

Epistle of Paul to the Colossians V

(Chapter 2)

The Foreshadowing of Things to Come

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Colossians 2 was the most difficult chapter in the book and perhaps one of the most difficult chapters of the writings of the Apostle Paul outside of the book of Romans. Let's review just a little bit. Let's understand that everything that is said in Col. 2 is built upon everything that is said in the Col. 1. And the entire problem that they had at the Church at Colossi was that they were being inundated with false teachers who were coming in bringing philosophy. We saw that how the second chapter was built upon an **A/B** kind of construction whereas:

- **'A'** is for God
- **'B'** is for man.

Now let's review the verses again which are for man/which are for God.

'A'—for God, Colossians 2:

- "That their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together... (v 2)
- "...the mystery of God, and of the Father and of Christ..." (v 2)
- "In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (v 3)

This would be the most appropriate place *if* the doctrine of the trinity were ever taught in the Bible, it would almost be demanded to be added here; because if the 'mystery of God' contains the Holy Spirit as a person or a form of a third being in a triune Godhead, then it would have to be mentioned in Col. 2:2.

It should read: "...unto the knowledge of the mystery of God, and of the Father and of Christ"—*and it doesn't* say: and of the Holy Spirit. So this is a good proof by negation or the lack of having it there that the doctrine of the Holy Spirit is not true as taught in most nearly every other church.

Verse 3: "In Whom... [God the Father and Jesus Christ] ...are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."

'B'—v 4, for man: "Now, this I say so that no one may deceive [beguile] you by persuasive speech." Why would they be beguiled or deceived? Of course, the word 'beguile' means *to deceive with enticing words*—and they sound good. Then he again reaffirms that they are in Christ.

'A'—6: "Therefore, as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, be walking in Him... [not in

the beguiling words of men] ...being rooted and built up in Him, and being confirmed in the faith, exactly as you were taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving" (vs 6-7).

'B'—v 8: *contrasting what men would do*: "Be on guard so that no one takes you captive through philosophy and vain deceit, according to the traditions of men, according to the elements of the world, and not according to Christ."

What is the trinity called? *A tradition!* There are many traditions in philosophy that people follow, but notice again, it is comparing their status in Christ, as they have been built up in Him and established in Him as compared to men who are coming around and trying to spoil them. Spoil means *to hunt down as a prey or an animal, or seeking to kill someone through philosophy*—'philosophia'—*the love of wisdom and vain deceit*, which are the fables and the tales and "...the traditions of men..." after the rudiments of the world, and those rudiments of the world are guided by demons and not after Christ.

'A'—v 9: "For in Him... [it goes back to God and Christ] ...dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." That could be all the fullness of Deity, the fullness of what it is to be Divine is found wholly in Christ bodily.

Verse 10: "And **you are complete in Him...**"—referring to Christ, which goes back to the mystery of God the Father and Christ. That is a profound statement!

Verse 11: "In Whom you have also been circumcised with *the* circumcision not made by hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ"—which is accomplished by baptism and the receiving of the Holy Spirit.

Verse 12 Paul goes right on: "Having been buried with Him in baptism..." That is the circumcision of Christ, to take away the hardness of the heart, to take away the things that human nature is and to be converted and transformed by the renewing of your mind with the power of the Holy Spirit.

"...by which you have also been raised with *Him* through the inner working of God, Who raised Him from the dead. For you, who were *once* dead in

your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh...” (vs 12-13). Everyone is dead in sin, until they accept Christ. Why? *Because the ‘wages of sin is death.’ The only way you can get rid of sin is by repentance and baptism.*

- You can’t get rid of past *sins by being better today.*
- You can’t get rid of sins that you do today *by doing good works tomorrow.*
- You cannot be made right before God *by what you do or by the prescriptions of what other people tell you to do*, who follow philosophy and do not follow Christ.

Verse 13: “For you, who were *once* dead in *your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh...*” (v 13). Another proof that the congregation at Colossi was Gentile and was not Jewish. There is no circumcision/uncircumcision controversy in the book of Colossians; and this becomes very important when we come to v 16, because it is claimed by those who come to the book of Colossians with preconceived notions about what they believe and what it is saying, make the claim that they were told in v 16, not to keep the commandments of God, having to do with eating and drinking and the Sabbath and the festival, etc. They were told that was a command to not do it, but we will see that that is a complete, absolute, incorrect interpretation of that verse.

Verse 13: “For you, who were *once* dead in *your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh*, He has *now* made alive with Him... [How is that done?] ...having forgiven all your trespasses.” All trespasses means all the sins, everything that has caused sin, now being Gentiles in the past, and following philosophy in the past, their past religion caused them to be ‘dead in their sins.’ So Paul makes it very emphatic here.

Verse 14: “He has blotted out the note of debt against us *with the decrees of our sins*, which was contrary to us; and He has taken it away, having nailed it to the cross.

The only thing that was nailed to the cross was Jesus Christ, Who represented sin and the little sign over His head, which said King of the Jews. Nothing else was nailed to the cross. Most of the Protestants believe that this—because it says blotting out the handwriting of ordinances—means that the sacrifice of Jesus Christ blotted out, did away and nailed to the cross the commandments and laws of God, so therefore, they do not have to keep them. That is a complete erroneous interpretation of this. The blotting out of handwritings or the *note of debt*,

have to do with the sins that were caused by the commandments and doctrines *of men!*

So it comes all the way down through v 15, now let’s finish it off and this is the one that is referring to God and what God is doing or the ‘A’ part of the structure of Col. 2

Verse 15: “After stripping the principalities and the powers.... [Who were they? *They are the evil powers of this world!*] ...He made a public spectacle of them, *and* has triumphed over them in it.”—referring to the crucifixion and the resurrection and the whole life of Christ.

Verses 9-15 shows how they got to their condition as Christians:

- that it was through Christ
- that it was through baptism
- that it was through the forgiveness of sin, which Christ can give
- that they have the circumcision made without hands
- that they were raised from the watery grave to walk in newness of life

Verse 16: “Therefore, do not allow anyone to judge you...” What does that statement mean? It means just what it says, *do not let any man*, who is:

- v 4: trying to beguile you with enticing words
- v 8: trying to deceive you with philosophy and the traditions of men

These were the men who were coming in and judging. What were they judging? Well, they were obviously *judging their behavior!* As Gentiles, uncircumcised in the flesh, in keeping the things which are mentioned here (which come in the rest of the verse) were astonished that these disciples now following Christ had given up their philosophy, had given up their way of pagan religion and were now following the laws and the commandments of God. They were astonished that they were following the commands of eating and the commands of drinking, that they were keeping Holy Days, that they were calculating things by the new moon rather than by the sun, and that they were regularly keeping the Sabbath. What does v 16 *not* say?

- It does *not* say: *do not keep!*
- It does *not* say: *therefore let no man keep eating and drinking, or a Holy Day or new moon or Sabbath day!*

It says, v 16: “Therefore, **do not allow anyone to judge you...**” How are people judged? *People are judged by comparison!* What were these evil men comparing their new behavior to now that they were

Christians and had forsaken the pagan way? What were they comparing their behavior to? *Philosophy! The commandments of men!*

‘**A**’—showing why we are to let no man do this, v 18: “Do not allow anyone...” We have vs 4, 8, 16, and now we have v 18: “Do not allow anyone to defraud you... [deceive you out] ...of the prize by doing *his* will in self-abasement...” A *voluntary humility* then is taking the vows of asceticism; taking the philosophical—and we could almost say severe Buddhist way would be more like anything that we would understand today—in the pagan religion.

“...by doing *his* will in self-abasement and the worship of angels, intruding into things that he has not seen, vainly puffed up by his own carnal mind” (v 18). So, you notice the comparison all the way through.

Now let’s just finish these next verses and then we will go back and we will understand from v 15 on and complete the second chapter. It says that *if* you are worshipping angels, which we will go into in a little detail here:

Verse 19: “And not holding fast to **the Head...**” Who is the Head? *Christ!* So, in other words, these were all the things that were taking them:

- away from the calling of God
- away from the Truth of God
- away from the commandments of God
- away from the laws of God

so that they would get involved in this philosophical, voluntary humility and the worshipping of angels. That is called the New Age movement today, where they have channelers, where they worship demon spirits. When you do that, you get your mind off of Christ.

Verse 19: “And not holding fast to the Head, from Whom all the body, being supplied and knit together by the joints and bands, is increasing *with* the increase of God. Therefore, if you have died together *with Christ...*” (vs 19-20). How are you dead with Christ? *You are dead through baptism, you are buried with Him!*

“...if you have died together *with Christ* from the elements of the world...” (v 20)—which comes right back to v 8, ‘the traditions [rudiments] of the world’ are *philosophy and vain tradition of men!*

Verse 20: “Therefore, if you have died together *with Christ* from the elements of the world, why are you subjecting yourselves to *the decrees of men* as if you were living in *the world?*”

Back to v 14: “He has blotted out... [the whole *operation of Christ* through baptism and your calling] ...the note of debt against us *with* the decrees *of our sins*, which was contrary to us...” What were those ordinances?

Verse 20: “...why are you subjecting yourselves to *the decrees of men* as if you were living in *the world?*” Here are the ordinances which cause sin, because they were contrary to the laws and commandments of God.

Verse 21: “*They say*, ‘You may not handle! You may not taste! You may not touch!’ [then up here worshipping of angels] ...The use of all such things leads to corruption... [that means *they have no lasting, eternal value or function*. Why?] ...according to the commandments and doctrines of men” (vs 21-22).

So, the *handwriting of ordinances* were those things which were the commandments and doctrines and teachings of men, which established the pagan religion of philosophy—and from that they had been called. From that operation of what is called in philosophy *enlightenment*—which we have in various religions: Masonry, Buddhism, Islamism, Catholicism; all of those are based on the philosophies of this world. What happens is that it is useless after you have done those things and they are useless before you even do them, because they have no lasting, eternal value, they have no standing before God, in Christ.

Verse 23: “Which indeed have an **outward appearance** of wisdom... [again: ‘sophia’—from which we get *philosophy*; they appear to be intelligent] ...in voluntary worship... [will-worship] ...*of angels...*”

Now, *will-worship* are those mental things that make you smarter, which make you greater, that gives you the will to walk on coals, to spike yourself with nails and all of this sort of thing. The punishment of the flesh, the voluntary humility in *will-worship*, where they take a vow of celibacy, where they go on pilgrimages or whatever it may be.

“...and self-abasement, and unsparing treatment of *the* body, not in any respect to the satisfying *of the needs* of the flesh” (v 23)—which means *it does not stop*; it does not control the carnal flesh and the drive of sin.

Let’s analyze this one considerably more so we can understand what is going on here; v 16 “Therefore, do not allow anyone to judge you...”—which means that because you are doing what is listed *you are not to let any man judge you.*

What is the very first thing that happens, when you start following the Word of God and you change your eating habits so you don't eat the foods that people normally in this world accept as good? What happens when you begin to refuse eating pork and seafood? Especially down there on the Gulf Coast, the shrimp haven of the world; the oysters, the clams, the lobsters and all that sort of thing—and you begin not eating those things? Why? *Because God is the One Who says not to eat them!*

Let's see what the Word of God says about these kinds of foods. Deut. 14 was given just before they went into the 'promised land' and Lev. 11 covers many of the wild animals that they would encounter in their journey before they got to the 'promised land.' So, it lists many of the wild animals there that are not necessarily listed in:

Deuteronomy 14:1: "You *are* the children of the LORD your God. You shall not cut yourselves nor make *any* baldness between your eyes for the dead." What is that? *That is one of those religious, philosophical practices that the pagans did!* That's exactly what Paul is referring to back here in Col. 2.]

Verse 2: "For you *are* a Holy people to the LORD your God..." We are also called Holy people, aren't we? *You're a Holy nation, you're a Holy people* (1-Pet. 2:9)

"...and the LORD has chosen you to be a specially treasured people to Himself, above all the nations that are on the earth." (v 2). Is that not true of us today? *Yes, it is!*

Why are we not to eat any of these unclean animals? *Because we are called; because we are Holy people!* If you eat things that are unclean, you are defiling the body.

- Does God want you to be ill? *No!*
- Does God want you to be sick? *No!*
- Does God want you to suffer ill health because of eating these things? *No!*

God did not create certain things to be eaten.

Verse 3: "You shall not eat any abominable thing. These *are* the animals, which **you shall eat...**" This takes care of vegetarianism as a religious, ascetic way of living. Some people have to be vegetarians because of their health, *or* because they have cancer, *or* because they can't tolerate meat, *or* whatever the condition may be. However, this is a command to eat meat.

"...the ox, the sheep, and the goat, the deer, and the gazelle, and the roe deer, and the wild goat, and the mountain goat, and the wild ox, and the

mountain-sheep. And every animal that divides the hoof, and divides it into two hooves, *and* chews the cud among the animals, that you shall eat" (vs 4-6).

Verse 7: "But **these you shall not eat**, of those which chew the cud, or of those that divide the cloven hoof: the camel, and the hare, and the rock badger, for they chew the cud, but do not divide the hoof. They *are* unclean to you. And the swine because it divides the hoof but does not chew the cud; it *is* unclean to you. You shall not eat of their flesh nor touch their dead body" (vs 7-8).

Then it shows what we are to eat of the waters: everything that has fins and scales, and what we are to eat of the birds, etc.

When the brethren at Colossi turned from eating these wrong things and went to eating the things that are correct, they then *were being judged*. This is a good substantiation that they were following the commandments of God concerning the eating of things, which were clean or not clean.

1-Tim. 4 is one of the places in the New Testament that people turn to, to try and show that it is okay to eat unclean things. But just like everything else that many 'religious' people do, they have an idea in mind and they pick a verse right out of the middle of the context.

1-Timothy 4:4: "For every creature of God *designated for human consumption is good*, and nothing to be refused, *if* it is received with thanksgiving, because it is sanctified by the Word of God and prayer" (vs 4-5).

So therefore, all you have to do is to make sure that your pork is refrigerated and that you cook it well—so it kills all the parasites, etc.—and then you can go ahead and eat it if you ask the blessing on it.

Again let's go back and look at this verse and we will see that one of the major difficulties we have with people concerning these verses is that they don't really read the verses before or after and they don't dig into it to find out what it really says.

1-Timothy 4:1: "Now, the Spirit tells *us* explicitly that in *the* latter times some shall apostatize from the faith..." When you depart from the faith, what are you leaving?

- you are leaving the Word of God
- you are leaving Christ
- you are leaving God the Father

"...and shall follow deceiving spirits..." (v 1). Isn't that the same topic that we are talking about in Col. 2, in a voluntary worship of angels? *Yes, it is!*

"...and doctrines of demons" (v 1)—which are the *traditions and philosophies of men after the rudiments of the world!*

Verse 2: “Speaking lies in hypocrisy...” Are we not seeing that on a vast scale even within the Church of God?

And, of course, we are seeing it on a mammoth scale in the government: speaking lies in hypocrisy, the deliberateness of their deceit and the underlying subversive, socialist plan that they are bringing upon us as a nation is almost just unreal. Here are those things that come from demons because they speak lies and hypocrisy.

Then you come to a certain point when you speak lies so much—and I think we all know one very famous man who seems to have this kind of conscience—“...their consciences having been cauterized *with a hot iron*” (v 2). They no longer have any shame in telling *lies and teaching the doctrine of demons!* Why, it is just a wonderful, natural thing to do.

Verse 3 shows some of the problems they had at that time: “Forbidding to marry; *and commanding* to abstain from meats, which God created to be received with thanksgiving...”

We have the same thing today. What is one of the biggest problems that they have in the Catholic Church right now? *An unmarried priesthood!* What is one of the problems that they have with the Buddhist religion? *An unmarried priesthood!* Which is based on philosophy and ‘will-worship’ to the depriving of the flesh.

“...to abstain... [stop eating] ...from meats, **which God created to be received** with thanksgiving by the faithful, even *by* those who know the Truth” (v 3). Let’s analyze this statement here in v 3 just a little bit:

There were certain things: “...which God created... [which were] ...created to be received with thanksgiving by the faithful, even *by* those who know the Truth.” What is Truth? *God’s Word is Truth!*

If you believe the Truth—which is God’s Word; know the Truth—which is God’s Word; then you go back and you find out which animals God created to be *received with thanksgiving*. Were there certain animals that God created not to be received with thanksgiving and not to be eaten? *Yes, indeed!* He tells us which ones *they are* and which ones *they aren’t*.

Verse 4: “For every creature of God **designated for human consumption** is good...” That would be a contradiction in fact it meant every creature that God ever created is good for food and nothing to be refused if it was received with thanksgiving.

Verse 4 is another qualifier for v 5: “Because it is sanctified by the Word of God...”—which then is *Truth*; which then is saying that every creature which God *created to be eaten* is good and nothing to be refused if it:

“...is received with thanksgiving, because it is sanctified by the Word of God and prayer” (v 5).

So, the very verse that is used to show that it is all right to eat unclean meats—and by the way, I think that needs to hang on that in other Churches of God we know of—to the allowance of eating unclean meats. One of the reasons is that we have refrigerators, so therefore, that makes the meat clean and it is all right to eat it. Well, *a refrigerator does not change a condition of creation!* Just remember that.

Colossians 2:16: “Therefore, do not allow anyone to judge you in eating or in drinking...” We could go through the Scriptures and see that the Bible allows the drinking of wine and occasionally strong drink, but *it does not tolerate nor endorse drunkenness.*

Much of the philosophical teachings that are in the various religions have that they are not to drink at all, which is one of those things that people will do in the form of *will-worship*. So, here they were obviously drinking wine with the feast that they were having and so forth.

“...or with regard to a [Holy Day] Festival...” (v 16). If they weren’t keeping these Holy Days, how could someone judge or criticize them? *It would not be possible!* Remember, they had no exposure to the Holy Days. Paul never went into any synagogue in Colossi to preach. As a matter of fact, it is not even recorded that he ever even went there. Since Paul went to the Jews first and went to the synagogues first, he probably did not go to those cities where there was not a synagogue.

Therefore, this is another proof that this was a wholly Gentile congregation having never known the Laws of God nor followed the *ways of God*. The Holy Days are all listed in Lev. 23, and the Holy Days teach us the things that we need to know of God.

“...or new moon...” (v 16). Rather than using a solar calendar, they were now using the new moon as the beginning of the month, and in particularly, we have today the Feast of Trumpets, which is the first day of the seventh month.

“...or *the Sabbaths*” (v 16). In the Greek this is the Sabbaths, which is plural, which means a weekly, on-going keeping of the Sabbath.

Verse 17: “Which are a foreshadow of the things that are coming...”

Now let's review for just a minute and understand why the Holy Days and the Sabbaths and these other things are a *shadow of the coming things*.

- What is one of the most important things, which is coming, in the whole history of the world?

It is going to be the Kingdom of God!

- What are they going to be eating and drinking in the Kingdom of God?
- Do you think that God is going to allow the eating of unclean foods in the Kingdom of God?
- Do you think that God is going to institute Sunday-worship, which is breaking and violating the Sabbath?
- Do you think that God is going to carry forward with Christmas and Easter and New Year's, which are all based on lies?

NO!

Let's look at a prophecy in Isa. 66, which brings us into what the Millennium is going to be. And also, it has to do with the Church, as we will see.

Isaiah 66:15: "For, behold, the Lord will come with fire... [His second return] ...and with His chariots like a tempest, to render His anger with fury, and His rebuke with flames of fire, for by fire and by His sword the LORD will execute judgment with all flesh... [tie that in with all of the prophecies in the book of Revelation and the other prophecies in Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel, and so forth] ...and the slain of the LORD will be many. "Those who sanctify themselves..." (vs 15-17)—which is by *worldly, earthly philosophies and religions!*

Let's see some of the things that were done, the practices that the children of Israel did concerning all of their abominations that they were doing, committing against God, which were all based in pagan religions and pagan philosophy, because pagan religion is pagan philosophy.

Ezekiel 8:5: "And He said to me, "Son of man, lift up your eyes now to the way of the north." So, I lifted up my eyes toward the way of the north, and behold, northward at the gate of the altar the image of jealousy *was* at the entrance."

This was a pagan image, which was placed right in front of the temple of God and this is called *the image of jealousy*.

Verse 6: "And He said to me, 'Son of man, do you see what they do; even the great abominations which the house of Israel is doing here, that I should go far off from My sanctuary? But turn again, *and* you shall see greater abominations.'" (vs 5-6).

- Where do these abominations come from?
- Who is the mother of all of these abominations?

In Rev. 17 it is 'Babylon the Great, Mystery Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots and the abominations of the earth'; and this is the practicing of the Babylonian religion right in the temple of God. Are we seeing that happening again in one of the Churches of God? *Absolutely!*

Verse 14: "...And behold, women were sitting there weeping for Tammuz"—which was *one of the gods of the Babylonians*. Every abomination in religion and all the religions of the world—that are not of God—come from Babylon. We are going to see with the amalgamation of all these religions of the world—Babylon the Great—come back home together again.

Verse 6: "And He said to me, 'Son of man, do you see what they do; even the great abominations which the house of Israel is doing here, that I should go far off from My sanctuary? But turn again, *and* you shall see greater abominations.' And He brought me to the opening of the court; and I looked, and behold, a hole in the wall. And He said to me, 'Son of man, dig in the wall now.' And I dug in the wall, and, behold, an opening.... [a secret entrance] ...And he said to me. 'Go in and see the evil abominations that they do here.' And I went in and saw. And behold, every kind of creeping thing, and hateful beast, and all the idols of the house of Israel, were carved on the wall all around. And seventy men of the elders of the house of Israel, and Jaazaniah the son of Shaphan, standing in front of them, these were before them, and each man with his censer in his hand. And the sweet smelling cloud of incense was rising" (vs 6-11).

- Who were the 70 of the ancients of Israel? *That was likened unto what we would call the Congress today!*
- Do those in the Congress have their secret organizations to which they belong? *Yes, indeed!*
- Do they have their secret little religious practices that they practice? *Yes, they do!*

This is exactly what it is talking about. This is all based on the philosophy, which takes men and people away from God to worship Satan.

Verse 12: "And He said to me, 'Son of man, have you seen what the elders of the house of Israel do in the dark, each man in his room of idols?....'"

- we have Masonic temples
- we have Knights of Columbus temples
- we have Odd Fellow temples

- we have Elks
- we have the Moose

Whatever we have, those are all included in what is discussed here in Ezek. 8.

Verse 13: “He also said to me, ‘You shall see greater abominations that they are committing.’ And He brought me to the opening of the gate of the LORD’S house, toward the north. And behold, women were sitting there weeping for Tammuz” (vs 13-14).

Right there, weeping for the Babylonian goddess Tammuz, right in the house of God! What do they always say; ‘Oh, we are delivered to do this.’

Verse 15: “And He said to me, ‘Have you seen this, O son of man? You shall see greater abominations than these.’ And He brought me into the inner court of the LORD’S house, and behold, at the opening of the temple of the LORD, between the porch and the altar, *were* about twenty-five men with their backs toward the temple of the LORD and their faces toward the east; and they worshiped the sun toward the east” (vs 15-16). There you have it, loud and clear!

- Are there men in high places that are causing people to turn back from God to worshipping those pagan deities that comes down to sun-worship?
- What do they do on Easter sunrise services on top of a high hill or in front of their churches?
- Do they not bow down and worship the sun toward the east?

Verse 17: “And He said to me, ‘Have you seen, O son of man? Is it a light thing to the house of Judah that they do the hateful things, which they do here? For they have filled the land with violence and have turned to provoke Me to anger still more....’”

- Do we not have our land filled with violence, today?
- Is not God provoked to anger?

“...And lo, they put the branch to their nose” (v 17). That is sniffing at their own pagan religion and the branch, we just need to be very frank about it, is a phallic symbol. And that is what they are doing with their religion.

Verse 18: “Therefore, I will also deal with fury; My eye shall not spare, nor will I have pity. And though they cry in My ears *with* a loud voice, I will not hear them.”

Now let’s see some of the other practices that they were doing. This is why Christ is going to

come *in fury*, this is why Christ is going to come *in power*; because:

- Satan is going to have *deceived* the whole world
- Satan is going to *control* the whole world
- Satan is going to lead the whole world—except those that have the Spirit of God—
- in rebellion against God and to fight God to destroy as many human beings as he can and hopefully to destroy God

God says He is going to come with fire and His sword and so forth:

Isaiah 66:17: “Those who sanctify themselves, and purify themselves *to go* into the gardens, after the rites of Achad...” This is no less than the *eco-freak movement* of today, where trees are counted as having spirits and they go to the grove. That’s where the Academy of Plato originated, in the groves, where he talked to the demons. **Philosophy!** What do they do?

“...eating swine’s flesh, and the abomination, and the mouse, will be cut off together,’ says the LORD” (v 17). They’re eating all these unclean things. In many places, mice are considered a delicacy. As a matter of fact, in Thailand, after they have the harvest of the rice then they drain the fields and they gather all the rats, heap them into a big pile and they have a deep fried rat fest. **They do!**

Verse 18: “For I *know* their works and their thoughts; it shall come to pass, that I will gather all the nations and tongues; and they will come and see My glory,” Then it shows that He is going to bring all of them.

When God reforms the world, what is He going to do? Verse 23: “And it shall come to pass... [here’s the reformation of the thing that is coming in the Kingdom of God] ...that from one month to another, and from one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before Me,’ says the LORD.” There you go!

Now, the reason we keep these things is because they are a *foreshadowing* of the events, which are coming. Now let’s review just a little bit concerning the Sabbath and the Holy Days, etc.

- we will have ***past***, which is Israel
- we will have ***present***, which is the Church
- we will have ***future***, which is the Kingdom of God when Christ returns

Passover

- **Past:** *for Israel:* It pictured the passing over of the houses of the children of Israel

when they were in Egypt, when God killed the firstborn of the land of Egypt.

- **Present:** *the Passover Lamb of God*, the crucifixion of Christ for the forgiveness of our sins and the passing over of our sins.
- **Future:** *for the Kingdom of God*, when salvation, through the sacrifice of Christ will be granted to all nations and the sacrifice of Christ will be applied to all nations at that time.

Feast of Unleavened Bread:

- **Past:** *house of Israel*, in the coming out of Egypt and leaving the bondage of slavery in Egypt.
- **Present:** *for the Church*, coming out of sin, coming out of the ways of sin, because a little leaven, leavens the whole lump.
- **Future:** *when the world system will be changed* so that there will no longer be a sinful civilization.

Wave Sheaf Offering Day: *which is on the day after the regular Sabbath, during the Feast of Unleavened Bread:*

- **Past:** *for Israel*, it pictured the beginning of the harvest of the firstfruits.
- **Present:** it pictures *the resurrection and acceptance of Jesus Christ as our Savior* to appear before God the Father in heaven above for us.
- **Future:** it pictures the opening of *salvation to all people* in the world.

Pentecost:

- **Past:** *to Israel*, pictured the receiving of the Ten Commandments on Mt. Sinai.

For the New Testament:

- **Present:** *Church*—pictured and still pictures the giving of the Holy Spirit for salvation to all people in general through repentance and baptism (Acts 2).
- **Future:** It pictures *when God is going to save the whole world* by giving His Holy Spirit available to everyone in the world.

Feast of Trumpets:

- **Past:** When *the children of Israel* completely conquered the land through their warfare, overcame and inherited the ‘promised land.’
- **Present:** pictures *the birth of Christ*.
- **Future:** pictures the *return of Jesus Christ* in the power and the authority of God Almighty and in the *future* it also pictures *when the government of God is going to rule over all the earth*.

Day of Atonement:

- **Past:** *for Israel*, the Day of Atonement pictured when all of their sins were forgiven, officially at the sanctuary and God would then deal with them again through the next year in spite of the carnality of their flesh.
- **Present:** the Day of Atonement pictures that *Jesus Christ has conquered and overcome Satan the devil*, that He has carried our sins and that Satan the devil has been conquered through Christ.
- **Future:** pictures when *the world will be at one with God and Satan the devil will be removed and will be bound*.

The Feast of Tabernacles:

- **Past:** When the *children of Israel* went into the ‘promised land,’ when they had all of plenty, when the golden age of Solomon was in effect.
- **Present:** pictures that *we are strangers and sojourners* just as Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and that we are looking for the Kingdom which comes from God and that we are following God right now. It also pictures for Christ, when He lived or tabernacled among men on the earth.
- **Future:** pictures the *Millennial reign of Christ* when the universal salvation will be granted to all of those who choose and accept it.

Last Great Day:

- **Past:** for the *children of Israel* pictured, when they had a great feast toward God because it ended living in booths.
- **Present:** pictures *the pouring out of God’s Holy Spirit* and really there is not too much of a present time fulfillment for the Last Great Day today that is more totally into the future.
- **Future:** pictures *the second resurrection*, and the opportunity of salvation for all those who never had an opportunity for salvation, while they lived a first, physical life.

That is a very, quick summary of the *foreshadowing* and the *meaning* of the Holy Days and the Sabbath. We can go back and let’s picture the Sabbath. The Sabbath was created by God as a day of fellowship, week in and week out, with His people. All the way through the Old Testament, the Sabbath was *a sign of His people*. Then, of course, that also means the Holy Days (Exo. 31:13).

The Sabbath:

- **Today** pictures:

- ✓ That we are entering into the spiritual rest of Christ every week
- ✓ that Jesus is the Lord of the Sabbath
- ✓ that we are to be keeping the Sabbath, week-by-week
- Future: the Sabbath also pictures the Millennial reign of Christ

So, all of these things are a shadow or a *foreshadow* of the coming events in the plan of God. That is why Satan wants to deceive us with philosophy and keep us from understanding those things by substituting his deceitful way for the Truth of God.

Colossians 2:16 will make far more sense when we read it again: “Therefore, do not allow anyone to judge you in eating or in drinking, or with regard to a Festival, or new moon, or *the* Sabbaths, which are a foreshadow of the things that are coming, but the Body of Christ” (vs 16-17).

Now that is a little difficult verse there, because the translators of the *King James* inserted in italics the little verb ‘is’ (before Body of Christ) which is meant to help clarify the topic, but in helping clarify the topic they actually confuse it and it actually has this meaning:

1. let that Body judge you in observing these things instead of a man

or

2. the reality of keeping these things that are foreshadows are found in the Body of Christ, which is the Church

The second one is probably the more proper understanding of v 17. These things are a foreshadowing, an advance sign, of the things that are coming.

Let me read vs 16-17 in the *Amplified Version*. Then we’ll go on and we’ll analyze the rest of the verses. Here is what I have written in the *Amplified Version* bringing to bear all of the Scriptures of the Bible and the Bible understanding to the verses to help give us a broader understanding.

Colossians 2:16: “Consequently, in the light of (all that has been written up to this point)... [and that is what the word ‘therefore’ means, and in *King James* it says: ‘let no man therefore’—but it should really be ‘therefore, let no man’] ...Consequently, in the light of (all that has been written up to this point), do not let anyone judge you... [‘judge’ has this meaning; *calling you into account*, or *assuming censorial power over you*] ...in your eating or your drinking, or in regard to, or on account of your observance of a festival...[which is what it means in the Greek] ...or a new moon, or the Sabbaths.” It is plural in the Greek, and when it is done that way in

the plural it means *an ongoing practice*—the Sabbaths, on a regular basis.

Verse 17: “Which are a foreshadowing and an advance sign of the things which are coming, (actually a foretaste of the coming events in God’s plan); but (the meaning and reality of observing these things is found) in the body of Christ, which is the Church.”

Now, I hope that through all of this that you really understand these verses because vs 16 & 17 coupled with vs 13 & 14 are perhaps the most difficult verses of all that Paul has written. You can’t understand those unless you fully realize, as Paul was writing, that you are complete in Christ: ***Christ in you is the hope of glory***, that you’re to be rooted and built up and established in Him, as you have been taught, and you are to avoid and beware of the deceptions of men, which bring you into the bondage of their demonic religions.

Now we are ready for v 18—again we have the same situation: “Do not allow anyone to defraud you of the prize [reward]...”

Let’s see what he is talking about in 1-Cor. 3. This talks about how we live our Christian lives, that we build upon the foundation of Jesus Christ and so forth. This is the thing that is important, this is what Paul is talking about with Christ and salvation and everything that we are concerned within Col. 2.

1-Corinthians 3:11: “For no one is able to lay any other foundation besides that which has been laid, which is Jesus Christ.”

- since Christ died for our sins, rose and is at the right hand of God
- since our salvation is in Him and through Him
- since Christ is in us, the hope of glory *there is no other foundation that can be laid!*
 - you cannot go back and substitute it for your own will, which is *will-worship*
 - you cannot go back and substitute it with philosophy
 - you cannot go back and substitute the revelation of God the Father and Jesus Christ for the doctrine of the trinity.

Verse 11: “For no one is able to lay any other foundation besides that which has been laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if anyone builds upon this foundation...” (vs 11-12).

If you are going to build upon the foundation of Christ, how are you going to do it? *You are going to do it by the will and by the Word of*

God, with His Holy Spirit! He likens what you could say six classifications of Christians and their works.

Verse 12: “Now if anyone builds upon this foundation **gold**... [which is the finest character as typified by fine gold] ...**silver**... [which is the next most precious metal] ...**precious stones**...” [and notice these three, gold, silver and precious stones all survive trial by fire. And as a matter of fact, gold, silver and precious stones are made better because of trial by fire.

But notice the next three: “...wood, hay or stubble.... [What happens to wood, hay and stubble when the fire comes? *It burns up!*] ...the work of each one shall be manifested; for the day of *trial* will declare *it*, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall prove what kind of work each one’s is. If the work that anyone has built endures, **he shall receive a reward**” (vs 12-14).

Our works do not save us, but our works in Christ—gold, silver or precious stone—bring us a reward. Tie that in with Matt. 25 where it talks about what is given to those who develop with the talents that God gave them, and that is their reward.

Verse 15: “If the work of anyone is burned up... [burned up in the way of wood, hay and stubble, the **three inferior kinds of Christian character**] ...he shall suffer loss; but *he* himself shall be saved, yet, as through fire.”

This doesn’t guarantee salvation because you have to tie that in with Matt. 25, if you go so far that you even burn up the foundation that you have because you leave it for philosophy or the worshiping of angels, then you yourself will not be saved. But he is saying that if you build on this foundation even though it is kind of crumbly and it is filled with wood, hay or stubble, if your heart is right you’re still going to make it, but you aren’t going to have much of a reward.

Colossians 2:18: “Do not allow anyone to defraud you of the prize... [let’s see how they do it]: ...*by doing his will in self-abasement*...”—voluntary humility, which includes all the do’s and don’ts of men. It has to do with all of the rigorous, disciplinary things that men would enforce in a physical way upon people. All you have to do is look at some of the Eastern, philosophical ‘religions’ and you will have the whole understanding of that.

“...and *the* worship of angels...” (v 18). These angels are not the angels of God; these are the demonic angels.

- if a spirit comes and says ‘worship me,’ *you know it is not a Spirit from God*

- if a spirit comes and says; ‘I am an angel from God, worship me,’ *you know it is not from God*

That’s how we know that the whole Mormon religion is not correct, because it is based upon the angel Maroni; and the angel Maroni was the one who was Jesus Christ and became an angel. If you want a real twisted conglomeration and amalgamation and combination of philosophy with so called Biblical sounding things, try Mormonism.

Revelation 19:10—and this was after the angel gave him the vision here: “Then I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said to me, ‘**See that you do not do this!**’... [this was the angel that brought the message] ...**I am a fellow servant of yours, and of your brethren, who have the testimony of Jesus. Worship God**... [not angels] ...For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.”

Let’s see the same thing again; and after John saw all these this vision, boy what a tremendous thing it was:

Revelation 22:8: “Now I, John, *was* the one who saw and heard these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel who *was* showing me these things. But he said to me, ‘**See that you do not do this!** For I am a fellow servant of yours, and of your brethren the prophets, and of those who keep the words of this book. **Worship God**’” (vs 8-9). So, any angel that comes along and says ‘worship me,’ is not of God, ***it is of Satan the devil!***

Now let’s see that Satan does have his angels that, because of their fall, are now called *unclean* or demon spirit.

Revelation 12:9 “And the great dragon was cast out, the ancient serpent who is called the Devil and Satan, who is deceiving the whole world... [actively doing it now] ...he was cast down to the earth, **and his angels were cast down with him.**”

Those are the angels that want to be worshiped. Any true angel of God would direct you exactly as the angel from God directed the Apostle John there as we saw back in the book of Revelation.

Matthew 25:41: “Then shall He also say to those on *the* left, ‘Depart from Me, *you* cursed ones, into the eternal fire, which has been prepared for the devil and his angels’”

Now let’s see that Satan wants to be worshipped as God and even wanted Jesus Christ to worship him:

Matthew 4:8: “After that, the devil took Him to an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him

all the kingdoms of the world and their glory, and said to Him, ‘All these things will I give You, if You will fall down and worship me.’” (vs 8-9).

Satan and his demonic angels want to be worshiped and one of the surest ways of losing your salvation and losing your reward is to worship angels. Angel worship is always connected with philosophy. They even have it today; it is called the *Rosicrucian's*, where you get their little prayer book and go into your bedroom and make it dark and you set up these candles and you go through the stages of *Rosicrucian enlightenment*, which brethren is no more than the old ancient Egyptian ‘religion.’

Colossians 2:18: “Do not allow anyone to defraud you of the prize *by* doing *his* will in self-abasement and *the* worship of angels, intruding into things that he has not seen, vainly puffed up by his own carnal mind.”

I will tell you one thing that is for sure, every time someone is involved in this kind of overt active spirit worship of angels and following of Satan, they get all lifted up in their vanity and they think they are greater than anyone, they have greater intelligence than anyone. We are not to do that!

Verse 19: “And not holding fast to the Head, from Whom all the body, being supplied and knit together by the joints and bands, is increasing *with* the increase of God.”

Again, we come back to ‘**A**’, v 20: “Therefore, **if you have died together with Christ from the elements of the world...**”—referring to God. How are you dead with Christ? *By baptism, you die to the world!* Going back and living and becoming part and parcel of the world.

Is that not what one of the larger denominations of the Church of God did? *Yes!* They went right back into accepting all of the basic demonic philosophies of ‘religion’ and that church are not be a Church of God.

“... why are you subjecting yourselves to *the* decrees of *men* as if you were living in *the* world?” (v 20)—the ordinances of the pagan, philosophical, demonic, angel worshipping, asceticism, which was the former ‘religion’ of those in Colossi.

Verse 22: “The use of all such things leads to corruption, according to the commandments and doctrines of men.” Not after the commandments and doctrines of *God*.

Where, in the Bible, at any time, does it ever show that the commandments and doctrines of God are not to be followed? *It does not!* So therefore, these verses cannot, nor will they ever mean that the

commandments and statutes and laws of God have been done away. As a matter of fact, I need to do a sermon on this, I will show that the laws and commandments of God transcend and follow through every covenant of the Bible. So, if you want something to study on, go ahead and study on that and think on that.

Now what I want to do is just go ahead and read this in the Amplified and then I will go back and I will summarize the things which make us complete in Christ and the things we are to beware of and then we will have finished Colossians the second chapter.

Colossians 2:18: “Do not permit or allow anyone to rob, defraud or cheat you out of the prize or the reward (of the calling of God), by doing his will, the one who is wishing and desiring to get you involved in self-imposed humiliation and self-mortification, even wanting to get you involved in that religious system of philosophy, which is worshipping angels (those wicked, rebellious, hostile angels who fell with Satan, and who are now demons), intruding into and getting involved in things which he has not seen, vainly puffed up in his mind and rashly strutting in the vanity of self—in the fantasy of his own fleshly mind.”

Verse 19: “And in following these practices they are holding fast or keeping their eyes on the Head (Who is Christ Jesus), from Whom the entire body [the Church], through the spiritual joints and ligaments which binds all together, are being nourished and spiritually supplied and knit together, even interwoven in Christ, and is increasing and growing with the increase and growth that comes from God (and not from the philosophies of men). Now then, consider this: If you died together with Christ (through the operation of baptism, and the spiritual circumcision of your hearts and minds) from the elements and rudiments of the world (those evil, demonic, supernatural, spiritual forces, which are driving, motivation and controlling this society), why then, as if living in the world (as if you are part and parcel of the society) are you voluntarily submitting to and subjecting yourselves to the decrees and dogmas, even the ordinances and statutes (of the philosophy of demon worship)?” (vs 19-20).

Verse 21: “Such as: you may not handle. Abstain—you are not allowed to have sexual intercourse (as God intended); You may not taste—you are not allowed to partake [as God intended]; You may not touch—the superstitions of forbidden objects. All these things (these absurd, inane and foolishly imposed restrictions of men) fall into spiritual corruption and destruction by their very use

according to the commandments and injunctions which are the doctrines and teachings of men, which things indeed have a superficial appearance and a skin-deep veneer of wisdom in the ritual of voluntary worship (of fallen angels) and the will-worship of self-imposed humiliation and self-mortification, even the unsparing, rigorous treatment and non-indulgence of the body—(are against what God intended); and in no way will this kind of strict, torturous regimen provide an honorable satisfaction of, or the control of the (lusts of the) flesh” (vs 21-23).

I am going to take this from the article that I wrote, *You are Complete in Jesus Christ* and toward the back of it we have a summary of all the things, which make us complete in Christ. We have also, all the things, which take us away from the completeness of Christ. I am going to have this in my final print out that I have for the book. What I am going to do is just draw your attention to, and please go back and review, starting with the things, which take us away from the completeness in Christ. All of these are out of Col. 2.

Things which take you away from Christ:

1. Persuasive, deceitful words.
2. Philosophy and empty deceit.
3. Traditions of men.
4. Elements of the world.
5. Allowing anyone to judge you in your Christian behavior and obedience to Christ.
6. Doing the will of men.
7. Humility, self-imposed pseudo humility.
8. Voluntary worship of angels or demons.
9. Intruding into those things, which he has not seen.
10. Puffed up, vainly puffed up by the mind of flesh.
11. Not holding fast the Head, which is Christ.
12. Living to the world.
13. Subjecting yourself to the decrees, doctrines and commandments of men.

There are thirteen things, which take you away from Christ, and if you are superstitious, in numbers 13 is bad.

The things which make us complete in Christ:

1. The full assurance in understanding. Full assurance means the completeness, *the fullness*.
2. The knowledge of the mystery of God and of the Father and of Christ.
3. In Whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom. Sophia, knowledge and gnosis

and they are hidden in Christ and God the Father.

4. The steadfastness of your faith in Christ.
5. As you have received Christ, walk in Him.
6. Having been rooted and are being built up in Him.
7. Being confirmed in the faith as taught, which then means the full teachings of the New Testament as taught by the apostles and preserved for us.
8. Circumcised with the circumcision of Christ.
9. Putting off the body of the sins of the flesh.
10. Buried with Him in baptism, the death of baptism.
11. Raised with Him through the workings of God.
12. Dead to your sins.
13. Made alive with Christ.
14. Forgiven all your trespasses.
15. Blotting out the handwriting of the note of our sins.
16. Nailed all of our sins to the cross.
17. Stripped away the power from the principalities and authorities of the demonic spirits over Christians.
18. Publicly triumphed over them in it, that is the crucifixion.
19. Eating and drinking in accordance with the commands of God rather than the traditions and commands of men.
20. The observance of the festivals, which are the annual Holy Days of God.
21. The observance of the new moons in particular, the meaning of the use of the Hebrew calendar as the standard of time, rather than the pagan calendar of Rome.
22. The observance of the Sabbaths, which means the weekly keeping of the Sabbaths on an on-going basis.

We have finished Colossians, the second chapter, which leads us up to what we are going to learn in Col. 3 but the thing that is so important and vital in this, brethren: whenever you come to difficult Scriptures—such as we have here in Col. 2—this is how we are to study them and take them apart bit-by-bit, *but keep the whole vision of what God is giving us to do*.

So, I hope not only, has this been helpful and beneficial for you but that it has been helpful and beneficial in showing you how to properly study the Bible and tackle some of these most difficult Scriptures.

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible, in its Original Order, A Faithful Version* (except where noted)

Scriptural References:

- 1) Colossians 2:2-4, 6-16, 18-20, 14, 20-23, 16
- 2) Deuteronomy 14:1-8
- 3) 1 Timothy 4:4-5, 1-5
- 4) Colossians 2:16-17
- 5) Isaiah 66:15-17
- 6) Ezekiel 8:5-6, 14, 6-18
- 7) Isaiah 66:17-18, 23
- 8) Colossians 2:16-17, 16-18
- 9) 1 Corinthians 3:11-15
- 10) Colossians 2:18
- 11) Revelation 19:10
- 12) Revelation 22:8-9
- 13) Revelation 12:9
- 14) Matthew 25:41
- 15) Matthew 4:8-9
- 16) Colossians 2:18-22, 18-23

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Colossians 2: 4, 8
- Leviticus 11
- 1 Peter 2:9
- Leviticus 23
- Revelation 17
- Acts 2
- Exodus 31:13
- Matthew 25

Also referenced:

Booklet: *The Epistle of the Apostle Paul to the Colossians, An Inspirational Study; A New Expanded-Amplified Translation* by Fred R. Coulter

Article:

You Are Complete in Jesus Christ (pgs 19-30 *The Epistle of the Apostle Paul to the Colossians, An Inspirational Study* by Fred R. Coulter)

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