Sept? Approx 10

AMBASSADOR COLLEGE **Bible** CORRESPONDENCE COURSE

LESSON 37

AT-ONE-MENT WITH GOD!

YOU have no doubt heard the claim that there is a "great controversy" between God and Satan. That Christ and the Devil are in a running battle for men's souls.

If this doctrine were true, then Satan indeed is WINNING! More souls are "unsaved" today than ever before in human history. Satan, according to this view, is made out to be actually STRONGER than Jesus!

But Satan is NOT stronger than Jesus Christ! Jesus is returning to RULE THIS EARTH WITH A ROD OF IRON—to depose Satan and set up the Kingdom of God. When Christ returns He will not leave this world in the hands of the Devil.

Why Christ OUSTS Satan!

For 6,000 years Satan has invisibly swayed the nations. He has guided human governments, influenced man's civilization, possessed mighty leaders and inspired World Wars. Satan has had his part in causing the misery, hate, suffering, and violent death that have plagued mankind since creation.

Since the days of Adam, Satan has occupied the POSITION OF THIS WORLD'S RULER! But his days in that office *are numbered!*

God is not in competition with Satan—there is no "great controversy"! The question of who will rule this earth has ALREADY BEEN DECIDED!

Jesus Christ has already OVERCOME the Devil and QUALIFIED to replace him. Jesus Christ is COMING AS KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS to take over the governments of this world and DEPOSE SATAN THE DEVIL!

Only when Christ reigns supreme will this world have peace for one thousand years.

But what will happen to Satan?

The Day of Atonement reveals the answer. But how many have ever heard of this day—let alone understood its meaning for us today? It reveals Satan's fate in God's Master Plan. By studying this Holy Day you will find astounding answers to these and many other questions.

What the Day of Atonement Pictures

God's Holy Days constantly remind us how, step by step, God is working out His Master Plan.

The first three of these—Passover, the Days of Unleavened Bread, and Pentecost—picture the first harvest of souls. The preparation, training and final reaping of the firstfruits—*those few now* being called.

The last four show the plan God has for completing salvation for the *rest of the world.*

We learned in the last lesson, how Christ will suddenly intervene in this world at His return. He will be swift and firm in punishing the nations.

But what about Satan? What happens to him?

The fifth annual Sabbath—the Day of Atonement (or At-one-ment)—reveals the answer. It pictures Christ deposing Satan the Devil from his present position as world ruler, and removing him to a place completely away and apart from mankind. He will be bound, no longer able to deceive the nations, for one thousand years! (Rev. 20:1.)

The Day of Atonement has also a deep *personal* meaning for *everyone* whose eyes God has opened. When Satan and his demons are dethroned and removed from office, they must be replaced by qualified rulers. Satan will be replaced by Jesus Christ. His demons by those of us who have surrendered to God and been willing to obey Him.

Are you qualifying to rule this world as it

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ought to be ruled? *Could you* do a better job than the President, better than the rulers of Russia, of Germany, or Red China? You may *think* you could, but COULD YOU really?

The fact is we do not *now* have the power, or the ability or capacity. *Of himself* no man is great enough to even *begin to commence* to measure up to the standard necessary to bring peace and happiness to the nations. It takes the power of God—the life of God—the mind and nature of God. That is possible only through conversion. Through conversion every single individual, great or small, can have God's own power and nature added to him by receiving the Holy Spirit!

That's the message of the gospel.

Most human beings cannot grasp this marvellous truth. They are unwilling to humble themselves under the mighty hand of God and wait to be exalted in His due time.

Humility Through Fasting

The Day of Atonement is perhaps the most unusual Holy Day. For it is the one day on which God has commanded us to fast!

What, exactly, is *fasting?* What is its purpose?

The purpose of fasting is to humble oneself—to help us to see ourselves as we are! And to see God as He is!

Fasting on the Day of Atonement means denying yourself food and water for 24 hours—from sunset to sunset. Fasting is *not* penance—NOT *a hunger strike* to force your own will on God. Mahatma Gandhi fasted that way. A Christian is to fast in order to humble his or her own fleshly mind with its carnal will and to draw closer to God. To *acknowledge* his or her own *nothingness* and ask for GOD'S strength.

Jesus Christ received the strength to resist the Devil's strongest temptation by fasting 40 days and nights! Spiritually, He was at His strongest at the end of 40 days, because He was *completely* humble before God. God, of course, doesn't ask or expect us to fast 40 days. He only commands one day of us each year, though we are also told to fast voluntarily at other times.

A little hunger on the Day of Atonement serves to prove to every one of us that we, as Job, are just like *worms* (Job 25:6)—puny, insignificant little creatures down here inwardly WARRING *with one another!* How absolutely *dependent* we are on the food and the water of this earth!

Fasting on the Day of Atonement reveals to us how much we still love ourselves. *How difficult* it is to give up some of *self!* This day is a TEST to see which we will put *first*. Will it be the cry of the body for food or the sincere desire to obey God?

LESSON 37

The Binding of Satan

1. Will Satan be bound with a symbolic chain and locked up with a key to prevent him from escaping to deceive mankind? Rev. 20:1-2. Where is Satan cast? Verse 3. Compare Rev. 18:2, and Isaiah 13:19-21.

2. Does Rev. 18:2 also show where the rest of the demons will be, and that they will all be removed from the presence of mankind?

3. After God allows the terrible woes of Rev. 9, to be unleashed on men, will they repent and turn to God? Rev. 9:21. Even after the terrible *seven last plagues*—the wrath of God poured out *without mixture*—does the greater part of humanity still remain obdurate, stubbornly rebellious? Rev. 16:11, 21.

4. Why won't men repent? Is it because they are deceived? Rev. 12:9 Are the three unclean spirits of Rev. 16:13, 14 demons? Is their purpose to deceive the world about Christ's Second Coming? Same verse. Is Satan himself behind this scheme? Note the word "dragon" in verse 13.

5. Did Paul predict the end of world rule by fallen angels? Heb. 2:5.

COMMENT: God speaks in His Word, the Holy Bible, of three worlds— 1) "the world that then was" which perished in the Flood (II Peter 3:6), 2) "this present evil world" (Gal. 1:4), and 3) "the world to come"—the World Tomorrow. In the World Tomorrow, Devil and demons will no longer be in authority over Earth's nations and religion.

6. Did Paul also show who will replace the demons as rulers over the world? Rom. 16:20; I Cor. 6:2-3.

7. Does the Bible show that after Satan and his demons are put away, their deception and false way of life will still maintain its hold for a little while on depraved human hearts. Ezek.

38:1-14. Is this after the beginning of Christ's kingdom on earth? Verses 8, 11, 14. Aren't these still-deceived folk a major portion of the human race?

COMMENT: Meshech and Tubal are the dominant people of the U.S.S.R., Gog and Magog include the Mongols and China, Gomer and Togarmah are other Asiatic peoples.

8. Will God deal severely with them to show them He is God? Ezek. 39:3-7.

COMMENT: Today God doesn't seem real to most people. Whether their present religion is Communism, Shamanism or falsely so-called "Christianity," *God is going to be real* to everyone "in that day."

A Commanded Assembly

1. Does Leviticus 23—the only chapter in all the Bible where all of God's Festivals are mentioned in one place—proclaim a Day of Atonement? Verse 27. Is this a day to be kept holy once each year? Same verse. At what time of the year?

COMMENT: The seventh month of God's sacred calendar typifies the seventh 1000-year day of man's history

2. Are all who are God's people *commanded to assemble* on the Day of Atonement? Lev. 23:27. Does Numbers 29:7 verify this, and set the exact day on which we meet locally?

3. Does God say that we should afflict our souls? Lev. 23:27 and Num. 29:7. What does "afflict" mean?

COMMENT: "Afflict" is translated from the Hebrew word "*anah*" which means "to beat down, depress, abase, chasten, humble." God inspired the same original word in Exodus 10:3, saying to Pharoah, "How long wilt thou refuse to *humble* thyself before me? let my people go, that they may serve me." See also in Deut. 8:2, 3 how God led Israel 40 years in the wilderness to *humble* them, by allowing them to *hunger*.

How are we, then, to afflict our souls? Why, the same way that God humbled Israel in the wilderness, letting them get good and hungry! See also Psa. 35:13 and Isa. 58:3.

Remember, "soul" means physical life in a physical body that depends on constant refueling for its maintenance. Here, "soul" is equivalent to "stomach."

4. Does this Day differ from all of the other Holy Days in that *absolutely no work* is to be done on it? Num. 29:7; Lev. 23:30 and 16:29. The other Holy Days permit "no servile work," that is, no ordinary work other than what is necessary for preparing "that which every man must eat" (Exodus 12:16).

COMMENT: Though a day of fasting, the Day of Atonement is also a day of rejoicing. It is a spiritual feast of drinking in of God's Word.

5. Why is this day to be kept so straitly? Lev. 23:28. What does "atonement" mean?

COMMENT: Webster says to "atone" means to set "at one." To join in one—to form by uniting. This day symbolizes God and man being set at one—literally, if you please, the Day of *At-One-ment*. God and the created human race can never be fully at one—in full agreement—until Satan is banished and the whole world has repented.

6. Will God allow anyone to remain among His people who refuses to keep the Day of Atonement? Lev. 23:29, 30. Was this day to be done away at the cross? Verse 31. Does this command apply only to racial Jews and Israelites? Lev. 16:29. Notice that it is a statute for the stranger also—any person of any race—who comes among God's people.

COMMENT: If we are God's, then we all are spiritual Israelites. And that means we *must* keep this Day of Atonement today (Gal. 3:29; John 4:22; Rom. 2:28, 29; 11:17, 18).

7. At what time of day do we begin fasting for the Day of Atonement? Lev. 23:32.

COMMENT: Notice that the first meal we miss is the evening meal. If we were to eat immediately before sunset on the ninth of the month, we would *not* be truly fasting—not *afflicting* our souls and humbling ourselves—for several hours, because our "souls" would be full of food and busily digesting it.

In God's true calendar, every day begins at the previous day's sunset (Gen. 1:5, 8, 13, 19, etc.).

How Ancient Israel Observed Day of Atonement

Especially, it seems, has the world forgotten the symbolism of the Day of Atonement. And no wonder! For this day above all others is like a thorn in the flesh to that great Deceiver.

Let us examine the 16th chapter of Leviticus which details God's instructions to the Levitical priesthood concerning the Day of Atonement.

1. Was part of the Tabernacle which Israel built as a type of God's house, permitted to no one but the high priest? Lev. 16:17. What was the significance of this very holy place? Verse 2.

Was this the earthly representation—a type—of the very throne of God? Exodus 25:17-20. Why was the cover to the Ark of the Covenant called the "mercy seat"? Verse 17. Compare with Jer. 17:12, noting the word "sanctuary."

2. Was the high priest permitted to enter this typical throne room of God as often as he liked? Lev. 16:2. Was this because God's very

Presence was there—He whose face no man can look on and live? Ex. 33:20. Could God allow His very throne to be profaned or disrespected?

3. *When* was the high priest permitted to enter the room behind the veil? Notice the last verse of this "Atonement Day" chapter, and also verse 29. See, too, Exodus 30:10.

4. Before entering the "Holy of Holies" or "most holy place," what types did the Aaronic high priest first act out at the door of the Tabernacle? Lev. 16:5 and 7. Why did he present the two goats before the Lord? Was one of the goats to represent the LORD? Was the other goat to be rejected? Verse 10. Whom did the rejected goat represent? Verse 8.

COMMENT: The English word "scapegoat" is *not a correct translation* of the Hebrew word God inspired. If you have a Bible with marginal renderings, notice that it gives "Azazel" in the margin, for "scapegoat."

Who is Azazel? Gesenius' and other Hebrew lexicons derive the word from *azal* which means "he removed or separated." This is exactly what Satan or Lucifer did when he turned against God and became God's adversary!

Azazel is none other than Satan the Devil!

Gesenius says that Azazel is "an evil demon." Ancient Jewish literature knew the Devil by this name. It is, for example, spelled Azalzal and Azael in apocryphal literature. *The Comprehensive Commentary* says, ". . . [According to] the oldest opinions of the Hebrews and Christians . . . Azazel is the name of the Devil, . . . the word signified the goat which went away."

The modern word "scapegoat" carries an *entirely wrong* connotation. Originally it was "escape goat"—the goat which was let escape—which the translators took to be the meaning of Azazel. But today the English word "scapegoat" signifies "one who bears blame or guilt for others." This is definitely not the meaning that God inspired. Azazel—Satan—bears his own guilt. Satan is no scapegoat for another's sins. He is to be punished for his own guilt.

To be constantly seeking for a scapegoat—a way to shift the blame for his own actions—is man's natural inclination, which Satan incites. All the heathen religions are based on this principle. Satan's perversion is: "Always blame someone else, never clean up *yourself*"—where the source of the trouble resides.

Satan would like to deceive everyone into believing he is being unjustly used as a scapegoat. Satan claims God isn't fair.

This principle is *not the same* as the placing of the sins of a truly converted Christian on Jesus Christ to be washed away by His blood. A Christian does not try to shift the blame—he *freely admits his own guilt*—something Satan has never done! And Jesus Christ freely pays the penalty for the sinner, provided the ex-sinner earnestly *repents* and zealously seeks to avoid sinning in the future. JESUS CHRIST IS NO SCAPEGOAT!

5. How was it determined which goat was to be accepted and which was to be rejected? Lev. 16:8.

COMMENT: A *lot* is a solemn appeal to God to decide a doubtful matter. It is a sacred religious ceremony. It includes a supernatural act of God. That is why lotteries and gambling are of the Devil—an actual profaning of an ancient holy ceremony appealing to God. See Prov. 16:33.

6. Whom did the other goat typify—the one which was accepted? Verses 8 and 9. Was this the YHWH—the LORD—of the Old Testament, the One who became Jesus Christ? (I Cor. 10:4.) Then this goat which was sacrificed for a sin offering and whose blood was sprinkled on the mercy seat for an atonement for all Israel represented Jesus Christ, didn't it? We will see this more clearly in a moment.

COMMENT: Although these goats appeared to be exactly alike to men, one was to typify Christ and the other Azazel-Satan. Men were utterly unqualified to determine which was suitable to represent which. Therefore it was necessary to make a solemn appeal to God to decide the matter. This means that in the antitype—the *reality* which this symbolic acting out represented—men today are unable to determine which is Christ and which is Azazel (Satan). It is because Azazel-Satan has done his work of deception so thoroughly that mankind as a whole does not know who is God and who is the Devil! *Most Christian-professing people,* who think they worship God, *are actually worshipping the Devil!* (II Cor. 4:4.)

New Testament Explains High Priest's Function

1. Is Christ our perfect, sinless High Priest? Heb. 6:20; 7:26.

2. Was the high priest of the Aaronic priesthood—an impure mortal human being—fit to stand in the very presence of the sinless spiritual Creator? Lev. 16:2, 3.

COMMENT: The book of Leviticus includes the law of rituals—animal sacrifices, meal and drink offerings, incense burnings and various washings—which the priests in Old Testament times had to perform. The Apostle Paul called it the "law of works" (Greek *ergon,* which means physical labor). That was the law which

"was added because of transgressions till the seed [Christ] should come" (Gal. 3:19).

The sacrifices were a substitute for Christ, designed to lead Israel *to* Christ (Gal. 3:24, 25) and therefore after the crucifixion ceased to be necessary.

Let us understand the meaning of the rituals in this chapter that we may know what had to do specifically with the Day of Atonement and what was merely ceremonial.

3. Was the high priest required to wear special holy garments (compare Rev. 19:8) and to bathe his whole body before being allowed in the presence of God? Lev. 16:4, 23. Was it necessary he be accompanied in the most holy place by a "cloud" of incense? Verses 12 and 13. What does incense symbolize? Rev. 5:8.

COMMENT: This incense pictured the kind of prayer God will hear. Sweet incense shows our attitude must not be bitter or vindictive. As the incense was beaten fine, so must we be specific in our prayer. Too many people pray first for their own personal desires, then end quickly with something like, "And, oh yes, God, bless everybody."

The cloud of incense was not physically to screen the high priest from the glory of God. It was only a temporary ceremonial type.

As incense arises from hot coals, so prayers are to ascend like a cloud from the righteous. Prayers bring God's people protection as the incense protected the high priest.

4. Did the high priest have to offer a sin offering for himself? Lev. 16:6 and 14. Why was the blood sprinkled on the mercy seat? Heb. 9:17.

COMMENT: In the Ark of the Covenant beneath the mercy seat were the two tables of stone (Heb. 9:4) on which God had engraved the Ten Commandments with His own finger. Since these were the very laws whose breaking made the sin offering necessary, the sacrificial blood was sprinkled on and before the cover to the Ark, thus symbolically "covering" broken law.

5. What did this ritualistic blood (sin offering) picture—Christ? Rom. 3:25; Rev. 5:9.

COMMENT: The high priest has completely purified himself and is ready to go out and officiate. What follows next has to do specifically with the Day of Atonement. Its types foreshadow New Testament fulfillments.

6. Did the high priest next offer the goat chosen by lot "for the LORD" as a sin offering for all the people? Lev. 16:15. Was it not the "LORD" Himself who was slain for the sins of all the people—and who then assumed the office of High Priest? Heb. 2:17.

7. Does the New Testament plainly tell us that Christ as High Priest and the heaven of God's throne are the *realities* which the Old Testament high priest and Tabernacle only represented? Heb. 9:23, 24; 8:2, 5. To get the complete picture, read the whole of chapter 9 and through the 13th verse of chapter 10 of Hebrews.

8. Did Christ enter behind the vail to the very throne of God in heaven? Heb. 6:19, 20; 8:1. Was it His own blood which He presented as an offering for sin? Heb. 9:12.

9. Then did not Christ *begin* to do what the Aaronic high priest did in type on the Day of Atonement? Heb. 9:7; Lev. 16:15-19.

COMMENT: Note the need for the goat's blood which symbolized the blood of Christ. Even the altar, the Tabernacle and the mercy seat were considered to be defiled by their presence among the carnal, sinning Israelites. This was because continually all through the year Israel's sins were symbolically transferred to the Tabernacle and its fixtures. Once a year on the Day of Atonement this mountainous load of guilt was purged from the nation in order that God might continue to dwell in Israel. For sin separates from God—God is holy (Isa. 59:2).

Meaning of Azazel's Removal

1. The high priest carried the blood of the goat, which represented the slain Christ, into the sanctuary. Did this represent the risen, resurrected Christ who ascended into heaven? Isn't this why he had to be purified so minutely?

COMMENT: If the world today understood only the significance of this goat and of the high priest's actions, they would not be in ignorance of the purpose of the coming of Christ. They would understand His present intercessory work for us these 1900 years in heaven.

But this is not all!

Satan has almost succeeded in blinding this world to *his* very existence, and to its own need for help to escape *him* and draw near to God.

The first of the two goats was killed and of course could not now continue to represent the risen Christ. The high priest himself now took that position.

2. What has Christ, our High Priest, been doing for over 1900 years? Heb. 7:25; 4:14-16.

3. Is He going to return to earth again? Why? To complete the at-one-ment? Let us see what Christ will do when He returns by following the typical acts of the Levitical high priest when he had completed his work in the Tabernacle—symbolic of heaven. Did he *seize* the live Azazel goat? Lev. 16:20.

COMMENT: This did not take place until after the high priest had finished his work in the

Tabernacle. This typified an act to take place after the Second Coming of Christ.

4. Did he symbolically place the sins of Israel on the head of Azazel? Verse 21. Whose sins were they really?

COMMENT: The laying on of hands symbolizes setting apart and bestowing some characteristic attribute. When Christ died He fully paid for our sins. By His payment our debt to the law of God ceases to exist. So these cannot be our sins again placed on Christ, for Him to carry a second time—nor are they our sins to be placed on someone else.

It is actually Satan who is principally responsible for every sin of mankind from the first theft by Eve down to the present. Christ paid for *our* part in every sin of which we repent. But He did not pay for Satan's part in these sins, or the sins of the other demons. Demons are not offered salvation through repentance! They, by nature, live forever. They cannot be born again into the family of God. And they refuse to repent! So here are *Satan's sins* being put right back on his own head—where they belong. God is a God of justice.

This world is in total confusion on the sin question. It does not know who is to blame for sin and how sin is to be paid for. It only knows fragmentary parts of God's plan and it gets even these all mixed up. Practically the *only* bit of truth concerning salvation that is generally known is that Christ died to pay for our sins. But most assume that this means we are saved *in* our sins, not *from* sin. So Satan finds it easy to deceive people into assuming that the sin-carrying Azazel must be Christ.

5. Was this dreadful goat sent away from all mankind carrying all his sins with him? Verses 21 and 22. Doesn't this mean Azazel will no longer be allowed to deceive the people? Is this goat pictured as living on? Verses 10, 22.

COMMENT: Satan is a spirit being and therefore immortal. To signify that, the goat was permitted to live. But notice that he was turned loose only when completely removed from the presence of man.

6. Does the wilderness to which the goat was taken represent the land of ruins which modern "Babylon" will soon become? Isa. 13:21.

7. After coming in contact with Azazel, did Aaron have to wash himself again before coming in contact with the people? Lev. 16:24. And did the "fit"—or "capable"—man who led the goat away have to wash his clothes and bathe before coming into the camp? Verse 26. The symbolism is certainly that of having come in contact with the Devil!

8. Is the mission of this "fit" or "capable" man mentioned in the New Testament? Rev. 20:1-3. Does he represent a mighty angel?

What At-One-Ment Will Mean to This World!

1. How long, according to the archangel Gabriel, will it take Jesus to conquer the rebellious hearts of the children of Israel? Dan. 9:27. Who is the "Desolator"? Last part of verse 27.

COMMENT: Marginal reference Bibles show the word translated "desolate" in the King James Authorized Version should be "Desolator." The primary desolator of earth is Satan—also called Abaddon and Apollyon—"Destroyer" (Rev. 9:11).

2. Was Daniel also told it would take 3½ years for the returned Christ to complete the task of bringing the world into at-one-ment? Same verses. What does it mean to "confirm the covenant"? See Comment below.

COMMENT: All through this famous prophecy, which predicted the exact year of the coming of Jesus the Messiah to the Jews in 27 A.D., the year for a day principle is employed. A week thus becomes 7 years in fulfillment. Christ was to confirm the covenant for one week—7 years. But the prophecy also states He was to be cut off in the "midst of the week" (same verse), leaving yet another 3½ years to be fulfilled after His Second Coming. He spent 3½ years—from the autumn of 27 A.D. to the Passover in 31 A.D.—confirming the covenant by personally teaching and training a first group of true Christians who are to be given the overlordship of the world the Covenant promised. At His return, He will continue what He began by actually putting them in power over nations, bringing all into subjection to the government—kingdom—of God.

3. What was it the Apostle Peter proclaimed was to occur when Jesus Christ returns to earth? Acts 3:19-21. Note the words "refreshing" and "restitution." But what is it that is to be restored to earth? Why, the government of God!

COMMENT: A whole new way of life needs to be restored to mankind. It was once offered to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, but they quickly rejected it, being taken in by the serpent's subtle deception.

What the world needs is obedience to God's revealed will—faith instead of skepticism—relying on the superior wisdom and experience of the Creator instead of human wisdom. Away with reasoning, feelings, desires, and emotions, based on the pulls of the flesh!

The first step for restoration of Utopia is reinstitution of God-authority—with absolute enforcement and immediate punishment for infraction of God's law. There will be a worldwide system of mayors, judges, lesser and great-

er kings, etc. Jesus referred to these offices in the parables. One will be given rule over ten cities, another rule over five, and so forth (Luke 19:17, 19; Rev. 5:10).

4. Does Peter also show God's government is to be restored at the same time Satan's part in sins is to be transferred to his own head? Acts 3:19.

5. At-one-ment will not be complete with merely putting Satan away. The greatest task will be remaining. People will still be hating and killing each other. Man's mind, man's very nature, must be refashioned—his character reshaped and remoulded until it becomes "at one" with God. Then the fully confirmed new covenant will be completed.

What will be the attitude of both Israel and Judah "in that time"? Jer. 31:9, 34; 50:4, 5. Who does God blame for their past sins and wrong attitudes? Verse 6. Isn't this Azazel's doing—*through* his counterfeit ministers? But "in that time" will Israel and Judah have any more sin? Jer. 50:20; Zech. 3:9.

COMMENT: God says, "I will pardon them whom I reserve"—those whom He brings back alive through the Great Tribulation. There will be at-one-ment between God and Israel. Israel will have been brought to her knees—and to repentance—by the terrible national punishments to be inflicted on her.

7. Is this the attitude pictured by fasting on the Day of Atonement?

COMMENT: The Day of Atonement is a vivid illustration of the state of mind necessary for salvation—of the humility, the godly sorrow, the earnest seeking for the right way. It is also a warning of the state to which God will be forced to reduce Israel by war, captivity, deportation, slavery and persecution.

8. Will the twelve nations or tribes of Israel have any more disagreements or jealousies *of one another?* Isa. 11:13. Will they then cooperate to convert Gentile nations to the government of God? Verse 14. Also Rom. 11:12, 15.

9. And seeing Israel's right example, will Gentile nations willingly, of their own volition, seek to God's nation for the way of peace and at-one-ment? Deut. 4:6. See also Eph. 2:11-16.

10. What will the Gentiles say when they have learned the truth—and realize at last how the father of lies (John 8:44) has deceived them? Will they forsake the ways of their ancestors? Jer. 16:19.

New Testament Church Kept Day of Atonement

1. Did the Apostle Paul tell us God's Holy Days *foreshadow* events to come—illustrate the plan of God in advance? Col. 2:16-17. Note the proper translation of verse 17 is that God's days "foreshadow" good things to come.

COMMENT: Colossae was strictly a Gentile city, and Paul was writing to a Church composed of Gentiles by birth. They had previously known nothing of God or His Holy Days. Unless the ministers of the Church of God had taught them to observe these Holy Days, they would never have been "judged" by outsiders for doing so.

Verses 16 and 17 are *one* sentence. In this much misunderstood sentence Paul instructs Christians not to listen to any outside man or body of men but to the Body of Christ—His Church—concerning their weekly and annual Sabbaths. Note that the translators of the King James Version erroneously inserted the word "is" in verse 17 (in italics in most Bibles). It is not found in the original inspired Greek text. The proper translation means: "Let no outsider judge you . . . but let the Body of Christ—the Church—do the judging." Write for a free article making this verse plain. It is entitled "Does It Matter Which Days We Observe?"

2. Did the New Testament church keep the Day of Atonement? Acts 27:9.

COMMENT: All Biblical scholars know that "the fast" refers to the Festival of Atonement in the fall of the year. Your marginal reference Bibles will have a note saying "Day of Atonement." Here was the evangelist Luke—over 30 years after the crucifixion and the cessation of all the Mosaic rituals which were fulfilled in Christ—writing that "the fast was now past" for that year. Luke would never have thought of mentioning "the fast" unless he and all the Church had just been keeping it! And if the Day of Atonement were no longer in existence, the Holy Spirit could never have inspired these words!

The early New Testament Church of God is our example church for today, just as was the Jerusalem headquarters church for all the local congregations then (I Thes. 2:14). We should do as it did. The true Church of God today keeps the fast of the Day of Atonement.

Why We Must Keep "the Fast" Today

1. Was the Day of Atonement chosen as the beginning of a time of release? Doesn't this make it obvious that the purpose of this Day is to symbolize release from bondage? Lev. 25:9, 10.

COMMENT: The Jubilee was given the Israelites that their poor might be released from debts they were unable to pay. Every fiftieth year those were released who had sold themselves

into slavery for food to eat and clothes to wear. Inherited land lost through poverty was restored to the family rightly owning it. This was typical of man's future Atonement release from the debt of sin, slavery to Satan (Rom. 7:14; 6:16), and of the restoration to each nation of its own land.

2. Why is it necessary for there to be a Day of At-one-ment? Isa. 59:2; Ps. 66:18.

COMMENT: We all, whether Israelite or Gentile, have sinned (Rom. 3:23). And so we have become *separated* from God. Our crying need for reunification—atonement—with God is emphasized by the fact the word "atonement" appears no less than 45 times in the book of Leviticus alone.

3. The Old Testament observances so far studied were ritualistic. Only the high priest and a few assistants were involved in performing them. But the *whole population* or congregation of Israel has a part of its own to play. That part is *to fast and abstain from work* on the Day of Atonement. Lev. 23:29-32. Does it say "forever"—and "throughout your generations"—and "in all your dwellings"?

What does the act of fasting indicate—sorrow because of sin? Ezra 10:6; Deut. 9:8, 9, 18.

4. Isn't the Bible example of spiritual fasting always to go without water as well as food? Same verses, and also Exodus 34:28; Esther 4:16; Acts 9:9.

5. Is it through the minor affliction of fasting that we become one with the Christ who suffered so TREMENDOUSLY *for us* that we might become at-one with God? Isa. 53:4, 7. The same Hebrew word *anah* is used here that is used for fasting, afflicting the soul.

6. Does this Fast Day serve to keep us in remembrance of what we are at present—flesh? Isa. 44:8, 12.

7. Doesn't the Day of Atonement fast also tell us how much our lives, our actions, and our thoughts are taken up with self? When we get hungry, we suddenly find that we are still very carnalminded. How spiritualminded are *you?*

8. Carnal nature tends to become exalted, puffed up with its own sinful ways. How did David control his tendency to become arrogant? Psalms 35:13; 109:24; 119:71. On what kind of man will God look with favor—a humble man? Isa 66:2. Atonement Day cuts us down and lets us know how small and weak we are.

9. Did Jesus teach that he who humbles himself shall be exalted? Luke 14:11. And that no one can be accepted of God until he becomes humble? Luke 18:14.

COMMENT: Notice Luke 18:11, that this Pharisee fasted weekly from a wrong motive. His fasting was penance, thinking that God would be pleased if he made himself suffer, and would grant him *his* will. That is not the purpose of the Day of Atonement. True humbling is repentance, not penance. It leads to conversion—admitting one's human ways are all wrong and turning to God's ways, receiving the power of the Holy Spirit to completely overshadow one's own puny human strength.

10. What else does the act of fasting picture to us? Isa. 40:28-30.

COMMENT: The glorious spirit bodies we will have after the resurrection, or instantaneous change of the just, will have no need of food to sustain life. Our physical bodies today gain their pittance of chemical energy from plant products or animal flesh. Without constant replenishment, we would run down quickly. But it is not so with spirit. Spirit contains life inherent within itself, not dependent upon any outside source.

When we fast on the Day of Atonement it pictures to us the time and condition when we will no longer need to eat. We will *no longer be earthbound,* tied to this mundane sphere with its supply of physical food and drinkable water. It pictures the time we shall have the power to go where we will (John 3:8), whenever and wherever necessary to carry out the government of God, while we teach others how to live joyfully and happily and how to inherit the same wonderful spirit bodies we will have.

We should not sorrow on the Day of Atonement as the world sorrows which has no hope. Though we sorrow for sin, we rejoice. Though subdued physically, in spirit we thrill with life! The Day of Atonement, like all of God's Holy Days, is a time of great rejoicing.

11. In addition, the commandment to observe the fast of the Day of Atonement is a *test* commandment, to see if we will *obey* or not. How does James say we will receive the ability to withstand Satan during this life? James 4:6, 7, 10. Surely humbling ourselves—resisting Satan and submitting to God—is symbolic of how we will be able to replace him as world ruler. Does Mark 9:29 also show how God's servants receive the necessary power to cast out the demons? Is it by fasting?

COMMENT: Those who are truly converted—surrendered to God's will—will keep the Day of Atonement, fasting and meeting with others of God's true Church if at all possible.

Those who refuse to keep this day, or who carelessly keep it in some manner other than God commanded, are not converted and will be "cut off" from among the people of God. Their part is the lake of fire *with* Satan. Those ready when Christ returns will enter the Kingdom—the government of God. But outside will be darkness and weeping and gnashing of teeth (Mat. 22:11-13) reserved for *those who know* their Master's will (Luke 12:46-48) *and do it not!*