

How Does

THE BIBLE

Define

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One of the greatest monarchs who has ever reigned on this earth was King Solomon. Taking the throne of the tiny country of Israel from his father, David, he succeeded in building Israel into a powerful nation which commanded respect from the great empires on the world scene at that time. At the height of his power, his regal splendor as he sat upon the throne of Israel in Jerusalem caused his fame to spread abroad so that other rulers came to visit him. When Solomon embarked upon the construction of the magnificent Temple of Yahweh in Jerusalem, Hiram the king of Lebanon furnished materials and artisans to complete the work. During the time that Solomon was standing at the head of a well-known government, he had the opportunity to evaluate critically the success and failure of many different nations.

His observation which we find in Proverbs 14:34 should be a guideline for our nation today. ***“Righteousness exalts a nation; But sin is a reproach to any people.”*** If only our own nation would have the desire to draw upon the experience of King Solomon and take his advice! Rather than to con-

by
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tinue stumbling along under the increasing burden of sin which has been dragging our nation down in recent years, we might continue to enjoy greatness as the people who are the heirs to the blessings of our Heavenly Father if we would turn from our sins.

The most unpopular thing that a minister can do is to go on the air and cry out against sin. This subject is perhaps the most unappreciated by our contemporary society. The natural tendency of people today is to explain away misbehavior as a psychological maladjustment which is the result of a repressed upbringing. I am convinced that these are alibis and excuses, a simple lack of discipline, and are the responsibility of a misguided educational system. Except for extreme situations, a person is responsible for his own conduct. When a person sins, he himself is responsible for that sin. Sin is still sin, and sin has been declared by our Heavenly Father to be offensive to Him. There is no “situation ethics” to be found in the Bible.

Just what is sin? Even though you may have heard the word literally hundreds of times, can you give a scriptural definition? You may be just as I was, while I was a part of nominal religion. We repeated these words and terms, but never actually understood the correct definition. As I have stated on many different occasions, there are several definitions of sin, but the firm and absolute definition for sin is found in 1 John 3:4. ***“Everyone that commits sin also transgresses the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.”*** Some translators say, “Sin is lawlessness.”

Usually when someone raises the question of obedience to the laws of the Scriptures, a rather passionate argument ensues. I was raised under the same teaching which has influenced many of you who are reading these words now. I was not raised in a command-keeping church which taught obedience to all of the scriptural laws. However, after I began my thorough Bible study, one of the first things I learned was that I was wrong in rejecting the laws and commandments which are found in the Bible. Let us turn to some passages in the Bible which

have led me to take a stand for scriptural law-keeping.

Most people usually turn to the books which were written by the Apostle Paul when they try to find substantiation of the theory that the law has been done away, or annulled, when the Savior died. Frankly, they have a very flimsy case for reaching this conclusion. Have you ever read what the Apostle Peter has to say about Paul's writings? This is found in 2 Peter 3:15-16. *"...even as our beloved brother Paul also, according to the wisdom given to him, wrote to you; as also in all his letters, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to be understood, which the ignorant and unlearned wrest [twist], as they do also the other scriptures, to their own destruction."* Now that is quite an eye-opening revelation from the pen of Peter, who warns that Paul's writings are hard to be understood and that caution should be exercised when studying Paul's epistles.

As I stated previously, the only place to which you can go in the entire Bible which could be interpreted as teaching that the laws of Yahweh were done away when the Savior died would be the writings of Paul. However, when I checked these passages for myself I was stunned when I came across Romans 3:31 where we read, ***"Do we then make the Law of no effect through faith? By no means: No, we establish the Law."***

How shocking to me when I first read this verse! I had been taught that the writings of Paul declared that we no longer were obligated to keep the laws of Yahweh and that it was a yoke of bondage around the people's necks. Here was a Scripture that said that Paul established the law. Reading on a little further in Romans, I came to chapter 7, verse 12, which reads, ***"So that the law is holy, and the***

commandment holy, and righteous, and good."
And every man that hath hope in Him purifieth himself, even as He is pure.

4 Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.

5 And ye know that He was manifested to take away our sins: and in Him is no sin.

Whosoever abideth in

commandment holy, and righteous, and good."

Now to me, that certainly did not sound as though Paul was teaching a doctrine which was hostile to the law of Yahweh. What do you think about this? And then in verse 16 of this same seventh chapter of Romans, Paul says that he consents to the law that it is good! In verse 22 he informs us that he delights in the law of Yahweh after the inward man, and in verse 25 he says that with the mind he serves the law of Yahweh.

After I had read these Scriptures and others which Paul wrote and which actually teach law and commandment keeping, I was anxious to return to the Old Testament and to see what it had to say about itself. I found many Scriptures which said that the law of Yahweh would endure forever!

Let me just show you a few. Psalm 119:160, ***"The sum of your word is truth; And every one of your righteous ordinances endures forever."*** Verse 152 says, ***"Of old have I known from your testimonies, That you have founded them forever."*** Psalm 111:7-10 reads, ***"The works of his hands***

are truth and justice; All his precepts are sure. They are established for ever and ever; They are done in truth and uprightness. He has sent redemption to his people; He has commanded his covenant forever: Holy and reverend is his name. The fear of Yahweh is the beginning of wisdom; A good understanding have all they that do his commandments: His praise endures forever."

Now those are just a few passages from the Psalms, but you can go to the Torah (the law) and find this same thought; you can go to the prophets and find it also. Solomon in Ecclesiastes 12:13 says, ***"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: all has been heard: fear Elohim, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole of man."*** The words "duty of" at the end of the verse in some translations have been added by the translators. If we eliminate them, the verse ends, "this is the whole man," or "this makes the whole man."

One of the most concrete reasons dictating against a conclusion that the law of Yahweh could ever be annulled is that of a specific state-

ment which has been written into the Old Testament. The statement is found in Isaiah 8:20. ***“To the law and to the testimony! If they speak not according to this word, surely there is no morning for them.”*** Do you suppose that the apostles would have wished to be known as writers of darkness, as people in whom there is no spiritual light? You would hardly think so. Especially after reading what our Savior says in Matthew 5:17-20, ***“Think not that I came to destroy the law or the prophets: I came not to destroy, but to fulfil. For truly I say to you, Till heaven and earth pass away, one yothe or one tittle shall in no wise pass away from the law, till all things be accomplished. Whoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven: but whoever shall do and teach them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I say to you, that except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven.”***

Now this is an absolutely clear passage which cannot possibly be misunderstood, and yet many people appear to be misunderstand-

ing it, and they explain it away constantly.

How would you as an individual identify the body of True Worshipers down through the ages? Many people of whom I ask this question reply that they can be recognized by their fruits. This is a correct answer, but what are the fruits? Some people may answer with the fruit of the Spirit found in Galatians 5:22-23. Certainly the True Worshipers must show these spiritual fruits, and please notice especially the last few words of verse 23.

However, Yahshua the Messiah has given us the keys to accurate recognition in Matthew 7:15 to 27. I wouldn't have space to quote this entire passage, so I will just pick out some of the key verses. He tells us to beware of false prophets who appear to come in sheep's clothing. We are cautioned to check on them since they could be ravening or hungry wolves inside. We can know them by their fruits, He says.

In verses 21 to 23 we read, ***“Not every one that says to me, Master, Master, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Master, Master, did we not prophesy BY YOUR NAME, and BY YOUR***

NAME cast out demons, and BY YOUR NAME do many mighty works? And then will I profess to them, I never knew you: depart from me, you that work lawlessness.” When I read this Scripture, I was amazed at the stress placed on the word “lawlessness.” Some people actually think that they are doing the work and will of the Heavenly Father and our Savior, when in fact they are misleading people and will be rejected by our Savior because of their teaching against the law of Yahweh. The remaining verses of the chapter indicate that it is not acceptable to Yahweh **to hear the Bible read—we must obey.**

Have you been wondering if you are committing the unpardonable sin? If you are breaking any of Yahweh's commandments today, you may very well be doing this. In fact, the Bible in Acts 5:32 says that those who **are not obedient** do not have the Holy Spirit, and without the Holy Spirit you are destined to die the eternal death. As you are reading these words today, why not check what I have said in your Bibles? Take a good look at what the Bible teaches. Obedience is the only thing that will stand between you and eternal punishment in these last days at the close of the age. □

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