



# ~ Thought For The Day ~

~gathering from the 4 winds~

“come just as you are”

Refresh, Restore, Rebuild = Healing



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## Worship Music

### Prayer

Lord, I want to tell You that I am sorry for the many times I've tried to present the Gospel to others in the power of my intellect and flesh, failing to let the Holy Spirit confirm the Word with and to spew out of my mouth. I have been timid and shy about moving in the power of God, but I know it's time for me to push that timidity aside. To the best of my ability and with sincerity of heart, I am telling You today that I want Your Gospel-proving power to flow through me. Speak through me Lord, use me as You will, for You said whom can I send, here am I my Lord, use me as You will. I ask my prayer in Jesus' name. Amen.

[Fire By Night-](#)  
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[Rainbow-Josh Garrels](#)

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### Video's / New Information/ Prayer Requests

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If you have a prayer request...please e-mail it to us so we can pray for you...or a person.....

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1 ISRAEL SETTLED down and remained in Shittim, and the people began to play the harlot with the daughters of Moab, 2 Who invited the [Israelites] to the sacrifices of their gods, and [they] ate and bowed down to Moab's gods. 3 So Israel joined himself to [the god] Baal of Peor. And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel. 4 And the Lord said to Moses, Take all the leaders or chiefs of the people, and hang them before the Lord in the sun [after killing them], that the fierce anger of the Lord may turn away from Israel. 5 And Moses said to the judges of Israel, Each one of you slay his men who joined themselves to Baal of Peor. 6 And behold, one of the Israelites came and brought to his brethren a Midianite woman in the sight of Moses and of all the congregation of Israel while they were weeping at the door of the Tent of Meeting [over the divine judgment and the punishment]. 7 And when Phinehas son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, saw it, he rose up from the midst of the congregation and took a spear in his hand 8 And went after the man of Israel into the inner room and thrust both of them through, the man of Israel and the woman through her body. Then the [smiting] plague was stayed from the Israelites. 9 Nevertheless those who died in the [smiting] plague were 24,000. 10 And the Lord said to Moses, 11 Phinehas son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, has turned my wrath away from the Israelites, in that he was jealous with My jealousy among them, so that I did not consume the Israelites in My jealousy. 12 Therefore say, Behold, I give to Phinehas the priest My covenant of peace. 13 And he shall have it, and his descendants after him, the covenant of an everlasting priesthood, because he was jealous for his God and made atonement for the Israelites. 14 Now the man of Israel who was slain with the Midianite woman was Zimri son of Salu, a head of a father's house among the Simeonites. 15 And the Midianite woman who was slain was Cozbi daughter of Zur; he was head of a father's house in Midian. 16 And the Lord said to Moses, 17 Provoke hostilities with the Midianites and attack them, 18 For they harass you with their wiles with which they have beguiled you in the matter of Peor, and of Cozbi, the daughter of the prince of Midian, their sister, who was slain on the day of the plague in the matter of Peor.

#### Numbers 22–25. Balaam

Balaam's prophecies were a remarkable prediction of Israel's influential place in history through a "Star" that would arise out of Jacob ( 24:17 ). Though God used him to speak true prophecy, Balaam, for money, was the instigator of Israel's shameful sin with Moabite and Midianite women, for which Balaam was slain and 24,000 Israelites perished ( 31:8 , 16 ; 25:9 ). And Balaam's name became a synonym for false teachers ( 2 Peter 2:15 ; Jude 11 ; Revelation 2:14 ).

(Halley's Bible Handbook; Henry Halley; 2000; Zondervan; Bible History and Commentaries; page 172)

#### Chapter 25

AND Israel was abiding there in Shittim, and the people began to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab. And they called the people into the sacrifices of their gods (Num 25:1-2):

You see they got the young guys and come on and go with me to the sacrifice of my god.

and the people did eat, and they bowed down to their gods. And Israel joined himself unto Baalpeor (Num 25:2-3):

Or the lord of Peor. Peor was the name of the mountain there.

and the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel. And the LORD said unto Moses, Take all of the heads of the people, and hang them up before the LORD against the sun, that the fierce anger of the LORD may be turned away from Israel (Num 25:3-4).

In other words cut off the heads of these guys that are doing it, hang them up in the sun that my anger might be turned away.

And Moses said to the judges of Israel, Slay every one of his men that were joined to Baalpeor (Num 25:5).

Every man that joined in those rights.

And, behold, one of the children of Israel came and brought unto his brethren a Midianitish woman in the sight of Moses, and in the sight of all the congregation of the children of Israel, who were weeping before the door of the tabernacle of the congregation (Num 25:6).

Here these guys were weeping and repenting before God for what was done and here comes this guy in with a prostitute right there where they could all see him, into his tent all excited and all.

And so Phinehas, the son of Eleazar (Num 25:7),

He actually was the grandson of Aaron.

When he saw it, he jumped up, and grabbed his javelin; and went over to the tent, and thrust the guy through, and the woman through, both of them in their tent. And so the plague was stayed from the children of Israel. But those that died of the plague were twenty-four thousand (Num 25:7-9). So Balaam was successful in bringing a curse in a secondary way. And by his advice to the king he laid a stumbling block before God's people. So that when Moab was conquered and the Midianites were conquered and they were slain, Balaam was slain with them. Now God said because of Phinehas' heroic deeds and righteous deeds in the killing of these people, this man and this woman he said, I'm going to give to Phinehas the son peace: [and the priesthood will come through his family.] the covenant of an everlasting priesthood; because he was zealous for his God, and he made the atonement for the children of Israel (Num 25:12-13). And so it gives us the name of the man and the woman who was of the tribe of Simeon.

Chapter 26: Now in chapter twenty-six we again have the tribes numbered off. Now remember this is at the end of the forty years of wandering. At the beginning of the forty years of wandering they numbered the tribes and now the end of the forty years of wandering they number the tribes again. And it is interesting to compare the number of people at the beginning and at the end. And actually there's a total loss of people of about two thousand, approximately two thousand less at the end of the forty years wandering. But some of the tribes, they were really wiped out, quite really decimated; others actually grew in number through the wilderness wanderings. Towards the end of the chapter in verse fifty-nine we get a little history of Moses' family. His father's name was Amram; his mother's was Jochebed. She had three children; Moses, Miriam and Aaron. And it gives you a little history of Aaron's family, the two sons again that died; Nadab and Abihu who offered the strange fire before the Lord. And now that generation has passed away, there's no one left except for Moses, of course, is still alive and Joshua and Caleb. But all of those who came out of Egypt who were twenty years old or older have now all died with the exception of these three men. Moses is soon to die before they go into the land.

Chapter 27: Chapter twenty-seven, we have the beginning of a woman's lib organization. Then there came the daughters of Zelophehad, the son of Hephher (Num 27:1), Now what had happened is that the dad had seven daughters but no sons. And as they were dividing off the land they were giving the sons the portions. The oldest son would get the portions and so forth. And so these gals said, "Hey now wait a minute. It's not fair. We have equal rights you know, and our dad didn't have any son. If you don't give us any land then my father's name will die in Israel". So Moses said, "Well, we'll take it before the Lord". So the Lord said, the Lord says, "These gals are right. Give them the inheritance of the family". And so, they won their case and the daughters of Zelophehad received the inheritance. And so, God's with you gals and He's looking after ya and you got a just cause. But unfortunately these radical women are taking it far beyond God's, you know, there is that which is right but then there is that taking it beyond and far beyond what God ever intended. So balance is such an important thing. So he gave the law then of the inheritance. If there is no son then it goes to the daughters. If there are no daughters or sons then it goes to a man's brothers. If he has no brothers then it will go to his father's brothers. And if his father has no brothers then it comes to the next of kin, whoever is closest in the family to him. Now the LORD said to Moses, Get up to the mount Abarim, and see the land which I have given to the children of Israel. And when you have seen it, there also you will be gathered to your people, as Aaron your brother was gathered. For you rebelled against my commandment in the desert of Zin, in the strife of the congregation, to properly represent me at the water before their eyes: that is the waters of Meribah in Kadesh in the wilderness of Zin (Num 27:12-14). So Moses, get up the mountain, you get to look at the land but then you're gonna die. You're not gonna be able to go in because of your misrepresenting of me there at the water of Meribah, the waters of strife. Moses said unto the LORD, Let the LORD, the God of the spirits of all flesh, set a man over the congregation (Num 27:15-16), Now this is an interesting little verse, "Let the LORD, the God of the spirits of all flesh, set a man over the congregation." From this little verse, the Mormons have developed their whole doctrine of the eternal spirit of men. That you actually existed in heaven, your spirit existed there in heaven and then God made a body for you and put your spirit in it to see whether or not you would—could become a god by becoming a Mormon. And you have no memory of your pre-existence in heaven but all of you pre-existence in heaven as spirits but there is no way of telling up there whether or not you would be a good or bad, so he put you in a body and let you prove yourself down here. And if you become a good Mormon, wear your underwear and all then you will be god. And you and your wives that are sealed to you can go to some planet and you can have your own little kingdom that you can watch over and you'll be god over that planet and you can develop it however you want—wish and so forth. So, that whole doctrine comes out of this one little verse. I really don't see it in this verse. "Let the Lord, the God of the spirits of all flesh," but it doesn't say anything about the spirits pre-existing with God being in heaven before or anything; He's just the God of the spirits of all flesh. set a man over the congregation, which may go before them, which may lead them out, which may bring them in, that the congregation of the LORD will not be like a sheep, like sheep without a shepherd. And so the LORD said to Moses, Take Joshua the son of Nun, a man in whom is the spirit, and lay your hand upon him; And set him before Eleazar the priest, and before the congregation; and give him charge in their sight. And thou shalt put some of thine honour upon him, that all of the children of Israel may be obedient. And he shall stand before Eleazar the priest, who shall ask counsel for him after the judgment of the Urim before the LORD (Num 27:16-21): Now the Urim was a little thing that the priest wore, a little pouch of some kind, that they sought counsel from God through the use of the Urim and the Thummim. Lights and perfections is what the words Urim and Thummim mean. And some believe that they were just a little pouch and one had a white stone and a black stone and that when they would ask the Lord a question the priest would say, "Now God, show us which one" and he would pull out a stone. If it was the white stone, God would say yes, then they would ask the next question. And you know, they'd mix up the stones and you'd pull a stone again and they would get yes-no answers. So it's sort of a twenty-one question kind of a thing where you get yes-no answers to then ascertain the will of the Lord. Now, God had a more direct relationship with Moses. God said, "Hey, there's no one like this before after where I really speak to the fellow sort of face to face," I mean direct speaking, a very powerful way.

Now Joshua who is to lead the people, he is to come before Eleazar the priest who will inquire of the Lord in questions. David so often would go to the priest, inquire "Should we go into battle against them?" and then "What time of the day should we start the battle?" And they would ask all of these questions of God in order to determine the will of the Lord. And it was oftentimes determined by the priest inquiring and by the use of the Urim, these lights and perfection. So just what the Urim and Thummim actually is, is not told to us. That's what people surmise what it was, but exactly we don't know. Surely it wasn't a pair of glasses by which you could

read hieroglyphics when you put them on. Hocus pocus. So Moses did as the LORD commanded him: he took Joshua, set him before Eleazar, and before all the congregation: he laid his hands upon him, and gave him the charge of the LORD, as he was commanded (Num 27:22-23).

So he brought Moses laid his hand—I mean Joshua, laid his hands upon him and signifying that Joshua was now to begin to take Moses' place as the leader of the people.

#### Chapter 28

The twenty-eighth chapter God sort of reiterates some of the commandments concerning the sacrifices. Every day they were to offer—every day of the year they were to offer two lambs as a sacrifice to the Lord, one lamb in the morning, one lamb in the evening; one during the morning oblations or prayers, another during the evening oblations or prayers. And so twice a day at least, there were these two lambs that were offered and the smoke would go up with the prayers of the people as a sweet smelling incense before the Lord. And they would offer daily in the morning and evening a lamb. That was just a daily—and every day of the year this would occur.

However, on the first day of the month, then they were to offer more animals on the first day of every month. They were to offer two bullocks, one ram, and seven lambs of the first year without spot. And then they were—and the Passover time to offer the animals, the goats and all, in the Passover time. And then also for the first fruits or Pentecost he gives them the orders of the animals that were to be offered during that period. So chapter twenty-eight deals with the sacrifices, the types of animals, the type of drink offerings and meal offerings that were to be offered to God daily and then annually on special occasions. And so, just sort of the repetition of some of the earlier commands that we had in Leviticus. Just sort of reinforcing that which he commanded earlier. So next week we'll finish the book of Numbers as we get into chapter twenty-nine and we'll begin there and finish the book of Numbers next week.

Shall we stand. "God is so good. God is so good. God is so good, He's so good to me. Jesus is real. Jesus is real. Jesus is real, He's so real to me. He saved my saved soul. He saved my soul. He saved my soul, and He made me whole. I praise his name. I praise his name. I praise His name, He's so good to me."

I realize that some of you may have come to church tonight in order that you might get saved and that's a good idea. And so you can go back to the prayer room at this time and some of the pastors will go back there and meet with you and pray with you and lead you into a real relationship with Jesus Christ. If you came tonight in order that you might get saved, don't get disappointed and don't go home without being saved. So just go on back to the prayer room at this time as soon as we're dismissed and the pastors will meet with you there.

May God bless you and just give you a beautiful week. May you experience really, the living presence of the living God within your life. Not needing any relics, but just be conscience of the nearness of God and of God's great love wherein He loves you. He loves you so much that he doesn't see anything wrong with you. Isn't that neat? Man, that's more than my wife loves me and she loves me an awful, awful lot. Oh, so glorious to be walking with the Lord and serving Him. May God just fill your life with joy, praises and thanksgiving all week long.

(Through The Bible C-2000 Series; Chuck Smith; 1979-1986; Commentaries)

THE LIVING GOD DOES NOT ASK US to believe Him and honor Him only because of His mighty acts done in the past. The writer to the Hebrews informs us of a spectacular future judgment promised by God. It will be a "shaking" of His creation and the actual removal of temporal things to ensure that "what cannot be shaken may remain." This is the brief review of God's acts provided in the Letter to the Hebrews: See to it that you do not refuse him who speaks. If they did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, how much less will we, if we turn away from him who warns from heaven? At that time his voice shook the earth, but now he has promised, "Once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heavens." The words "once more" indicate the removing of what can be shaken—that is, created things—so that what cannot be shaken may remain. Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe, for our "God is a consuming fire." (Heb 12:25-29) We believe the Holy Spirit of God is the true Author of what is written here. We note the warning that men and women may be guilty of refusing to heed the God who speaks to His creation on earth. God's first divine act described in these verses was His giving of the Law—the Ten Commandments. On Mount Sinai He spoke to Moses and through him to the people of Israel. The second reference is to the gospel—God's revealing from heaven His grace, mercy and love in the person of Jesus Christ, the eternal Son. When this message was written to the early church nearly 2,000 years ago, both of these mighty, divine acts were already history. God had spoken to the fallen human race, first from the mount, from the earth, and then from heaven itself with the plan of redemption through Jesus Christ. But the Hebrews text continues with the promise of a future act of God. It speaks of the great day of consummation—the final judgment that is often mentioned in the Scriptures. God's word at Sinai: First, I want to review the two great acts of God in the past. The Old Testament record makes it clear that God chose the nation of Israel to witness and exemplify Him before a lost, sinful humanity. From that nation as well would come the promised Messiah and Savior. The Israelites, at the time God spoke from Sinai, had just been delivered from grinding slavery and oppression in Egypt. For four centuries they had been surrounded and influenced by Egyptian paganism. Three months after leaving Egypt en route to Canaan, Israel under Moses' leadership had come to the rugged wilderness terrain of Sinai. The dark red granite peaks clustered ahead of them, rising to heights of 8,000 feet. Israel was encamped in an area of open ground that looked upward to the peak of Mount Sinai. Dangers and uncertainties loomed ahead of them. Surely these chosen children of Israel did not realize that they were about to participate in an awesome, even terrifying encounter with the Lord, their God. It was to be an event unprecedented in human history. The living God was ready to declare His holy, moral will to a young nation.

Israel's intended role was to communicate that will to an earthly society in a sin-cursed world. God called Moses to go up into the mountain. He told him to prepare the people of Israel to receive His sacred Law. On Sinai, God in a mighty, significant act spoke from the earthly mountain, declaring His moral will for His people. The giving of the Law on Sinai was accompanied by supernatural terror, according to the Scriptures. The mountain burned with fire. There was darkness and tempest. There were the sounds of a mighty trumpet and the divine Voice, so overpowering that the encamped people pleaded that they could not endure it and begged that they should not have to hear it. The experience was so far beyond the limits of normal human expression that Moses cried, "I am trembling with fear!" God was dramatizing the necessity for people to live according to His will. In unforgettable fashion, God was setting before human beings the high principles of morality that He requires of His creatures.

God said, "This is what I expect": It was in those Ten Commandments that God said to His earthly people, "Here is what I expect from you, My covenant people. My Law declares specifically your individual moral duty to Me and to your fellow beings." God promised Israel through Moses: "If you obey me fully and keep my covenant, ... you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation" (Exo 19:5-6). For the first time in history, men and women could actually be measured in the performance of their moral duties both to God and to their fellow beings. History tells us how thoroughly Israel disregarded God's Word. That was Israel's great tragedy: she disregarded the word from God. God bore patiently with His erring people. He brought them into the promised land of Canaan. He made them a great nation—under David and Solomon, dominant over all the surrounding nations. Israel's temple atop Mount Moriah was a thing of beauty and splendor. History tells us that Israel lost her temple. The nation lost her king. The people were driven from their land and scattered among the nations. Ultimately a remnant returned to struggle against superpowers that controlled their homeland. In the fullness of time God sent Messiah. Israel failed to recognize Him. Instead, she put Him to death on a cross. Short decades later, Rome mercilessly devastated Jerusalem and blotted Israel from national existence. In all the succeeding centuries, the Jews have known trouble and persecution. They have wandered the earth. The famed wailing wall in present-day Jerusalem is a continuing symbol of Israel's great tragedy: her failure to hear and heed the God who spoke so eloquently on earth from Sinai.

I will only remind you, for you surely know it well, that many people have declared the Ten Commandments no longer valid, no longer relevant in our society. I watch the papers to check on the sermon topics of my fellow ministers, and it is apparent that Christian churches are not paying attention to the Ten Commandments. Dwight L. Moody preached often on the Commandments. John Wesley said he preached the commands of the Law in order to prepare the way for the gospel. R. A. Torrey told ministers if they did not preach the Law they would have no response to the preaching of the gospel. It is the Law that prepares us for the gospel. It is the Law that shows us our need for the gospel of salvation and forgiveness.

That Law has not been annulled: When I said the Ten Commandments are no longer in vogue, I referred to common attitudes held generally among unbelievers. In our Christian churches, we generally respond, "Well, we are not living under the Law; we are living under God's grace!" It is accurate to say that our binding obligation is not to Old Testament Law. As believing Christians, we are under Christ's higher law—that which is represented in His love and grace. It is true that if we are in Christ, His better law of love is operative in our lives. Is that a big relief to us? Something else needs to be said about God's Law and God's will and God's grace. Everything that is morally commanded in the Ten Commandments still comprises the moral principles that are the will of God for His people. As believing, regenerated Christians, we must acknowledge that God's moral will for His people—then and now—has not changed. God expressed His will for His covenant people. He said, for example, "You shall have no other gods. ... You shall not make for yourself an idol. ... You shall not bow down to them or worship them" (Exo 20:3-5). It has always been God's will that His people shun idolatry. We take our position in God's grace that we are not bound by Mosaic Law. Are we free, then, to worship idols? No, of course not! We are in our Savior, Jesus Christ, by faith. We have met God. We love Him with our whole being. We admire Him and we worship Him. To us, it would be utterly senseless to worship an idol made by the hands of human beings. That is our higher reason—and it confirms the moral will of God. We can apply the same moral and spiritual standards of our faith to the matters of taking the name of the Lord in vain, to covetousness and murder and adultery and stealing and lying. We are not bound by the exterior chains of the old Law—true. If we are what Christ means us to be through love and grace, that kind of external allegiance is not necessary. The apostle Paul expressed well for us this new principle of grace: Through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law was powerless to do in that it was weakened by the sinful nature, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful man to be as in offering. And so he condemned sin in sinful man, in order that the righteous requirements of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the sinful nature but according to the Spirit. (Rom 8:2-4)

God's second mighty act: Now, let us review the second mighty act of God—the giving of this gospel of grace. The gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ is the declaration of God's redemptive will for men and women on this earth. Quite surely we can agree that this act was more completely divine than the first. I say so because of the participation of the three Persons of the Godhead—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—in the plan of salvation for the lost. This brings us to the mystery and miracle of the Incarnation—God coming to take our humanity and our flesh, yet without sin. Luke quotes the message of the angel Gabriel to Mary: You have found favor with God. You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. ... The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God." (Luk 1:30-35) The overshadowing of the Most High, the Father; the energy of the Holy Spirit; the enfleshment of the eternal Son—here were the Persons of the Godhead cooperating in a gracious act on behalf of lost men and women. Later, at the crucifixion, in that most important of all moments for a lost, death-doomed race, the three Persons of the Godhead are again in full view. Our writer to the Hebrews expressed it concisely: "Christ ... through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God" (Heb 9:14). Then, in that culminating miracle—the resurrection of Jesus from the dead—we view again the Trinity in action. Jesus Christ our Lord—to use the apostle Paul's words in Rom 1:4—"through the Spirit of holiness was declared with power to be the Son of God by his resurrection from the dead." So, in this mighty, once-for-all act of redemption, the three Persons of the Godhead were participating as one—lovingly, harmoniously, effectively working in behalf of lost humanity. In this personal communication from heaven, God declared His redemptive will for us, even as He had declared His high, moral will earlier at Sinai.

Why would Israel not listen?...There is a question to be considered at this point. Why did Israel refuse to listen to their God who spoke to them on earth? First, consider the acceptance of idolatry in Israel's culture and worship. The Israelites had not been able to resist the power of example in Egypt. They had lived among their pagan overlords for 400 years. These heathen masters had dominated their lives. When they saw the Egyptians worshiping their idols, the temptation was there to ask, "Why should we be satisfied with an invisible God? Let us fashion something visible to remind us of Him!" Then the mighty hand of God—the God who had never forgotten or abandoned His people—delivered these Israelites from slavery and from their pagan surroundings. On the mount, He gave them His Word and His Law. But, as the Bible admits, the children of Israel fell to a new low. They not only committed adultery and fornication in view of the thundering Mount Sinai, but they turned such immoral acts into a religious rite, believing that they could worship Jehovah God with licentious sexual practices. From the very start of their heathen rituals, the Almighty God condemned them. But although they were His covenant people, they refused to hear and heed the voice of Him who spoke on earth. There were other areas of disobedience as well. God in His Law had commanded that one day in seven should be observed as a holy and reverent Sabbath. But Israel was largely an agrarian nation, and there were economic reasons for breaking the law of Sabbath rest. If a storm threatened a field of ripe grain, it became easy for the Israelite to finish his harvest on the Sabbath. He would reason within himself, "I know God is not going to be displeased as long as I have a reasonable economic excuse."

We are guilty, too: How do we apply this kind of rationale to our practices in this generation? Surely we must admit that the Israelite farmer of long ago was not alone in his shortcomings! We have become quite adept in our own time in finding and using economic, social and other reasons for doing things we should not do and for making decisions that we should not make. We presume the grace of God is so wide and so flexible that we can do just about anything that pleases us or is convenient, and God will look the other way. But Jesus was very dogmatic concerning the lives and attitudes of His disciples. We recall how plain and direct His teachings were. Jesus was not concerned at all about the preservation of economic and cultural customs. He said it was most important that His followers should accept the offense of the cross. I remind you and emphasize it that every serious-minded, committed believer is going to be challenged and even persecuted because he or she is a disciple of the crucified Jesus. Some times there are alternatives, both of them good. But at other times, we shall be called upon to take a right and proper stand for Jesus' sake. Jesus did not promise that consistent Christian living would be easy. He did not promise a release from daily problems and pressures. He did not promise to take us home on a fluffy pink cloud. We live in the knowledge of the grace of God, but we dare not forget that our Lord came to die for us and to express the never-changing moral and redemptive will of God for His people. Before we condemn the Jews of Bible history for their failure, we must be sure we are not overlooking spiritual and moral shortcomings of our own. The prophetic Scriptures announce a coming day when the stored Jewish remnant will come into a blessed, glorious future. We confess that we are indebted to Israel for many things. We owe them for our Bible, for our Messiah who is now our great High Priest in glory. And when the prophecies of our Lord are fulfilled, restored Israel will again be an effective, God fearing nation. But at present, Israel remains under divine judgment. Why? Because Israel rejected the God who loved them, who spoke to them, who cherished them as a chosen people. Israel has turned from the speaking God. In the light of that history, the writer to the Hebrews has this question for his Christian readers: "If they did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, how much less will we, if we turn away from him who warns us from heaven?"(Heb 12:25).

We have a personal responsibility: Israel must give her own accounting to God. But what about us? As Christian believers, you and I must be careful about the reasons we give for not heeding God's Word and God's warning from heaven. Have we taken His grace seriously enough that we have asked Him to forgive our spiritual carelessness? Have we identified and dealt with the twin sins of indifference and apathy that are always trying to creep into our daily living? In our day, we hear strange things concerning the measurement of spiritual life and activity. What measurement will be made of your life if you are among those who insist—sometimes loudly—"I am just as good a Christian as most of the people in our church!" God's message is clear: "Once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heavens." The words "once more" indicate the removing of what can be shaken—that is, created things—so that what cannot be shaken may remain. Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe, for our "God is a consuming fire." (Heb 12:26-29) The apostle Peter was in that generation to whom the above words were originally addressed. I close this chapter by telling you that Peter got the message and responded to it! Through Peter, the Holy Spirit has given us one of our best glimpses of the coming shaking of all things and what our preparation should be: But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar, the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare. Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness. (2Pe 3:10-13)

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(AMP Bible; The Everyday Life Bible; Joyce Meyers; Scripture; Commentaries; Past Pastor Sermons; Dictionary; 2006; pg 252-254)  
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