this point before it became obvious, they paid Judas to betray Jesus in the Garden.}** And here we will have to admit that Jesus had a measure of His righteous judgment not only because of the previous time spent in the past with the Father, but also

because of His ability as the supernatural Son of God to look into the future and behind closed doors and in the hearts of all men, not hidden from Him. An advantage and wisdom we can have only to the extent that we are "WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT".

6. The Appearance of Sabbath Day Observances versus Doing the Real work of God on the Sabbath Day. There was no need for Jesus to answer, "Who is Trying to Kill You" (7:20) since they knew as well as Jesus, and He did not desire to play their games. Instead Jesus turned the focus to another appearance versus righteousness judgement where on the Sabbath Day Jesus made a man completely well. The Jews themselves in order to keep the law of Moses would circumcise on the sabbath day, thus providing a sort of limited healing of a person. And such objections to this healing of Jesus was the final of this passage incident of judging according to appearance than according to righteous judgment.

3-5: What Are We Going to Do About It?

The question and question asked in the sections above are too critical to delay about the Falling Away and the Den of Thieves, except for the details that required later chapters of the book.

1. We are going to continue in all ways possible and as much as possible to PROMOTE BIBLE UNDERSTANDING. Surely even the elite of denominational leadership and religious popularity such as Osteen and Warren would not object to this goal even when it counters their personal philosophies of religion as set forth in the two popular movements of (1) Things and Cares for Things, and (2) Purpose Driven Lives and Churches as a substitute for Christ and Holy Spirit in the place of "purpose". So widespread has this self-purpose substitute become among even the once conservative SBC, that denominational workers had developed a focus on it as an influence that might have on the local churches of the SBC. Just a deeper look at the message of the book of Ephesians, where God's purpose suggested by Carver's book THE GLORY OF GOD IN THE CHRISTIAN CALLING goes even deeper into real Bible oriented purpose as Ephesians 1 reveals, and hopefully illuminates, on how the purpose of God for all remaining human history is the unite all things in heaven and on earth under the Lord Jesus Christ. While this is a kingdom of Christ reality established by Christ two thousand years ago on this earth and a reality to be progressive each year striven for, it is a reality only as the old earth and heavens disappear and God finally "makes all things new." In other words, when the kingdom of heaven--where God's will is now completely done by angels and the "spirits of just men made perfect"--and the kingdom of earth--where we struggle each year to grow the influence of Christ and the kingdom--become one under the leadership of Christ, and then Christ turns over that kingdom to God the Father and for "the glory of God the Father". **{Perhaps there is one exempted period of history remaining for this world age where the kingdom grows as it is doubtful how much growth in the kingdom there can be during the "little while" after the Holy Spirit is withdrawn from earth, Satan is consequently released from restrictions by the work of**

the Holy Spirit, and the Falling Away rising tide of the flood of lawlessness and sin becomes by far the dominant movement of world age history as also the events unfold as the Man of Sin and Satan develop and lead the greatest army of anti-Christ of all time, and as culminated during that "little while" in the last great Battle of Armageddon until Christ comes to terminate it! If you cannot see now in the trends and movements of current history a vast movement of opposition to Christ and God from Muslims and Communists, with the many candidates appearing on the scene for the position of "Man of Sin" or "Son of Perdition", then you must have your head in the sand of fundamentalist propaganda from the SURFERS OF THE FALLING AWAY like Hagee, LaHaye, Warren, Osteen, and Stanley. {In a few moments this "Surfers of the Falling Away", these leaders of the "Den of Thieves" gang will be explained further.}

2. However right now I cannot resist the goal of establishing in public a Restoration, spiritually and politically, of the SBC by real southern Baptists. I am saying that these fundamentalists that took over the SBC during the last 20-30 years under the leadership of SURFERS like Stanley, Criswell, and Adrian Rogers **{while during the takeover Rogers only slayed thousands of good pastors and teachers, and their careers, Criswell and Stanley have killed their ten thousand in the name of the Scofield Reference Bible notes}** are not real Southern Baptists. If you investigate their backgrounds, even though large SBC churches made the mistake of calling them to their churches out of the obscurity of Bible Baptists, they were generated and trained by other denominations. **{Later we will want to deal in more details with the current history of the SBC where churches riding on the flooding surf of the Falling Away, with its emphasis more on the world and the concepts and philosophies of the world--perhaps in the trend of Wayne Oates we might want to call them the "unspoken influences" of the community of the world--are the responsible ones for the creation of fundamentalist leadership.}**

Yet is felt that the possibility exists of real Southern Baptists, with the assistance of Southern Baptist State Conventions, like in Texas, wrenching the control of the SBC conventions back from the devastation from Georgia, Virginia, and Tennessee. I know, one of the reasons the so-called moderates of the SBC like Dr. Bert Dominy **{forced to leave Southwest Seminary for Baylor Seminary by Stanley and other fundamentalists during their takeover}** and the former pastor at FBC Amarillo, Winifred Moore, who ran and lost the presidency to Rogers and Stanley, later having to retreat to true SB conservatism at Baylor, the main reason they offer is to cease the fighting among Christians. While this is noble, and by doing so they were able to save their careers which many other Christian brothers at the same time could not do, it is felt that at some point we must contend for the faith while as much as possible not being contentious. However, there is a fine line of distinction between "contend" and "contentious"; and we must find a way to straddle this one fence in a regain of control of the SBC.

You know this would be about the biggest blow of our generation and generations against the Falling Away and the "Den of Thieves". You know, it cannot be co-incidental

that the same period of history where we came to notice the results and evidences of the Falling Away like divorce among church members, the gays, the heaping up of itching ears Bible teachers, the intolerance toward sound doctrine with the running off of sound Bible preachers, and the rising tide of the mystery of lawlessness as church members' love for Christ waxed cold as more of the influence of the world of sin was allowed in local churches...I say it cannot be co-incidental that we notice this movement in southern Baptist history at the same time we notice the fundamentalist's warfare and takeover of the SBC. **{But this is more a subject for later after we have established a firm foundation in the Bible for the contemporary Dens of Thieves. Let it be said, however at this point, that no one feels more secure in their man-made Houses of God today than these fundamentalists leaders. No one feels more their status and safety and permanent position in the kingdom, first in the kingdom, thinking that they "stand"-yes, if Stanley can write on "Spiritual Warfare" at the same time he leads the fundamentalists in warfare against other southern Baptists, all things are possible for them, never for a moment until perhaps they read "Den of Thieves", that they also could fall and have fallen!}**

Yet I still must introduce the phrase "Surfers of Popularity" as applied to these fundamentalists leaders before proceeding on into the third goal of what we must do about the "Den of Thieves" and the Falling Away. What we find is that this popular preachers and Bible teachers like Warren and Osteen are surfers on the history of the Falling Away. **{Always recall that popularity is a bad sign during the present Falling Away, and that Billy Graham was the last pre-falling away preacher of fame.}** You have to give them credit for being students of the majority of the American people, and what these people want and are looking for. What Americans are seeking from churches and their religious leaders consistent with what they want in their lives otherwise, is security, things, and safety. Warren, Osteen, and hundreds of other "itching ears" Bible teachers have found smooth ways to give it to them without offending aggressively other church members and leaders. You see it in the "Gospel of Prosperity" that news indicates is now the belief of other 60% of Americans; you see it in the self-expression philosophies, in the things of mega-churches where "buying and selling" is done by merchants in the House of God like Jesus objected to in His day, and you see it in the "faith resources" where these movements among women promote things and trinkets in the name of the faith of Christ!

3. Then it behooves us naturally to consider a third goal of what to do during the Falling Away and expansion of the Dens of Thieves: to rescue sound doctrine. There is not much money, glory, or fame in this; and certainly, a very minimum amount of fame, although one might be accused quite often of trying to steal the fame and glory in the kingdom of such best-selling and popular preachers of the Bible as Osteen and Warren. You will not appreciate this goal of the rescue of sound doctrine unless you have become convinced that "the time will come", that period of history that Paul introduces in II Timothy 4:3,4, has already come and that the church members of intolerant doctrine of whom he speaks

have already come--"the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine"--they are here now as leaders and followers in the churches **{thus by the way also making local churches a "Den of Thieves", the stealing of sound doctrine among other things}**, and with this "heaping up of itching ears" Bible teachers we right now have on the American scene many false prophets in the category of those who came to the local church at Ephesus immediately after Paul and came to the notice of the Apostle Jude during the first century to interpret his efforts on evangelism. **{You know it is amazing how we can admit the Bible truth that false and itching ears Bible teachers came to Ephesus after Paul, even that many of them were in the 7 churches of Asia Minor, or that many existed in the first century against whom Jude wrote, also that Jesus told of their inevitable in the "last days"; yet we cannot find in this generation even in our pulpits or on TV or among the local churches and denominations, one single Bible preacher and teacher that we are willing to label as a "False Prophet". I am afraid that there is something wrong with us and our Bible understanding. Perhaps that we have been overcome by the so-called "toleration" of the American Democratic Faith, placing our faith as citizens above our faith in Christ and the Bible. But this matter of the American Democratic Faith above the faith of Christ and the Bible is also more a matter for later discussion.}**

4. Present "Friends of Jesus" as a challenge sufficient for the Falling Away. This is very positive and challenging in the face of all the negatives we must consider during this Falling Away and the rapid expansion in the dens **{gangs}** of thieves **{surfers}**. **{Later in the book as "Gangs of Surfers" is used I hope you will remember the background development of this chapter.}** Friends of Jesus is a challenge for both old and young alike. While most of the 12 Apostles, excluding Judas Iscariot and adding the Apostle Paul born out of due time, with careers already behind them such as fisherman, tax collector, and lawyer, cannot be considered as young when they accepted the challenges of John 13-17 to pass from servants of the Master-Christ to "Friends", a good example of a young man that did follow in their footsteps was the young man Mark. After a few years and some bad decisions, he focused on telling the story of Jesus in his famous Gospel.

5. With the Holy Spirit and with Reports for Unbelievers. This also and lastly, we will continue to do in 2008 and beyond, increasing our activities to reach with Bible reports both the churched and the unchurched unbelievers. Granted that while efforts to convey Bible reports to the unchurched unbelievers is most generally called "evangelism", the efforts to reach churched believers like Paul did in Hebrews 3:12--"beware, brethren let there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God"--might more appropriate be called "preventive" rather than corrective. Like the rest of Hebrews and much of the New Testament, the goal is to keep church members from the extent of stumbling that ultimately leads to the point of no return past their own personal "today" or "now" and plunges them into the giant abyss of the Falling Away from which there is no rescue!

3-6: With the Spirit and with Reports for Unbelievers.

In the spirit of B.H. Carrol's first professor of evangelism at Southwestern Seminary, later the President of the same seminary, and who wrote the well-known book on evangelism entitled *WITH CHRIST AFTER THE LOST*, this book as with one of the 5 purpose of SunGrist_Bible and the website www.biblecombibleman.com is "With the Holy Spirit and with Reports for Unbelievers". "With the Holy Spirit" for it is considered that we work in vain and fruitlessly if we do not recognize that the Spirit has the purpose on earth to convict of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; and above the Bible is added to "Bible Reports" to clarify that this reports or testimonies to unbelievers come strictly from the Bible; and finally "for Unbelievers" instead of "after the lost" to focus on the reaching of unbelievers both in the church and outside the church.

This book by no means is an effort to duplicate the movement among Baptists of members getting saved in Arkansas and other SB states of the early 1960's. I can recall no Scriptural basis for that movement except from evangelists with a holier than thou attitude and a perchance for numbers much like many groups go to mission fields like Thailand to baptize several times certain "converts" for their own denomination. Back then nobody even thought about the Falling Away as an immediate happening in the United States and forbid "among Southern Baptists"--thanks to the fundamentalists we can see it better now--much less talked about it as a fundamental necessity for evangelism within the churches. This type of evangelism, like this book, must be based on Scripture; and must be in the category of warning to all brethren in the church like the Apostle Paul gave to the Hebrew brethren in Hebrews 3:12, that is, "Beware brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God." This we will not be able to do unless we: (1) recognized that there are many "tares" in the churches since Jesus said they are in the kingdom; (2) it cannot be an effort to separate them from other followers of Christ since Jesus warned that if efforts to separate the tares from the wheat were made, some wheat would be culled by mistake {in other words innocent Christians and church members might be harmed}; (3) yet there has to be a counter to the bad influence that the tare-leaders exert in the churches so that at bare min we must talk about the reality of tares over the appearance of complete holiness in a local church; (4) we must get beyond the excuse making of how at least they are sinners that are trying since after 40 years of cultivating an evil heart of unbelief they are far beyond that point of innocence; and (5) the subject with which we continue in this chapter, we must get away from Public Relations (P.R.) Appearance to the realities of righteous judgment. Not easy; yet it is important that we go solidly based on the righteous Judgments of many Scriptures, promoting a unity based on the inherent unity in a church provided by the common Holy Spirit, not on protecting the church by enforcement of a man-made church covenant. This we will do in this book, God willing!

Chapter 4 *“Who Has Believed Our Report?”*

A word of warning as we research on this subject through Jeremiah and the rest of the Old Testament, even the New Testament on the same subjects where it properly interprets the Old for us, it becomes often a bleak and discouraging subject. I recall when writing “The Message from the 19 Writing Prophets”, the volume 5 of the LEARN CHRIST COMMENTARIES, with a thorough look at what happened to Israel during the long history of the Old Testament from Moses to Malachi, from struggles in the wilderness to formation of the United Kingdom and through the period of the Divided Kingdoms with Captivity, a somber even bleak mood was created like when a book or movie has a sad ending. Later realized that while the majority of the chapters and pages of the Old Testament book are discouraging without a good ending, the deepest message of the Old Testament in the ultimate “all things are made new” turns the bleakness into glorious hope.

4-1: Good NEW Things in the Old Testament.

Whether it is a book or a movie, we generally like a happy ending. For example, almost buried in all the pages of Isaiah where the judgments of God against Israel and other nations is laboriously predicted in detail, you will find periodic shorter passages on the hope of the new earth under the new heaven. In Ezekiel where, like Jeremiah that Prophet under the direction of the Spirit of God drags us through all the wrongs back in the Temple at Jerusalem, periodically there are mentions of a “new heart” and “new spirit” for the people that will allow them to live up to the requirements of the law by faith. At the same time as Isaiah and Jeremiah, there are many of the minor Prophets before and after, likewise dealing with the bleak and the new messages of hope.

Like with the history of Israel, God’s originally chosen people, the history of the Temple is one of ups and downs with a predominance for the bleak side of down. Yet within those major and minor Prophets who both recorded history and made future predictions

which became history, there was both the question as to whether God would ever dwell with men; and then also the greater ray of hope that God would on the new earth make a place where He would eternally dwell with men. Bless the hearts of the fundamentalists who have allowed the Bible Notes of Scofield to dominate their eschatology, they have become so prejudiced by a false hope of a thousand years glorious kingdom on earth, that they have confused all those passages about the new earth and the new Jerusalem with such a false one-thousand-year kingdom. For example, you have no doubt heard of the quote from Isaiah where “swords are beat into plowshares” (Micah 4:3), “spears into pruning hooks”, no longer nation against nation, and war no more, also “where the lion shall lay down by the lamb” referred to as Israel here on earth, even for the false one thousand year kingdom.

A careful chapter by chapter review of Isaiah will show several chapters on God’s judgment against a rebellious people and other wicked nations, then like a ray of sunlight in the darkness either a chapter or part of a chapter like a jewel dug from the deep dark earth with a message of hope of the new earth under the new heaven.

4-2: Revelation 21, Last Chapter of the Book.

Granted that also bleak is the dominant subject of “Den of Thieves”, in spite of primarily coming to us from Jesus and Jeremiah; but we must keep this bleakness in the total context of the messages that God has given to us in this Book called the Word of God. Faithfulness to the total message from Apostles and Prophets will both provide a balance between the dark and the light, the good and the evil, the believe and the unbeliever, the new and the old; but also provide in the bottom lines of the New Testament the proper interpretations that make sense of the whole history of Israel, the temple, and salvation. And it will not hurt if you can engender a little faith at the beginning of this research to recognize that like Pastor James said at the Great Jerusalem Conference on Circumcision that “known unto God are all His works from the beginning”. Sometimes we are easily confused because of our human frailties with how much of this history God predestined, but the confident statement of James was that God knows all of these works that are going to happen. Further from the rest of the Bible we find that God in the new earth is going to “make all things new”. Besides the new earth on which dwells a new humanity of regenerate souls but also lowered from heaven after destruction of the old heavens and earth will be a New Jerusalem; and at that time God will Himself dwell with men in a new relationship, where there is no need any more for a Temple. In fact, the Apostle John tells us that after he saw the New Jerusalem lowered down from heaven, he failed to see any temple in the New Jerusalem, deciding that there at this point in salvation history there was no need for a temple because “the LORD God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple” (Revelation 21:22)

And I hope, with or without a little faith, you will recall that this is the bottom line of both the Word of God, the outcome of the believe and unbelief, temple and no temple, house of God and church of the firstborn stories; and hopefully has been adopted and

implemented for this book on the “Den of Thieves”. Right now, up front I will warn you that a methodology of this book is to emphasize “Believe” over “Unbelief”, the positive over the negation, the good end results over the bad. For example, on the eschatology of “last things” unfortunately we have heard more on hell, more on the destruction of the old earth and heavens by fire, and the majority of the world--Jews and Gentiles--who chose unbelief over belief than we hear on the positive. As REPORTS are given to you for unbelievers, the intent is to stress believe over unbelief, the ultimate newness of the new earth over the destruction of the old earth by fire, and the New Jerusalem where there is no need for a Temple over the fumbling efforts of men to create a place where they thought God would dwell.

1. How simply the Apostle John in Revelation 21:1 puts the destruction of the old earth by fire with the straightforward words of “for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away” starting with the more positive statement of faith about the new heaven and the new earth, “Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth”. Now, if you can believe that John really saw this and faithfully translated it to us, which I do believe, then you have come a long way toward turning all these negatives of unbelief into faith. One fellow Engineer, a brilliant person in the high IQ society, once said to me, “What if all this is not true”, to which I immediately replied, “Please consider that it all may be true”. And perhaps if you are an unbeliever to whom I am addressing these reports, I would ask you to add a ray of hope to your darkness of despair by considering the possibility that this is exactly what a God of love would do for those who adopt the proper attitude toward Him. He has never been concerned for the majority of people whether it be the majority of the Jewish nation or the majority of the Gentiles. In fact, the Bible often tells us how God laughs at and holds the majority in derision, especially those who consider themselves to be wise. The primary reason God selected the nation of Israel to be His own people is because of the commitment that He made to Abraham to bless his children, and because He had chosen Israel to be the little nation that would bring His own Son into the world for the salvation of the world, also because like Paul explains in Romans God made Israel the custodian of the “oracles of God.” If nothing else, we are indebted to Israel for Christ and for the oracles of God, the book of 66 books which God wrote through Apostles and Prophets.

2. After John witnessed the new heaven and the new earth which will happen after the destruction of the old, he then saw the holy city of New Jerusalem lowered down from heaven. (Revelation 21:2) Sometimes when we read in John 14 that Jesus went back to heaven to prepare a place for us in His Father’s house of many mansions, we do not realize that this is the very “house” as part of the New Jerusalem that will be lowered to earth. Also, as we look at Jerusalem and Mount Zion today, while we see little beauty there, especially with a Moslem mosque right in the middle of the mount, we must realize that this Mount has a special place and meaning in the heart and mind of God. And perhaps much of that comes from the fact that He long ago decided that this would be the place where He would build His New city as a light to all the nations that lived

centered around the New city. This would be the time and the place when God would finally “dwell” among men. What God enjoyed in fellowship with man and woman in the Garden of Eden, He is going to more than restore on the new earth.

3. John also heard things. He heard a loud shout from heaven which said, “Behold the tabernacle of God is with men...” (Revelation 21:3) Please consider this the bottom line of all that will be said about temples and churches, all houses of God, in the pages of this book on “Den of Thieves”. Here at the end and the bottom line of the story all temples and houses of God are thoroughly cleansed as God Himself dwells with men. In fact another bottom line which you may also miss less you read carefully in Revelation 21 is the last verse, verse 27 where nothing that defiles shall enter the New Jerusalem, or causes an abomination or lie **{please keep this in mind as we look thoroughly later at the abominations of 10 commandments violations and the lies which allow the people of the Temple and Jeremiah’s day to make the House of God into a Hideout for Bad Habits}.**

4. This requires the creation of a new kind of person, and John in that same verse 27 identifies that kind of person who carries no lies, abominations, or does not defile, as “only those who are written in the Lamb’s Book of Life.” (Revelation 21:27b) What the ultimate goal of Jesus was when He twice cleansed the temple of God as recorded in John 2 and Matthew 21, what God through Jeremiah was really after in efforts to cleanse the Temple at Jerusalem from lies and abominations, from a false sense of security, is what God achieves right here at the end of time. Never forget as you read the pages of this book and the discouraging pages of the Bible about the failure of God’s people, that here at the end God achieves it all that He has intended. God throughout history has chosen a very small remnant of believers among Jews and Gentiles that He has automatically written in heaven in this Book of Life. And the Book with the New Jerusalem will be lowered from heaven to this earth after the destruction of the old earth. **{Heaven is not destroyed with the destruction of the old earth, only the old heavens , the canopy if you would over the old earth or the space that surrounds this rotating earth. All we know about heaven is that it must be about cloud level since the Bible tells us that God sits on the great white throne with the clouds as His feet, and we know somehow it is invisible and unfelt in a somewhat separate dimension that is outside the ability of our human sensors, like visible light, and touch to pick up.}**

5. Please do not fail to note the ultimate benefits and blessings of the great ultimate reality that GOD WILL TABERNACLE WITH MEN. (Revelation 21:3)

(1). God will eternally dwell with men;

(2). The dwellers on the new earth will be the new people of God {consider please all people of God that God selects and from which God tries to cull a people for His name as only predecessors to the real and ultimately defined REAL people of God to be called “God’s People”, and consider also the bottom line definition of the people of God in the

New Testament book of Romans where Paul as chief interpreter of the Old Testament and the bottom line tells us that the real people of God are a small number of Gentiles and even a smaller number, often called a remnant, of Jews--you see the emphasis of God is on quality rather than quantity which should not surprise you, and this is righteous by faith quality over quantity.};

(3). God will not only Himself be with these dwellers on the new earth, but He will be "their God" (21:3)

(4). While we would like to know much more about the living conditions and environment of the new earth, especially for us Gentiles of the nations around New Jerusalem {perhaps much like the Garden of Eden}, we do much about from the single verse of 21:4 about the living conditions: (1) there it will be all good because there will be the complete absence of sorrow with no more tears; (2) death is abolished as the new residents of the new earth live eternally {start getting rid of that concept of heaven on earth where all sit around eternally to look at a beautiful city with streets of gold, and consider that you will be busy in the country side that surrounds New Jerusalem}; (3) and there will be no more pain and sickness. **{All nations we are instructed later in this same chapter are required to periodically come to this abode of the Father and the Son and of the 12 Apostles over the new Jewish nation to worship, and available to them a source of healing for all nations.}**

NOTE: There is so much more to say on the New Earth, the New Jerusalem, and the benefits when God tabernacles among men, and will be presented in later chapters; but now lest we lose the flow of "Who Believes Our Report", or reports we need to lay it out in this chapter, much of it of course for further Bible research and development, also for concurrent presentation with the dominant theme of the "Hideout for Bad Habits", hopefully in the last two chapters bringing to the two contrasting themes--the good and the bad--together in the final two chapters. Anyway, that is the intention at this point!

4-3: Full Extent of the REPORTS for Unbelievers.

Even as Paul and John come together with a quote from Isaiah 53:1 on "Reports" (John 12:37-41 and Romans 10:16), so also this book comes together with chapters on "Hideouts for Bad Habits" and "Reports for Believing" in the book of this book of "Den of Thieves", more specifically are brought together in the last chapter of "Called God's People versus Chosen God's People". If you read carefully about God's people, the new Israel, as defined by Paul under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, also the teachings of Jesus in the Gospel of John as in other Gospels, and the comments John made like in John 12:37-41 on Reports, you will find a consistency and unity which can easily convince you of the Bible as the Word of God. Having considered briefly the end, and hopefully encouraged by it, the bottom line of the Bible story, we must now fill in some of the middle history in order to understand and fully appreciate the twin simultaneous themes of this book: (1)

Churches today which make themselves a “Den of Thieves” **{our preference is for the phrase “Hideout for Bad Habits”; and (2) some justice to the Bible on the Reports for Unbelievers.}** Unfortunately, most of the “unbelievers” we are given examples about in the Bible for our own help are unbelievers among God’s own people, first in the Jewish congregation and then in the churches. In fact, we must explore the possibility that by the time of Malachi and even before that, as Paul will explain to us in Romans, there was always only a “remnant” of God’s adopted people from the great body of God’s selected people. Sometimes it almost seems that God selects like out of Egypt a large body of people uniquely for Himself, so that later from that larger body He can whittle down to a very small remnant of His real adopted people. And even as in the time of the Fullness of Gentiles, also written about from Paul in Romans, God’s people in America as the fullest of all Gentiles, have temporarily replaced the Jewish nations as the majority of the selected people of God, so after the completion of the fullness of the Gentiles, we in America may expect an almost complete Falling Away from the status as God’s people that was experienced in Old Testament times and later in the times of Jesus. What we have in the book of Hebrews is a brief history of the Falling Away of the Hebrews in the wilderness for 40 years, as they saw the works of God and still developed an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God, and that of course was early in their history of development as a nation, also as a somewhat selected people of God--of course we know that only approximately four of them survived to be adopted people of God, that is over the age of 20; what we have in Jeremiah is an almost complete Falling Away among the temple as God identifies that as the time of a point of no return for them, except of course for a small remnant which would include some of the captives like Daniel in Babylon; and what we have in II Timothy 4:4,5 is a complete Falling Away of God’s people, primarily the Gentiles and the Gentile leaders in America, in churches and denominations as they: (1) become intolerant toward sound doctrine; (2) make Christian and church decision based more on their own “desires” than on any control from Christ; (3) heap up Bible teachers and preachers, even prophets, of “itching ears” in churches, over TV, in their pulpits and Sunday school classes; (4) churches turn away from the truth; and (5) churches turn into fables. While we might consider these are the great Falling Away, recalling that the Great Apostasy is reserved for just before the Second Coming of Christ according to Paul and II Thessalonians, it would seem that both the Old Testament history is a long record of different periods of falling away as is the history of the Christian churches starting with the history of the seven churches of Asia Minor where lack of love and unsound doctrine precipitated a threat from the Ascended Christ to remove their candlestick, and the perilous times of II Timothy 3:1-9 speak of ups and downs among Christians and their churches which are like mini-falling Aways.

1. “LORD, who has believed our report?” (Romans 10:16 and Isaiah 53:1) We could laboriously dig our way through Isaiah, Jeremiah, the Old Testament Prophets and history to get a proper God-given history on these matters and the REPORTS, also the same for the 27 books of the New Testament which give us the proper interpretations of these Old Testament matters; but why do that when God in His providence of the writing

of Scriptures has provided the Apostle Paul, the book of Romans, and Paul's summary of the REPORTS in Romans chapter 10.

(1). Notice this is a plea to God that so few people have believed our reports about Jesus and salvation, a tacit recognition that unbelief among Jews and Gentiles is more prevalent than faith; and also a recognition that the majority not only do not believe what is necessary, but that the majority of humanity, Jews or Gentiles, do not achieve the ultimate salvation of the new earth. Also, that the struggle to be God's people in Temples and churches is seldom graceful and successful; and not only does God identify that as the trend of history, but also that He has ordained that it be this way! **{This is getting a little ahead of what we will find in Romans 10, and in the larger context of Romans.}**

(2). You will find as you turn to Isaiah 53:1 that this are primarily REPORTS about Jesus and about faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Also, they are reports about salvation as the complete verse is: "Who has believed our report? And to whom the arm of the LORD been revealed?" (Isaiah 53:1) The words "arm of the LORD" are constantly used in Isaiah and in other books of the Bible as synonymous with the "salvation of God". And when you read into chapter 53, a famous chapter on Jesus as the Saving Servant of God, you will see that the "He" of many verses is Jesus: (1) He grew up non-illustriously with little attention in a little city of Palestine at a time the nation of Israel itself was somewhat insignificant in the world; (2) He was despised and rejected by men, although the very Son of God; (3) He bore our sorrows, was bruised for our iniquities in the Crucifixion, wounded for our transgressions; (4) He did not open His mouth during the mock trial and Crucifixion; (5) He was cut off from the land of the living; and so on with so many predicted details of the life, Crucifixion, and Resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ as to be without denial that the "He" is Christ, the Jesus of Nazareth born in Bethlehem. **{It is interesting that some of the "scoffers" which will be addressed later, but which you already know about and hear from often, would claim a time of writing for the book of Isaiah after Christ until at least one copy of the manuscript of Isaiah in the Dead Sea Scrolls was dated as at least two hundred years before Christ.}**

NOTE: At any point such as this, we could bog down in the details; but the flow on REPORTS must continue, be placed instantly in one chapter before us, and then reviewed and further developed in later chapters.

2. Even as there is an obedience toward the gospel of Christ, there is also the opposite of disobedience toward the gospel. Believers practice the obedience and unbelievers practice the disobedience. **{Later you will read a chapter about the people of Israel in the Old Testament under the title of "to obey is better than to sacrifice." While humanity has found and still finds many ways to make sacrifice, and the sacrifice of service, always to God and made clear in the Old and the New Testament histories has it been more important to God Himself to see obedience. God said often and said early in the Old Testament, in fact in the words that He spoke Himself to the Hebrew**

congregation before Mount Sinai, that far more important to Him that the sacrifice of blood animals was the obedience to His commands and covenants.}

“But they have not all obeyed the gospel...” Paul writes in Romans 10:15, just before the REPORT quote from Isaiah, and with somewhat of a summary of how most of Israel up to that very time of his life as a leader and lawyer in the Hebrew nation had not believed in God, and they were the select people of God!

3. In the very next verse, Romans 10:17, is careful to be more positive than negative about the unbelief of Israel, with a definition of how faith comes: “faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.” The REPORTS to which Paul and Isaiah make reference, especially the reports on Jesus, are designed just like in this book to generate faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; that faith can only come if you hear the Word of the reports or in this case read the reports. This book and Romans and Isaiah, indeed the whole of the Bible, is based on the Bible as the Word of God. Read any of you, like in Isaiah, and you will find that the Prophets are only recording, just like the Apostles, what God told them to say. “God said”, “I decided” where the “I” is God, and “Thus saith the Lord” clearly identify for the reader who has eyes to see and ears to hear that God the Father is the source of the words.

4. Passing on to the flow of the REPORTS in Romans 10, with a summary of much of the rest of the Bible, Paul begs the issue of perhaps even though the REPORTS were given to Israel maybe they did not hear. **{Unbelievers today would also like to proclaim a certain ignorance of hearing of the Word-Reports; but we know from the Bible the many incessant and constant and world-wide manner in which they continue to hear from the Holy Spirit who convicts the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; of from other Christians and preachers; even from the Bible itself sometimes; from their own conscience that God has put in every one of His human creations; and yes, even nature and the collective Conscience of American Society.}** The answer of Paul is a quote from Psalm 19:4 that the sound of the Word has gone out across the whole earth, the words to the end of the earth. **{Likewise we know from Jesus and Matthew 24 that after the gospel goes to every nation, a process He started with His kingdom when on earth, then “will the end come”; and we can legitimately feel that by now through the past efforts of the U.S. and other Christians and churches, and in the process of the fullness of the Gentiles lead by the U.S. the gospel has indeed gone out to every nation.}**

5. Well, okay the argument **{Paul was always a lawyer and master of logic based on the Bible}** of Paul proceeds: perhaps they heard but did not understand with the words “did Israel know?” (Romans 10:19)

(1). Yes they knew, and Paul quotes first from Deuteronomy 32:21; and you know that to be Moses and the people of God before Palestine to the extent that already Israel was REPORTED to about the salvation of God for the Gentiles, and the threat and promise to

them at that time of how they would be “provoked to jealousy” by a nation that did not even exist {yes, that it us and the other Gentile nations of the world}, a foolish nation {yes, that is us also, now}.

(2). Isaiah (65:1) states it more clearly, Paul argues in Romans 10:20 where God Himself states: (a) that He was found for those nations who did not seek Him {more of the grace and plan of God}; and (b) God was manifested to those who did not seek Him. {For more on how God and Jesus manifest themselves to believers and not to the world, please refer to John 15 with the three questions from Apostles and the three answers of Jesus of “how He will manifest Himself to us and not to the world.”}

(3). Finally, Paul comes in 10:21 and with a quote from Isaiah 65:2 to give God’s summary of the history of how Israel has heard and known. {This is a reaction, if you would of the majority of the nation of Israel to the REPORTS from God Himself.}

“But to Israel he says {see once again how in the Bible it is God that does the talking}, ‘All day long I have stretched out My hands to a disobedient and contrary people.’” (Romans 10:21 and Isaiah 65:2)

NOTE: I promised that Paul in Romans would not only summarize the Old Testament for you on the unbelieving history of God’s own people, but how Paul through the Holy Spirit of God would also give the proper meaning and interpretation!

Paul continues the REPORTS and arguments of Romans 10 with the question in Romans 11 of “has God cast away His people?” This is another way to talk about the remnant that God chooses from all His people, Jews in the past and even some in the present, and mainly Gentile church members in the present. It also begs the issue that is a burden of this book, and as introduced by Christ in John 15 where God does cast out many of His unfruitful people--also the threat of candlestick removal of churches by the Ascended Christ, that God today for churches like for God’s people in the past of the Jewish nation does cast out those selectively called His own people, but not yet fully adopted. Also, you see in this I know, the difficult issue of the predestination of God versus freedom of choice; however, we cannot neglect it from the words of Romans, nor can we neglect its importance for the twin themes under discussion in this book.

Conclusion for the Whip of Cords from [Benson Commentary](#)

[John 2:15-17](#). *And when he had made a scourge of small cords — Εκοχινιων, of rushes, rather, which he found strewed on the ground. This circumstance, seemingly slight, was inserted to show that the instrument could not be the cause of so wonderful an effect as is here mentioned. He drove them all out — Namely, out of the court of the temple; both the sheep and the oxen — Though it does not appear that he struck even them, much less any of the men. But a terror from God, it is evident, fell upon them. And poured out the changers’ money — Upon the ground; and overthrew the tables — At which they were sitting. And said*

to them that sold doves, Take these things hence – Greek, **ταυτα**, the cages wherein the pigeons were exposed to sale, pointing to them. *Make not my Father's house a house of*



merchandise – Make not the temple, which is dedicated to the worship of God, a place for carrying on low traffic. It is remarkable, that the guilty persons did not offer to make the least resistance; probably, a consciousness of guilt restrained them, or the wonderful things which Jesus had performed at this festival, though not recorded, with the influence of Christ's miraculous power on their minds, made them afraid to resist him. Nevertheless,

in the apprehension of the disciples, he exposed himself to great danger, by turning out a body of factious men, whom the priests and rulers supported. On this occasion, therefore, they called to mind, [Psalm 69:10](#), *The zeal of thy house hath eaten me up* – Imputing their Master's action to such a concern for the purity of God's worship, as the psalmist of old was animated by. The truth is, it certainly was an evidence of a very extraordinary zeal indeed; a zeal nothing inferior to that for which the prophets were famed.

About the Chord of rushes in the whip of Jesus from

<https://ceeemstone.com/2016/05/20/historical-inaccuracy-rushes-strown-on-the-floor/>